The Role of Values

in the

Policy Process

Elaine Cooper

Abstract

The thesis explores the role of values in policy implementation and the effects of values disjuncture on policy performance. In particular it hypothesises that values disjunctures are most prevalent and the potential negative consequences for policy performance greatest where policy recipients are from a different disadvantaged social milieu, furthest removed from the culture of the policy makers. It adopts a methodology based on backward mapping tools where research at the point of delivery informs and precedes research into policy formulation and implementation. This method enables the experience of the policy recipients to be used to shape the research questions to policy implementers. The research focus is on Hungry for Success a policy introduced by the Scottish Government to improve the standard of school meals and to redress health inequalities. The findings of this study are that although the policy improved the quality of school meals across Scotland, it nevertheless failed where it was most needed, in reaching those poorest children who would most have benefited from a healthy meal. Instead of redressing the issues of health inequalities, the evidence suggests that by providing most children with a healthy meal while failing to deliver to a minority, health discrepancies among the children may in fact have been increased.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis sets out to explore the role of values in the policy process. In particular it examines the way that values influence the behaviour of actors at different levels of policy implementation, and the way that discordant values across the implementation process may prejudice policy delivery. It focuses on the Scottish Government's Hungry for Success (HfS) initiative which was designed to address the problem of ill health among Scotland's children, especially those from poor backgrounds. The overarching hypothesis is that a clash of health values and food cultures between policy-makers and those at the point of delivery will undermine the effectiveness of the programme.

In the 19th century, in the earliest days of broad brushstroke, health policy, public health acts were concerned with alleviating or containing the unsanitary conditions of the poor (Chadwick, 1842). At that time, it could be assumed that even if the values of the policy elite were not entirely shared by policy recipients, there would be enough common ground to ensure support for policies which would be of widespread benefit in providing clean drinking water or effective sewage systems. In the liberal pluralist democracies of the 21st century, where it has become more common for the state to intervene in issues which may previously have been understood to be in the private sphere, such as family relationships and health, conflicts are now much more likely to occur. In these circumstances values disjuncture can impede policy delivery. Understanding the values of policy recipients becomes correspondingly more important, both for policy practitioners and academic observers. Hungry for Success was a policy designed with the objective of intervening in that most personal and private sphere of food behaviours. Its long-term aim was to contribute to a Scotland-wide change in the eating habits which had helped to earn the nation its tag as the 'sick man of Europe' (Interview, senior government minister, 2009). The policy was intended to begin that process of change by providing a nutritionally well-balanced lunch for every child in a state school in Scotland.

While the role of values in the policy process has been widely recognised by analysts, the focus has most often been on the values of the policy-makers. The concentration of the literature on the values of these elites may have resulted in the neglect of more subtle values impact on policy outcome. This thesis intends to reverse the polarity from that concentrated focus on the values of policy formulators and other elite actors to the end point of policy delivery. It will expand the analysis of the policy process to incorporate policy *recipients* as well as mapping values right across the implementation process. It will seek to identify those points at which there may be conflict between different values where disjuncture within implementation could cause dysfunction with negative impacts on delivery. By acknowledging the potential influence of recipient values on delivery and by identifying and tracking the relationship between those values and values which influence the other implementation actors, the areas of least values harmony will be identified. In doing so, the impact of values disjuncture on policy delivery will be better understood and methods of predicting and ameliorating potential points of conflict will be more easily discovered

Although, as will be seen, the structure of the presentation is conventional in that it begins with policy origin and design, the research itself was carried out in accordance with the tenets of backward mapping, which recommends that the needs and behaviours of the policy recipients be first understood, before attempting to evaluate the policy process (Elmore, 1979). This means that apart from one meeting with a senior government civil servant who supplied outline information at a preliminary stage of the research, the first interviews were held within the schools where HfS was being delivered. The research design was further influenced by the work on street level bureaucrats (Lipsky, 1971; Maynard-Moody and Musheno , 2003) and by Young's assumptive world theory (1977) which suggests that cultural values may influence not only behaviour , but the perceptions of policy makers about other actors in the policy process. The research questions were additionally directed by the literature to look at communication processes and the allocation of

discretion to implementation actors, as other important factors which might influence delivery success.

The policy recipients in the case of HfS were intended to be the 743,000 children attending Scotland's state schools. The original conceptualisation of HfS had attached crucial importance to the concept of social justice and the need to redress health inequities, as exemplified by the needs of the 20 per cent of those pupils who were eligible for free school meals. The schools were selected, therefore, on the basis of their ability to each represent a different socio-economic demographic in order to test the effect of variation in social class on delivery. More than one hundred pupils spoke about their food behaviours, habits and views on school meals in general, and on the changes introduced by HfS. The evidence collected from these pupil recipients of HfS and the frontline teachers and catering staff who delivered the policy to them, then informed the research questions to key actors at the other levels in the policy process. The substantive experience of the children and of those actors at the point of delivery provided insights into the reality of delivering HfS which could be presented for comment to elite interviewees as evidence of practice, rather than as implementation theory.

This study is heavily dependent upon empirical research and particularly upon extensive interviews conducted with stakeholders engaged at different levels of implementation. Fortunately, the appeal of the subject of food and eating habits, which lay at the heart of understanding HfS delivery, was one which crossed generations and social class alike. The topic appeared to be of abiding interest to those interviewed and this study owes a debt to those council workers, civil servants and politicians who were willing to speak freely about their professional and personal experiences.

In doing so, the interviewees enabled this study to identify potential values influences and values conflict throughout the policy process, from the policy elite who designed HfS at government level, through the different levels of implementation to the point of delivery, and beyond to the policy recipients.

Thesis Structure and Outline

The form of the thesis is consistent with the theoretical framework explored in the first chapter and based around the policy process stages. The data collected is presented under chapter themes based on the three broadest levels of the policy process; policy conception and creation at Government level, implementation at local authority level and delivery at schools level. Within each of those chapters, those broad categories are broken down in order to more fully represent the data collected from the diverse communities and actors which operated at each level.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the body of literature which forms the conceptual framework for the evaluation of Hungry for Success. The examination and analysis of relevant policy themes, concepts and research and in particular of the literature about values, culture and inequalities allows for the development of the key questions which direct the thesis structure and design of the empirical research..

Chapter 2 outlines the research design and methodology employed. It explains the way in which the research design was informed by the questions arising from the themes in the literature. The selection of the methods and methodology employed are described in detail and the justification of their selection explained with reference to the literature on research methods.

Chapter 3 is the first of three chapters which present the findings of substantial empirical research carried out at three levels of the policy process. This chapter is based on analysis of primary documentary materials and elite interviews with Government level policy makers and other key actors involved in the formulation of and operationalisation design of HfS. It identifies the origins and influences which informed the genesis of the policy and seeks to explain why and how the policy appeared on the political agenda at that time.

Crucially it tries to identify the values which informed the original HfS concept and the broadest aims and objectives of the policy-makers involved at the earliest stages. It examines the source of evidence which influenced the policy format. It looks at the

degree of consensus and division on issues and identifies potential factors driving the choice of targets and the agreed timetable. It examines the extent of consultation and identifies the monitoring and evaluation process which were put in place.

This chapter also examines the practical methods selected to implement HfS in Scotland's schools and asks on what basis they were chosen.

Chapter 4 is informed by document analysis and interviews with key actors who took part in the HfS implementation within local authorities and specifically within the city of Glasgow, where the case studies examined in Chapter 5 are based. It identifies cultural values within Glasgow's implementation communities and their impact upon delivery. The findings reveal the extent of Glasgow local authority's endorsement of HfS and identifies political conflicts between the local authority and Government with the potential to impact on policy delivery. It also looks at the allocation of discretion and the effectiveness of the communication systems in place.

Chapter 5 focuses on the policy actors, including the school pupil recipients – in and around the schools themselves. The use of backward mapping to structure the research design meant that the findings in this chapter were key to informing the structure and content of the subsequent research.. It establishes the processes by which information about HfS was delivered to staff, pupils and their families and investigates what kind of knowledge was presented about the policy ethos. It asks about the extent to which schools' actors felt adequately prepared for the changes brought by HfS, the extent to which the policy was embraced or rejected and crucially, the role played by cultural and values beliefs in that process. Unusually in terms of policy analysis, the findings present some unmediated views of policy recipients – in this case a cohort of young disadvantaged children whose valuable contributions helped to inform much of the direction of this study.

The final chapter provides a summary of the research findings in order to assess the role of values in the policy process, and in particular the impact of values harmony and disharmony on the implementation of HfS. It revisits some of the literature

identified in Chapter 1 and pulls together common themes from the empirical chapters. It reflects on the broader contribution of this research to literature and the way the analysis of the extensive empirical research might contribute to a better understanding of the way values harmony or disjuncture can impact upon policy delivery, especially in those areas where policy seeks to change behaviour among communities outside the mainstream.

Throughout the thesis, the interviews and documentary data are logically structured around the key issues raised in Chapter 1.

Chapter 1

INFLUENCES ON THE POLICY PROCESS

> Much of the art of policy analysis revolves around the identification of value systems, the problem being that these are often not made explicit or even recognised by some authors as being part of the thought process.
>
> (Hudson and Lowe, 2004: 212-213)

Values are key to the policy process. While the role they play in the policy process has long been recognised as important (Hogwood and Gunn 1985: 24; Howlett and Hamesh, 2003:185; Dorey, 2005: 196), academic focus on values has overwhelmingly been 'subsumed within accounts that stress the role of interests, institutions, and ideas (or ideologies), or, are conceived as convenient covers for the pursuit of self-interest' (Stewart, 2006). More overt analysis of values has concentrated on the way in which the views of policymakers are shaped by their individual or institutional values-influences. As has been stated, this study seeks to understand the role of values in shaping the behaviours of implementation actors throughout the policy process to the point of delivery, and beyond, to the policy recipients. It further seeks to identify those areas where there may be disjuncture between conflicting values influences with the potential to impede implementation.

Implementation studies suggest that policy failure may be caused by disjuncture between levels in the policy process, with the scope for policy failure increasing with each additional level. Several factors, including power struggles, agenda conflicts and lack of knowledge were identified as contributing to the problems (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973). This study will test whether that potential for disjuncture between levels will be further exacerbated where there are value conflicts between levels.

Effective communication can offset the potential for general disjuncture across levels. It may also help to reduce cultural and values barriers between policy-makers, implementation actors and recipients. Good communication allows for the recipients' voice to be fed into policy formulation. Implementation can then be sensitised to the culture of the recipient. The thesis will therefore be attentive to this dimension of the HfS policy process. It will ask to what extent attempts were made to mitigate potential conflicts by creating good communication mechanisms across the levels of the policy process.

The heightened possibility of policy failure at the point of delivery has been identified in the literature. The street level bureaucrat literature focuses on the key role of actors at the point of delivery. Backward mapping literature goes further by emphasising the crucial role of policy recipients and the importance of acknowledging all of their sometimes disparate needs within the policy design.

Street level actors with discretion may adapt policy delivery in a way which can make it more or less acceptable to the policy recipient. So, cultural values conflict can be mitigated by giving implementation actors closest to the point of delivery the discretion to adapt policy to the culture of the recipients. However, if they share the recipients' hostility to the policy values, the allowed discretion can have the opposite effect, undermining policy delivery.

In terms of policies such as HfS, where the aim is to impose cultural change on the recipients, values conflicts between policy-makers and recipients may be pronounced, especially with disadvantaged recipients who are economically and culturally most different from the policy creators and implementers. Studies of the complex relationship between food behaviours and social class indicate the potential for values disjuncture will be greatest among socially deprived policy recipients (Counihan and van Esterik, 1997). The focus of HfS on challenging existing food behaviours and the concentration of this thesis on the role of values necessitates a proper understanding of contextual food behaviours. This study will ask if policy

makers who are seeking to change food behaviours need to pay at least as much attention to the particular food cultures associated with different classes as they do to food cultures of other groups, such as ethnic or religious minorities, whose food behaviours may also be different from the mainstream. Some of the literature in this area originates from sociology and psychology academics, rather than public policy analysts, but this inter-disciplinarian sourcing is needed to properly understand the values conflicts which may occur at the point of delivery (Foley et al, 2001;Marks et al, 2006; Hall and Elliman, 2006) Where there has been no recognition of potential cultural clashes in the policy design, values conflict may occur at the point of delivery and the conflict (and thus the potential for disruption) will be greatest where the recipients are most alienated from the dominant (policy-creating) culture.

The original promotion of HfS as part of a wider programme of social justice reforms suggests that the debate among social justice theorists as to the most effective methods of addressing inequalities will also be useful. The discussion about distribution versus recognition as a way of tackling inequality goes right to the heart of whether the needs of the poor in the context of food behaviours can be best met by recognition of existing cultural differences. While a full examination of the very large general literature on this topic would not be practical or appropriate, a discussion of the relationship between social justice and nutrition should provide further insight into the business of shaping policy to accommodate differences in culture or values.

Values in the Policy Process

One of the earliest acknowledgements of the central role of values in the policy process can be found in the work of Max Weber.

> The distinctive characteristic of a problem of social *policy* is indeed the fact that it cannot be resolved merely on the basis of purely technical considerations which assume already settled ends. Normative standards of value can and must be the objects of *dispute* in a discussion of a problem of social policy because the problem lies in the domain of general

> *cultural* values. … One thing is certain … the more "general"
> the problem involved, i.e., in this case, the broader its cultural
> *significance,* the less subject it is to a single unambiguous
> answer on the basis of the data of empirical sciences and the
> greater the role played by value-ideas and the ultimate and
> highest personal axioms of belief.
>
> (Weber, 1904: 9)

While values may be a slippery and, often, too widely defined concept for focused analysis, Weber's understanding of the term, as that which provides the necessarily non-rational human context for actions, is useful. Since Weber, there has been an enormous post-Freud literature and a general consensus within the social sciences that accepts the subconscious effect of values on an individual's behaviour. The importance of these values in influencing the decisions and actions of individuals is now an acknowledged credo of social science which provides the opportunity for assessing the impact on the policy process of the interplay of actors' values (Lasswell, 1948; Vickers 1965, 1968). The belief systems of the policy elites are the focus of Young's (1977) *Assumptive World* theory, which investigates the way in which values might impact on policy formulation and implementation. He defines values as;

> policymakers' subjective understanding of the environment
> in which they operate containing several intermingled
> elements of belief, perception, evaluation and intention as
> responses to the reality out there.
>
> (1977: 2- 3)

This definition is especially useful in recognising the fluid nature of values-influence. However by confining his interest to the assumptive worlds of the expert networks which create policy, Young has neglected the possibility that the assumptive worlds of those further along the policy chain, or indeed of the policy recipients themselves, might also have a bearing on policy implementation success. By focusing only on the values of the elite, Young has also neglected to acknowledge that there may be particular potential for delivery disruption when other values (or assumptive worlds) are in conflict with those which inform the decisions of the policy formulators.

Some of the limitations of Young's assumptive world theory have been recognised by other political scientists who, while recognising the central role of values in policy formulation, have extended their values-influence analysis to include non-elite actors in the implementation process and the policy recipients. Valuable and relevant insights into this process are offered by Marshall (Marshall, Mitchell and Wirt, 1985, 1986; Marshall1988; Marshall and Mitchell, 1991). She interprets or defines assumptive worlds as a 'perceptual screen' (Marshall, Mitchell and Wirt, 1986: 366) and focuses on assumptive world conflict between policy makers and recipients in social and education policy. She argues powerfully that assumptive world theory is the connective tissue that holds together the varied separate research traditions for studying policy-making, concluding that: 'any valid picture, map model, theory or practice of education making must incorporate assumptive worlds' (Marshall, Mitchell and Wirt, 1985: 376-377).

> Policymakers are socialized in distinctive cultures and share understandings about factors in their state policy environments that affect perceptions of the key actors [that] relate to expected behaviours, rituals and judgements about what is feasible.
> (Marshall, Mitchell and Wirt, 1985: 376-377)

Although some of Marshall's early work has highlighted the particular problems of assumptive world conflict in redistributive policies impacting on gender, disability and ethnic minority groups, she identifies the conflict as a pervasive problem throughout general policy implementation. Others have argued from the same premise that mistaken assumptions made about the meanings which inform behaviour will increase the likelihood of ineffective policy making (Bryce and Humes, 2008; Forbes, 2006).

The interpretive approach is the more modern sister of assumptive world theory. It acknowledges the debt it owes Weber's 'interpretive paradigm' which suggests that 'subjective meaning used by people in social interaction ... [is]... a starting point for the objective analysis of society' (May, 2002: 40). Proponents of this type of non-positivist, or post-positivist approach share a conviction that meanings are subjective.

> Interpretive approaches begin from the insight that to understand actions, practices and institutions, we need to grasp the relevant meanings, the beliefs and preferences of the people involved.
>
> (Bevir and Rhodes, 2004:132)

The interpretive approach is about how 'beliefs, ideas or discourses … appear within, and even frame, actions, practices and institutions' (Bevir and Rhodes 2003: 17). Its value in implementation analysis lies in the way it seeks to look beyond the obvious to those reasons for actions or 'doing' which are not immediately or easily discernible. Interpretists 'reject explicitly the idea of given truths whether based on pure reason or pure experience; all perceptions, and so 'facts', arise within the context of a prior set of beliefs or theoretical commitments' (Bevir and Rhodes, 2004:131). The main advantage of incorporating an interpretive approach into this research frame is that it allows actors at the delivery level of the policy process to explain the meaning of their actions in terms of their own values which may identify cognitive disjuncture in the policy process.

Policy formulation and implementation may cross multiple jurisdictions, each of which has its own culture. This thesis hypothesises that it is when those multiple cultures or values are at odds with each other that there is most likely to be damage caused to the implementation process. March and Olsen (1989, 159) suggest that the [cultural/values] behaviours occur according to a 'logic of appropriateness' that follow from culturally-specific rules and norms.

> There are structures of meaning, embedded in identities and belongings: common purposes and accounts that give direction and meaning to behaviour, and explain, justify and legitimate behavioural codes.
>
> (March and Olsen, 2005:4)

Duemer and Mendez-Morse challenge the consensus that an 'institution can embody any value, or that any one individual can embody the values of an institution' (2002:5). But this distinction between an individual and an institution's values is unimportant in recognising values discord in the terms of this research.   In terms of

understanding the role of values here, it is the manifestation of these values in implementation behaviour, rather than the values' origins, which would identify conflicts. What is relevant in terms of this policy analysis is Duemer and Mendez-Morse's argument that what is most important in understanding the influence of values in behaviour is a design perspective that recognises 'the power of individuals to impact policy implementation and establishes a framework where competing values are uncovered and examined' (2002:5). The most recent discourse on the role of values in policy analysis (Stewart, 2010) has returned to a focus on values as policy-motivators or as a perspective for general policy analysis rather than as a way of understanding delivery problems. Stewart's analysis of values conflicts which build on earlier work (Thacher and Rein, 2004) is useful and valuable in understanding policy comparisons but does not explore potential conflict *within* implementation.

Implementation Levels in the Policy Process

Among the earliest and most influential implementation theorists were Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) who argued that the greater the proliferation of levels in the policy process, the greater the likelihood of policy failure. If, as we have seen, policy design can be the product of the assumptive worlds of policy-makers, those delivery difficulties could be further exacerbated when there are values clashes between those levels.

Although there is a large literature on policy implementation, definitions vary as to what precisely constitutes that 'implementation' part of the policy process. Parsons' (1995:457) terms 'delivery analysis' and 'post-decisional' are precise in that they clearly identify that part of the policy process which occurs *after* the policy has been formally designed and launched. Howlett and Ramesh (1995: 153) describe implementation as the point where 'policy decisions are translated into action ... the translation of plans into practice'. O'Toole (2004: 66) suggests it is what occurs 'between the establishment of an apparent intention on the part of the government to do something, or to stop doing something, and the ultimate impact in the world of

action'. In this instance, O'Toole's is perhaps the most relevant definition in that it seems to be the broadest, embracing all aspects of the policy from the first expression of *intention* to act right through until a change is effected. Those theorists who define implementation as a separate stage of the policy process from formulation (De Leon and De Leon, 2002:473) do not allow for an evaluation of values impact which seeks to understand, as this thesis does, the potential for the creation of values conflict even at the formulation stage

To understand the impact of values on and between those different levels or links of the process - one of the central purposes of this thesis – it is important to be able to properly identify and define those different levels. . Whether the policy process is defined in terms of links in a chain, or levels in a hierarchy, the potential impact of values discord can only be studied once all the stages along the course of the policy path have been identified.

The implementation theorists of the 1970s (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973; Bardach, 1976; Hargrove, 1975; Hood, 1976; Hanf and Scharpf, 1978) sought to understand what might influence policy shape in the space between conception and delivery. The earlier analytical focus on policy formulation and policy outcome left implementation studies to fill the gap left 'between federal aspirations and local reality' (Hill, 2005: 177). Analysis of the pathway between those points suggested that failure to realise policy aspirations could often be attributed to a proliferation of policy levels, and even, that the likelihood of failure was increased by every additional implementation transaction or level a policy underwent (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973).

The emphasis of policy studies was thus shifted from an initial interest in the values-influences of policy-makers, to a recognition of the way in which the values of implementation or delivery actors at these different levels might also have 'framed and informed' the policy by the time it reached the point of delivery. The earlier focus on elite policy makers – and the delay in recognising the potential influence of other actors elsewhere in the process was blamed on a limiting perspective of

policymaking as a top-down process. Parsons uses the example of the different values or cultural agendas being pursued between high-level policy-makers at the Ministry of Health and those of street-level health professionals who were delivering the policy to the public. He concluded that this initial concentration on the values of the policy-makers was the inevitable result of their hierarchical view of the policy process (1995: 525). This hierarchical perspective that was implicit in initial implementation research was self-limiting:

> …..policy implementation has too often been practiced as a top-down, or, governing-elite phenomenon and that its study and practice would be much better served were its practitioners to adopt a more participatory, more directly democratic orientation. We will suggest that implementation theory should address more carefully the kinds of democratic processes that are called forth by varying specific conditions…
>
> (De Leon and De Leon 2002: 468)

Much of the literature has argued that implementation can therefore be better understood by a 'bottom-up approach' (Lipsky, 1980; Elmore 1980; Hjern and Hull, 1982), involving a closer examination of those affected by and those responsible for the implementation of policy. Discussion about the relative benefits of a top-down or bottom-up approach to understanding the policy process has since formed much of the basis of implementation discussion. Decades of debate on this subject were usefully summarised by De Leon and De Leon:

> Top-down policy implementation is prone to hierarchical, unduly optimistic expectations, which in the face of complexity are more likely than not to be disappointed, thus visiting further ignominy on implementation studies. It is possible ... [ ] ... that this proclivity is less likely to be true in the case of bottom-up implementation ... [which] ...is a reflection of communal interest. Rather than have a policy imposed by a policy maker who is counselled by select (hardly representative) and narrowly focused interest groups, the potential clientele are proposing a policy that will directly affect them.
>
> (2002: 477)

It is evident that the policy process encompasses such an enormous breadth and range of policy that a one-size theory of analysis could never usefully fit all. Even those policies which seem most easily to lend themselves to one concept or another may benefit from a different approach. A policy involving defence or the military may seem like an obvious candidate for a top-down imposition of change but how much richer an understanding of the implementation process could emerge and how much more effective might that policy process be if the experiences of the soldiers enacting policy are added to that analysis? The use of different theories may also be influenced by the selected policy focus. It can be argued that in terms of health and other behaviour-changing policy a top-down analysis may provide an understanding of output in terms of overall targets reached, but a bottom-up analysis might be better placed to provide specific outcomes. Even recent literature which has enthusiastically advocated the use of theories of governance (Robichau and Lynn, 2009) as a way of enriching public policy analysis does not suggest that a new flexi-framework has been found to fit all. Indeed the emphasis placed by governance theories on 'drawing clear distinctions between outputs and outcomes' (I*bid*: 37) can only be achieved through the kind of focused attention on exactly what happens at the point of delivery advocated by earlier bottom-up and backward mapping enthusiasts.

Backward Mapping

Backward mapping was a product of the shift towards bottom-up implementation analysis which led to an exploration of new approaches for policy-makers and policy analysts. It recognised the key role of policy recipients and the importance of understanding and incorporating their values into the policy design.

Elmore's original (1979) 'backward mapping' model of policy making was based on his arguments that any policy making which 'reinforced the pathologies of hierarchy' (1979: 608) could only increase the likelihood of failure. The solution, Elmore suggested, was backward mapping, a model which started with a concrete statement and understanding of the issue or problem that required policy intervention and

worked its way backwards and upwards from the point of delivery to the policy recipient, through the implementation chain focusing attention on delivery-level 'reciprocity and discretion' (1979:608) . The essence of backward mapping theory, then, as a policy analysis tool, is that its initial focus is upon the point at which the policy is to be delivered (Elmore, 1979).

Unlike 'forward mapping' or other top-down approaches which 'begin at the top of the process, with as clear a statement as possible of the policy maker's intent' and tracks the policy to 'an outcome against which success or failure can be measured' (Elmore, 1979: 602-603), backward mapping begins with a 'statement of the specific behaviour at the lowest level of the implementation process that generates the need for a policy' (Elmore, 1979:604). When that policy seeks to change behaviour, it makes sense to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the behaviours of all the policy recipients, not in a general or idealised sense, but the reality of the different demands that different sectors of that recipient community might make.

While clear cut policy objectives and extensive analysis of potential top-down implementation problems may go some way to creating policy success, they do not anticipate implementation failure caused by recipient rejection at the point of delivery.[1] Backward mapping based on policy trials allows for exploration of that most crucial factor in policy delivery – the degree to which there may or may not be resistance to the policy imposition, not only from the public recipients of that policy but from those local actors involved in delivery.

This approach importantly allows for the discovery of those forces which influence policy acceptance, integration or rejection, (Lindblom and Woodhouse, 1993). By observing the activities of street level stakeholders, it may suggest ways in which negative effects may be avoided and so improve the chance of successful policy outcome. Maynard-Moody and Musheno's (2004) identification of the way in

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[1] Michael Hill cites that 'best-known British policy failure' the introduction of the poll tax, as a classic example of a policy formulation which failed to anticipate the point of delivery reception (Hill, 2005:188)

which personal 'values systems' and support or antagonism towards particular policy may critically influence delivery suggests that understanding the actors and communities involved in implementation is crucial to effective policy analysis.

The backward mapping framework allows for a study of context, actor discretion and recipient participation in a way which should identify 'local knowledge and skill at delivery level' (Elmore, 1979: 605) and reveal, among other influences, the impact of the smallest particular on the general implementation success. Elmore argues that solving implementation problems in a complex delivery system depends not upon 'hierarchical control' but on 'maximising discretion at the point where the problem is most immediate' (1979: 605). Those 'points' where discretion, may, or may not, be exercised need first to be identified. Backward mapping enables that to be done.

Where policy, such as HfS, is seeking to effect broad-based cultural changes, an early understanding of how the public may respond to the policy intent should be a factor in the basic building block of that policy creation. Backward mapping provides that essential building block by acknowledging and studying the role of those implementation actors who directly engage with the public recipients of policy – and crucially by engaging with the recipients themselves. In doing so, and by comparing different points of delivery, it can generate insights into potential behaviours which may impact upon the policy shape. The influence of actor discretion on policy shape is not of course limited to the point of delivery. The potential for discretion disruption may occur at any stage. This form of policy mapping works backwards from the end-delivery point towards the point of policy formulation and at each level or link in the policy chain identifies potential discretion influence by asking what ability 'each unit has to affect the behaviour' that is the policy target and 'what resources are required to do so?' (Elmore, 1979: 604) At each stage it identifies 'a set of organisational operations and how they work' (Dyer, 1999: 46) and only when the review of the implementation path is completed are the policy options discussed and policy formulated

Backward mapping may additionally be useful in successful delivery of HfS's particular kind of cultural-influencing policy because of its ability to see beyond a superficially statistically successful delivery. It reduces the dependence of policy analysis or policy formulation on broad statistics which may fail to supply the nuanced qualitative information which may contradict the bigger statistical picture.

The development of backward mapping (Elmore, 1979; 1983; Odden and Odden, 1984) as a tool for policy analysis and policy creation shares a focus with the body of literature which identified the way in which street level bureaucrats may influence policy implementation (Lipsky, 1971; Maynard-Moody and Musheno, 2004). The literature on street level workers, with its recognition of the power of actors at the point of delivery, is discussed in more detail in the next section.

Together these two theories (backward mapping and street level bureaucrats) provide an approach to policy analysis which may be particularly useful when it comes to understanding the implementation of policy which seeks to effect cultural and behaviour changes in the population at large. Elmore's original model has been developed and used in education policy research, where the clearly delineated hierarchical structure of many educational communities has lent itself to this particular form of analysis (Dyer, 1999; Recesso, 1999; Dimmock and Walker, 2004).

The Discretion of Street Level Bureaucrats and Other Actors

The influence of actor discretion on policy shape was most memorably identified by Lipsky (1971) who coined the phrase 'street level bureaucrats' to describe the men and women who were able to reshape policy at the point of delivery to accommodate their own assumptive worlds. Street workers, argued Lipsky, actually make policy choices rather than simply implement the decisions of elected officials. However those choices can only be made where they have discretion to exercise. It has been noted that Elmore argues that some implementation challenges can be met by allowing the greatest discretion to be exercised at the point where there is the greatest

problem (1979: 605). It could be strongly argued that successful delivery may also equally depend upon effective *minimising* of the discretion allowed to individual or communities of implementation actors.

Implementation actors able to exercise discretion could, of course, cause policy disruption at any stage during the policy process. However the recognition that those point of delivery workers, often those who were among the lowest-paid, could exert such influence on policy, continues to provoke debate[2] and a substantial body of case study work (Evans and Harris, 2004; Taylor and Kelly, 2006; Hupe and Hill, 2007; May and Winter, 2009; Evans, 2010).

Maynard-Moody and Musheno's acclaimed research into the work of policemen, teachers and counsellors [*sic*] in the Midwest of the United States demonstrated that those who implement policy at street level may, in fact, exert enormous influence on the form and way in which that policy is finally delivered (2003). How policy formulators deal with the degree of discretion available to different actors at different levels in the implementation process is a matter for debate. The argument that the implementation process be more strictly constrained and regimented to reduce the impact of discretion is challenged by the experience of a former Chief Executive of the National Health Service who found policy more effectively implemented if the policy formulators were able to 'let go'. Sir Alan Langlands said that at implementation stage actors have to have "some discretion to drive through their part of the system in a way that makes sense locally" (Gray and Jenkins, 2001: 206-207).

 Lipsky's original theory has now been used as a basis for modelling case studies all over the world, but recent critiques (Evans, 2010) have suggested that there are additional layers of influence which impact on those street level workers who identify as professionals and on the managerial focus of those who have 'gone over' to management from street level. Although Evans' research was on a case study of social workers, who considered themselves as street level workers *and* professionals,

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[2] There were eight papers presented at two separate sessions on street level bureaucracy at the 2009 annual Public Management Research Conference, Ohio.

it suggests that there may be values conflicts which are particularly experienced by those who have gone from street worker to management level, whether or not they identify as professional.

This recognition of the policy power exercised by street level bureaucrats and other 'lowly' employees has been widespread but not universal. Not all political scientists have acknowledged the potential ability of implementers to subvert or modify policy or the influences which might cause them to do so. Hill, for example, writes that '*even* personnel who have mainly service-providing tasks have some discretion to affect whether a public measure is likely to be implemented successfully or not' [*my italic*] (2003:28), but he is in a minority in failing to recognise the potentially policy-changing influence of actors at the point of delivery who interact directly with policy recipients. There is also debate about what might influence the behaviour of those who deliver policy at street level. Winter suggested that delivery actors including doctors, social workers, policemen, teachers and nurses all applied 'similar [discretionary] behaviours and that therefore these behaviours could not be the result of individual influences. He concluded therefore, that, 'their individual attitudes are not expected to have important implications for their behaviours' (2006:153).

It could also be argued that the amount of discretion allowed actors may be just as effective in promoting policy success as in causing disruption. In terms of values and cultural conflicts impacting upon the way delivery actors interpret and enact policy, perhaps allowed discretion should be viewed as an opportunity to promote policy. An implementation priority would then be to ensure that communication channels throughout the implementation chain promoted sympathy with and understanding of the policy objectives. Dorey suggests that:

> the extent to which street level bureaucrats implement a policy in the manner intended by national level policy makers will depend not only on whether they fully understand the objectives and purpose enshrined in the policy, but also, perhaps, on its compatibility with their own values or organizational goals. Just as government departments … have often been characterized by a particular internal philosophy or operational paradigm, so too might the organizations

acting as 'street level bureaucrats' have their own particular ethos or institutional ideology, and this may have practical consequences for their interpretation or acceptance of a policy emanating from above.

(2005: 210)

The literature suggests, therefore, that the exercise of discretion should only be allowed to those actors who are sympathetic and supportive of a policy and wish to support a positive delivery outcome. Where implementation actors have not been persuaded of a policy's benefits, the amount of influence they are allowed to exercise should be kept to a minimum.

Communication Across the Policy Chain

As with the children's game *Chinese Whispers,* there is a consensus that each additional intervention or level in implementation adds to the likelihood of increased communication and co-ordination failure. Effective policy depends upon the clarity of communication channels. The impact of these communication failures is recognised in work on backward mapping and on assumptive worlds.

Recesso suggests that whereas other analytical methods assume that a failure to meet objectives is due to the 'locality's inability to implement, backward mapping asks the local actor as implementer how they interpreted the policy' (1999: 28). While that interpretation will be influenced by their own cultural mores, he says it will also be influenced by the effectiveness of the communication channels which delivered policy. Good communication has the power to reduce negative interpretations of policy and allay the problems which may be caused when delivery is implemented by unsympathetic actors.

Marshall's work (1988, 1989) on education policy in the United States explores the particular difficulties when the assumptive worlds at federal level failed to recognised the reality of life at 'street level' in the schools where the policy was to be implemented. She describes the 'chasm' between policy makers and educators.

Operating in distinctive organizational cultures, state policymakers are, in the majority of cases, both geographically and psychologically distanced from school.

> Even when a state policy directive is clear, concise and direct (a rare occurrence) there are at least six more decisions points before the policy directive reaches the classroom level of implementation.
>
> (Marshall, 1988: 98)

Her evidence supports Pressman and Wildavsky's assertion that each additional implementation stage reduces the chances of policy delivery success (1973), suggesting at least the possibility that each of those levels may exist in its own individual assumptive world with its own impact upon that implementation process. Mendez-Morse and Duemer (2002) suggest that many of the difficulties with implementation 'mutation' can be traced to poor communications between levels and in failing particularly to properly communicate the values which inform the original policy. They argue that the impact of values can be usefully identified by conducting 'individual-focused investigations' which recognize the power of individuals to impact policy implementation and they suggest a values-based framework for doing so, which will be more usefully examined later in terms of the research design (Duemer and Mendez-Morse, 2002:5).

Among the conclusions which may be drawn from this literature, both theoretically and from empirical research evidence cited, is that the place at which values discord may have considerable impact on implementation is at the point of delivery – and that this may manifest itself in different ways. There is acknowledgement that the values assumption on which policy is based is unlikely to be shared by all those involved in implementation – either by the actors at different points in the delivery chain or by the recipients themselves. The theory suggests that improved communication and understanding by implementation actors of the desired policy outcome should increase delivery success and reduce the potential for disjuncture between levels. However, improved understanding of policy implications does not automatically guarantee resolved interest or values conflict (Berg, 2006).

Social Justice

The broad contribution of social justice theory to any discussions on inequality and the specific ideological origins of HfS suggests that attention must be given to the subject. While it would not be appropriate or possible to cover the very large general literature on the topic the focus of recent debates about social justice are worth examining.

The original term social justice was used by religious scholars in nineteenth century Italy to argue that the poor and disenfranchised should be treated as equals (Novak, 2000). Rawls (1971) redefined the terms of the phrase for the 20th century by arguing that individuals should be given equal access to health, education, legal justice systems and so on and that crucially those who were least advantaged should be given the most assistance to do so.

However, the theory that inequalities could be reduced by the redistribution of wealth was challenged in the 1990s. 'Recognition' rather than 'redistribution' was identified as a necessary tool for redressing the disadvantage that was caused by innate or cultural differences as well as economic inequalities. It was argued that recognition and acknowledgement of those differences, whether ethnic, sexual and so on, was essential to redress inequalities caused by those differences (Young, 1990, Fraser, 1995).

> Cultural recognition displaces socioeconomic redistribution
> as the remedy for injustice.
> (Fraser, 1995:430)

The consensus now would be that social justice requires the integration of both the redistribution of resources and the recognition of cultural differences (Fraser, 2001, Fraser and Honneth, 2003). This perspective can be seen as particularly relevant in terms of this thesis and its emphasis on the impact of culture and values conflict on policy delivery.

The well-established links between poverty, poor nutrition and health mean that much of the social justice debate has centred on the need to address food inequalities both globally and nationally. The concept that there are social determinants of health is widely accepted as the basis for this discourse (Daniels et al, 1999). Barry suggests that at least some of the 'evidence' which links genes and social class to intelligence, educational attainment and positive life outcomes can be challenged on the basis of the benefits which he suggests would accrue from equality of nutritional input (2005). In terms of the potential of HfS to successfully address the issue of health inequalities, Jukes et al (2007) argue that a reduction in health inequality can best be attained by exploiting connections between health education and nutrition and using programmes like HfS which seek to change health behaviour through the schools system.

Graham suggests that the most important question that can be asked from an equity point of view of a policy seeking to improve health is what its impact would be on the health of the most vulnerable (2001).

> Awareness is growing that the same policy may have a differential effect on different sub-groups within the population: beneficial effects for some, but little or even negative effects for others. Concentration solely on the overall health impact may miss serious shortcomings of the policy and the measurement of the distributional effects needs to be a standard part of the evaluation process.
>
> (Graham, 2001:2006)

Whereas in the past policymakers may have focused on equality of access to medical care as the most effective means of addressing health inequalities, discussions on the social determinants of health are no longer confined to social justice theorists and there is a recognition that social and economic conditions impact on health too (Wilkinson and Marmot, 2003). This would include an acknowledgement that policies are experienced differently according to people's different circumstances (Graham, 2001).

Value Discord and its Consequences: Lessons from Empirical Research

There are specific policy areas where it has been recognised that values conflict between the policy creators and the street level implementers or target recipients is likely to cause difficulties and acknowledgement of potential values conflict would have informed the operationalisation design. Any policy which has an obvious ethical or moral dimension, such as sex education in schools or abortion legislation, may, by its nature, produce a moral dilemma for the educator or medical staff involved who will feel ethically unable to deliver the policy as originally designed[3].

Explicitly moral-based policy analysis which focuses on policy issues that 'connect directly (and often exclusively) with the abstract questions about justice and rights that moral and political philosophy have traditionally emphasized' may neglect the way that less obvious values conflict can affect policy success (Thacher and Rein, 2004). They argue that this values analysis has become so closely associated with abstract moral philosophy that researchers have ignored the less explicit values which can influence policy implementation and which can be found, he suggests, in administrative reports, practitioner writings and journals of applied ethics. I will argue that this neglect has extended further to a failure to recognise those values embedded in the cultural beliefs and behaviors of implementation actors and policy recipients.

In some circumstances it is a simple matter to identify that there is a clash between the assumptive worlds of the policy-maker and those actors at the point of delivery. A potential difficulty may be acknowledged and anticipated and steps subsequently put in place to ameliorate the effects. There are however other categories of less

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[3] The damage which can be caused to policy delivery by conflicting moral values is clearly illustrated by research into the introduction during the 1990s of AIDS education into the school curriculum in parts of the USA. The contentious nature of the subject matter provoked a range of values conflicts. As a result, once the degree of disparity in implementation became apparent, the bill was rescinded five years after its introduction. Implementation analysts concluded that whatever the original delivery intentions, it was implemented according to teachers' own 'personal values, views of teacher roles and their interpretation of the mandate itself' (Huerta, 1996: 1-15).

obviously controversial policies which nonetheless provoke a degree of values conflict which could impact on delivery success. This would be seen particularly where the policy-creators have a very different values-culture set from actors at delivery level, for example where those who are targeted as the policy recipients are the most disadvantaged.

In Scotland, failure to recognise the negative impact of values differences on policy has historical precedents. Writing pre-devolution, Raab argues that 'the education policy community had been held together and had been able to act cohesively because of an unchallenging acceptance of the Scottish myth about education, democracy and meritocracy that 'discounted the experience of a major part of the population, especially *the working class of the industrial urban West* [my italics] (Raab, 1992: 83).

Examples of this failure to engage with the 'working class' culture of some policy recipients can also be seen in health policies in Scotland too. Campaigns to reverse the trend of increased formula-feeding of babies have proved successful in terms of overall figures, but there has been less success among the most disadvantaged (Britten et al, 2001). Those mothers who have continued to choose to bottle feed their babies, have done so for reasons which may have nothing to do with their budgets or even nutrition and everything to do with cultural pressures (Baumslag and Michels, 1995; Palmer, 2000). Policy designers who assumed that successfully disseminating evidence about comparative health or even economic benefits to formula-feeding mothers would produce the desired results were perhaps unaware of the perceptual screen through which breastfeeding was viewed, particularly by the poorest sections of society. Implementation rates were improved when the campaign focus was changed to acknowledge that the assumptive worlds of those mothers were at odds with the dominant culture of the policy creators (Interview,Warren, 2004).

A wide-ranging review of health policy initiatives in Canada found that government information campaigns which sought to change health-damaging behaviours had been least successful in changing behaviour among people with lower levels of

education and income, who also had least control over their lives. Campaigns, which had initially appeared to be succeeding, had eventually turned out to be least effective among the most disadvantaged populations, and even "had the unintended effect of increasing health inequality between socioeconomic levels". It concluded that those health issues, such as exercise, nutrition and smoking, which were 'integrally linked to culture and socio-economic status, were those which were most difficult to address' (Lyons and Langille 2000:33).

Further research demonstrates that policy which has sought to change other 'health-related behaviours' (smoking and teenage pregnancy) through education has been least successful among those where the behaviour has been most prevalent - that is the most disadvantaged. Demonstrating clear causal links between behaviours and poor health does not acknowledge or tackle the values system which, despite health risks, is accepting of these behaviours (Osler et al, 2000; Vlaicu, 2002) and is clearly in conflict with the assumptive worlds of the policy elites which have rejected these behaviours as unacceptable.

Given the focus of this thesis on values and cultural discord in the delivery of a policy which was designed to promote healthy eating, theories on the relationship between social class and food values offer useful insight.

There is a large body of evidence which demonstrates a connection between low incomes and poor diet and consequent health disparities between the advantaged and the poor (Blackman, et al, 2006). Research shows, however, that decisions about diet are not just based on income, but that a range of social and cultural factors influence our food behaviours. The cost and availability of healthy food is of course a factor in diet, but food choices are also influenced by education, cooking skills, family tradition, generational habits, parental and peer pressure, self-identity and a desire to conform within a community (Counihan and van Esterik, 1997; Rugkasa et al, 2008; Gregg, Ellahi and Cox, 2008). If food values of religious and ethnic groups - different from the dominant culture - are valid considerations in policy design which seeks to change behaviour, then I would argue that the food values associated with

socio-economic groups which are equally removed from the mainstream are also relevant.

In Scotland research in a disadvantaged area of Glasgow in 2006 identified a perception among young teenage girls that vegetables and salads were 'for posh people' (Cooper, 2006). This epitaph was applied indiscriminately and with equal disdain to everyone from teachers who were part of their daily lives to the more distant but equally 'other' politicians and civil servants who were attempting to influence their eating habits. The numbers involved were too small to extrapolate to the wider population but this perception of food choices being connected to self-identification as a member of a 'cultural group' (in this case *not* posh) are reflected in research elsewhere.

In the USA, evidence suggests that diet choice by disenfranchised groups can be influenced by a reluctance to give up their own heritage and accede to the food choices of what was perceived of as a separate and dominant culture (Delores 2004; Wilson, Musham and McClellan, 2004). Although this research was only conducted among two ethnic group (African-Americans and Mexican-Americans in the USA), it could be argued that a desire to maintain a particular cultural identity may contribute towards unhealthy eating patterns in UK communities which see themselves as similarly separately existing from the dominant culture.   Evidence to support this theory can be found in extensive research conducted by Ireland's Public Health Institute into food cultures (Kearney et al, 2008; Rugaska et al, 2008.). While food prices had the greatest influence on food choices among the poorest communities, it was found that food behaviours were also seen as a means of 'expressing identity, including one's value system' with a 'strong social and cultural basis' (Rugaska et al, 2008: 8-9).

It is not just the poor whose food behaviours may indicate expressions of identity, value systems, culture and so on. Other social classes and communities also have distinct food behaviours which are different from those of the mainstream or may be in conflict with those of the policy-making elite. However an additional and

particular cultural factor which may contribute to conflicting food behaviours of different classes is a direct consequence of low-income insecurity.

> The middle-class habitus is defined by a future-oriented expectation in relation to 'acceptable' food and eating practices and conceptualisations relating to a 'respectable' body size and healthy lifestyle. In contrast, the working-class habitus seems underpinned by the construction of 'good-enough' practices relating to diet, weight and health, with these 'good-enough' practices being driven by a focus on more pressing concerns about everyday life.
>
> (Wills et al, 2009:11-12)

Wills' research concluded that 'experiences and conceptions relating to diet, weight and health are driven by class-based distinctions and tastes' (2009: 15). This suggests that policy which seeks to effectively change lifestyles or behaviour must be formulated by those fully cognisant of the influence of cultural values on that behaviour – whether that influence is economic, class or identity-driven. Policy makers and implementers who do not contextualise the different reasons for that behaviour manifesting in different environments may fail because their overview is being clouded by their perceptual screens.

These theories about food behaviours and class suggest the hypothesis that differences between the assumptive worlds of policy makers and the most disadvantaged may be more prevalent and more damaging in those instances where policy seeks to impose changes in behaviour which has originated within a culture of poverty. Thus, policy delivery will suffer in those circumstances where policy designers have not acknowledged that the values and culture of the poor may be different from those of the dominant culture, and have failed to make allowances to accommodate those differences in the same way that they have for other more obvious minority groups. Testing that hypothesis will be one of the central purposes of this study. The examples given support this preposition. In those instances where the behaviour the policy seeks to change is part of the culture of a disenfranchised community, there is unlikely to be values-harmony with the community of policy-makers.

In conclusion it is suggested the choice of mode of governance can most keenly impact upon delivery success. Policy delivery in areas of specific policy such as health and education (very often those which are concerned with behaviour change), particularly benefits from what Gray and Jenkins (2001) call a 'communion' mode of governance - a delivery model described as being founded upon an appeal,

> to common values and creeds […] the legitimacy for actions lie in their consistency with the understandings, protocols and guiding values of a shared frame of reference'.
> (Gray and Jenkins, 2001:221)

Although the values which may inform policy creation are unlikely to be shared by all those involved in implementation – either by the actors at different points in the delivery chain or by the recipients themselves – it can be concluded from the literature that the delivery of behaviour-changing policy may rely more heavily than other types of policy, on values harmony – and that this may manifest itself in different ways. But the evidence suggests that this values disjuncture can be anticipated and prepared for by those involved in policy formulation. Effective communication and an acknowledgement of the way in which actors and communities may use discretion are both tools which can be used to both identify and ameliorate the potential problems of values conflict.

A failure to take the possibility of values discord into account would seem to have the potential to manifest itself in two policy-damaging ways. A policy aimed at the general population which failed to take account of potential values conflicts within disadvantaged sub-groups could be evaluated as succeeding on a macro level. However the policy's failure to engage the most disadvantaged may have increased the discrepancy between groups of recipients. Secondly, if the actors at the point of delivery either do not share, or have been inadequately educated, in the ethos of the policy, then implementation may be sabotaged either by accident or design.

Chapter 2

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

As has been shown, the gap between policy aspirations and the reality of policy delivery is a recurring theme of policy studies literature. This thesis explores the role played by values and value conflicts in creating that gap, why and how it occurs, and the impact it has had on policy implementation. In order to do so, the research traces the role of values in detail on one policy path from design to delivery. Previous research has explored the effects of values conflict at different points of the policy process. This research examines the influence of cultural values on actors throughout the policy process, including those of the recipients at the point of delivery.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The literature suggests that value conflicts may be found between the different levels in the policy process from policy formulation, through implementation to delivery. If actors in the implementation chain do not share the values that inspired the policy, they may undermine, or may simply be unaware of, its objectives. The greater the number of policy levels, the greater the likelihood is that value conflicts will occur. The research therefore maps the values of actors at different levels in the Hungry for Success (HfS) programme, seeking to identify the different points at which values disjuncture may occur.

The approach adopted in this research was to divide the HfS policy path into three sections: the Scottish Government, where the policy was formulated; the local authority responsible for implementation and the schools; where HfS would be delivered to its recipients. The main purpose was to establish whether there were value disjunctures in the policy chain, and, also, what effects these had on

implementation. The cultural values of those actors at different levels in the policy chain may partly reflect those of policy communities in the working environment. The research therefore seeks to identify values 'communities' across the implementation process.

The research postulates that the consequences of value disjunctures in policy implementation will depend on the amount of discretion exercised by actors at different points in the policy chain. It has been argued that discretion at the 'street level' of policy delivery may help to adapt policy to the cultural values of the recipients, thereby mitigating value conflicts. Moreover, actors with discretion in exercising their role in the policy process may feel more 'ownership' over policy and therefore make more effort to ensure that it is enacted as originally intended. On the other hand, actors who do not share the values of the policy may use the discretion they have been given to subvert or sabotage the policy rather than deliver it. The research investigates this issue, asking whether actors at each level of the policy chain had the discretion to influence or modify HfS policy and, if so, whether that discretion was used to adapt policy constructively or to subvert the policy. In so doing it is alert to the distinction between formal (or official) discretion and informal discretion, where actors – especially at 'street level' - are able to effect policy mutation.

It has been argued that the policy attitudes of actors across the policy chain may be influenced by the way in which that policy is introduced and explained (Gray and Jenkins, 2001). Effective communication has been shown to be crucial in successful delivery. The research has therefore examined the patterns of communication between actors involved in policy formulation, operationalisation and delivery, seeking to establish a clear trajectory backwards and forwards between the schools, the local authority which directly runs the schools, and the government. For example, policy designers were asked whether they had anticipated areas of potential values conflict and, if so, whether processes were put in place to bring actors on board by providing education about the values, objectives and methods of the HfS programme

Had all the actors in the policy chain been inducted into the 'understandings, protocols and guiding values' of the policy?

Social Class and Value Disjunctures in Policy Implementation

While the broad purpose of the research was to investigate the role of values and value disjuncture in the policy process, a particular objective was to test the impact of conflicting social class values on policy implementation. The overarching hypothesis of the research is that value disjuncture in policy implementation will be particularly sharp at the point of delivery where policy recipients are located in a disadvantaged socio-economic milieu that does not subscribe to the values that inform the policy. The literature suggests that cultural values about food and health are heavily influenced by social class (Lyons and Langille 2000; Osler et al, 2000; Palmer, 2000; Vlaicu, 2002; Gregg, Ellahi and Cox, 2008; Rugkasa et al, 2008). We might therefore expect to find that the intensity of value conflict in HfS implementation, and consequently the performance of the programme, varies between different socio-economic milieux, with the most severe conflicts arising among the socially disadvantaged. The Scottish Government framed HfS policy as part of its social justice agenda. Its capacity to reach school children in this social group is therefore critical to its success. Conflict between HfS and the food values of the disadvantaged might undermine the purpose of the programme.

The research is designed to test this hypothesis by investigating the effect of variation in social class on the intensity of value conflict and its impact on HfS implementation. The selection of schools was designed to capture variation in the socio-economic environment in which HfS was delivered. Three primary schools were used as case study units on the basis of the ability of each to represent a different socio-economic demographic. Anonymised demographic details of the three schools can be seen in Appendix B. The eligibility of school pupils for free school

meals (FSM) is an accepted indicator of poverty[4] and is viewed by policy makers as a stable indication of disadvantaged pupils (Chowdry et al, 2010). The percentage of Scottish primary school pupils eligible for FSM can be seen in the table below:

The average number of pupils eligible for FSM in primary schools	
In Scotland	17.5 %
In Glasgow	32.5 %
School A	7.9 %
School B	37.5 %
School C	56.6 %

 (Figures from: Scottish Government, June, 2009; Glasgow City Council, 2009).

These different demographics, demonstrated by the contrasting FSM figures above provided an opportunity for comparing HfS delivery within different cultural/values frameworks. Thus the selection of these particular schools allows the research to test the proposition that the disjuncture of values between policy makers and recipients is likely to be more pronounced in disadvantaged schools.

Backward Mapping

One of the distinctive features of this research was that it included policy recipients – the school children - as participants in the policy process. The school dinner hall was therefore a key locus for evaluating the HfS policy process. Like every other actor in the policy chain, the children themselves have a set of values, conscious or

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[4] FSM eligibility is means tested. Currently, in order to be eligible, a child's parent(s) must be in receipt of one of the following: • Income Support, • Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance • Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999• Child Tax Credit, provided that their annual income is less than £14,155 (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) and they are not in receipt of Working Tax credit – The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit.

otherwise, derived from their social background and reflecting the cultural values of their family and wider community. As such, the decisions they make about whether or not to embrace the policy being offered are themselves values-based. As policy recipients the children have the ultimate sanction in exercising discretion as to whether or not to allow successful policy delivery. Their decisions as to whether or not to embrace the new patterns of eating introduced by HfS would ultimately decide the success or failure of policy delivery. The school was therefore the key focus of the research.

In focusing on the school, the research used the methodology of backward mapping. The approach begins by understanding the behaviours and values of 'stakeholders' beginning at the point of policy delivery and working backwards. Stakeholders here were both implementation actors and policy recipients. As recipients they had a vested interest in the delivery of policy that affects them, while as implementation actors they had the power to affect policy (Bryson, 1990). The 'backward mapping lens' thus focuses on the perceptions or assumptive world of the stakeholder (McLaughlin, 1987).

In turn, stakeholder behaviours and perceptions were placed in the context of the social or community environment. This kind of contextualisation helps to explain what influences behaviour (Elmore,1983; Maynard-Moody and Musheno, 2004). This is particularly useful in research that seeks to understand the impact of values and culture on policy. Backward mapping acknowledges that each and every actor may have the potential to mutate policy and so requires that the drivers for doing so be understood. By providing insights into the contexts that form behaviour, it is particularly effective in analysing behaviour-changing and education policy. It may also help to explain the role of the local actor and the use of discretion in decision-making (Recesso, 1999: 27-28). Following Elmore (1980: 604), the research is designed to identify the discretion of actors at each level of the policy chain to influence the behaviour of the policy and the resources required to do so.

The research was therefore designed using backward mapping to:

- Identify the behaviours which have generated the need for HfS.
- Identify food values and attitudes of policy makers and stakeholders at each level in the policy chain.
- Assess the performance of the policy at the point of delivery
- Map the process from the end point of delivery to Government level, again identifying actors and individuals at each level with the potential to shape policy, any ways in which they may do so, and critically, *why* they might do so.

Following the backward mapping approach, this research began at the level of the school. Localised observation could identify delivery challenges not obvious from statistical data. Starting with the schools allowed the data gathered at the point of delivery to inform research and shape the direction of inquiries at local authority and Scottish Government level.

Identifying Values

Identifying the values of policy actors throughout the policy process is key to understanding whether values conflict impacted on implementation success. Questions had to be asked about the broader context of healthy eating and their levels of understanding of barriers and facilitators for healthy eating. Throughout the policy chain, implementation actors were to be asked about both general health contexts, and invited to share information about their personal/domestic food behaviours including their food habits and eating patterns.

At the point of delivery in schools, actors were to be asked for their specific views on HfS. What did they know about HfS? Were actors supportive, neutral or in opposition to the policy? Was there evidence of conflicts of interest that might undermine effective HfS implementation? What and who did they think was responsible for poor eating habits among children? Why were poor eating habits an

issue for state intervention? All of the actors at this schools level would be engaged in the research process, including head teachers, general teachers, any staff involved in canteen duties, including teaching assistants, the canteen staff themselves and pupils.

The research sought to establish if different levels in the process co-existed with or cut across different education policy communities. Understanding the way in which these communities may inform the values of their members would in turn inform the research understanding of values harmony or conflict which might be uncovered.

Communication and Information

In what way were the ethos and objectives of the policy communicated to actors involved in its implementation and delivery? As mentioned, the extent to which actors may or may not be informed about policy may influence the way in which it is implemented. What was the operationalisation *intent*? Did the original policy include plans formally to educate involved implementation actors about policy intent and context? To what degree were policy actors involved in formulating HfS? Were policy actors formally consulted about HfS? Were they given only information that was needed for implementation - *a need to know basis* - or was effort made to increase understanding of the reasons for the policy?   How adequately were actors briefed about the origins and intentions of HfS? Do actors feel they had input into formulation?

Discretion

What level of discretion did the respective actors exercise, and how might this impact on policy implementation? How flexible were funding guidelines? What kind of sanctions or rewards were teaching staff expected to employ, to persuade pupils to eat up? How rigidly enforced is portion control and meal content?

METHODOLOGY:
Operationalising the Research Questions

The specific nature of this topic had implications for the type of methodology employed. The research used a combination of methods as appropriate at the different levels of the policy process: interviews, focus groups, observation, and documentary research. The overall framework was strongly influenced by the backward mapping techniques referred to above and by the literature on street level bureaucrats, which emphasises the need to contextualise behaviour by exploring what influences that behaviour (Elmore 1983; Maynard-Moody and Musheno, 2004).

The Case Study Method

It was not practical to attempt formal sampling research intended to be statistically representative of all schools in Scotland, or even of one local authority. A social survey which would study a 'large number of cases, but only gather a relatively small amount of data' (Becker and Bryman, 2004:254) would not have provided the richness of material needed to understand something as complex as the influence of cultural values on behaviours. The successful outcome of the interviews depended very much on the establishment of trust between the interviewer and subject, something which required time and focus not easily available in survey methodologies. Case studies encourage a freedom of exploration to examine the shifts and dynamics of the policy process which the rigid design associated with survey methodologies would not allow. The descriptive case study method offered the opportunity to explore the HfS policy process with an eye to the detail which would enhance the understanding of the role of values in delivery.

A key strength of this method is that it uses multiple techniques (In this study, focus groups, interviews, documentary analysis, observations) and a variety of sources of evidence to produce a rich analysis of each case. This method has the advantage of

allowing for in-depth examination and has a proven track record in enhancing analysis and understanding of social policy (Bryman, 2004; Gerring, 2004: Yin, 2009). Case studies allow for data collected by a variety of methods (Interviews, documents etc) to be collated and used as the basis for triangulation. Triangulation is a cross-check through different modes of inquiry.

> If interviews, observations and documents agree, the evaluator gains confidence that the information is right. It is assumed that different data collection methods are biased in different ways, and if they agree, the evidence is strong and if they don't fully agree, their idiosyncratic biases will cancel each other out.
>
> (Weiss 1998: 265)

In this instance, further insights into implementation areas were provided within the interview format because each of the interviewees were to be encouraged to supply their individual perception of implementation events. If 'quantitative and qualitative studies can mutually confirm each other ... [to produce] ... more robust findings' (Becker and Bryman, 2004: 98-99) then it should be considered that individual interviews with disparate actors may also offer mutual confirmation.

Case studies have been criticised for their lack of rigidity, employing as they may, a variety of research techniques, including documents, archival records, interviews, observations and so on (May, 2002) . However in this instance the fluidity of the case study method allowed multiple themes to emerge and for culture and values dynamics to be fully explored in a way which could not be replicated with, for example, the formality of a survey methodology.

There is an argument that the purpose of case studies is to 'capture cases in their uniqueness, rather than use them as a basis for wider empirical or theoretical conclusions' (Becker and Bryman, 2004: 255). In this instance the case studies were a source of empirical inquiry that explored an area of policy delivery with a view to illuminating the wider perspective of potential values conflict in policy delivery where cultural differences may not have been fully acknowledged or accommodated.

As has been stated the schools were selected on the basis that they would represent the kind of contrasting environments in which HfS was delivered. They were selected to test the hypothesis that there might be a greater potential for cultural values to impact negatively on policy success in those areas where the prevailing cultural mores might be most different from those of the policy creators. Given the middle class focus on the benefits of healthy eating and the accepted links between poverty and poor diet, schools with different demographics were chosen to explore whether different perceptions about food culture and values associated with class might influence policy success. Primary schools were selected rather than secondary schools, because of the increased influences in terms of food choices which come into play with older pupils when alternatives to the schools' canteens are more easily accessible.

In terms of focusing on cultural values it was also important to reduce the influence of other potential variables between the schools. Given the diverse nature of Scotland's local authorities and the different methods of HfS implementation employed among them, it was considered important that the influence of differences in delivery methods was not allowed to distract from the core exploration of values contrast. For that reason each of the three schools is within the jurisdiction of the same local authority. The selection of three schools within one local authority, Glasgow, also influenced the choice of that city as the case study for the local authority level research. Given that part of the analysis aimed to understand the relationship and communication channels between the implementation levels, it was important that the case studies allowed for the identification of direct pathways to and from the schools, the local authority and the government.

Interviews

Interviews and focus groups represent a major source for this study.

The aim of all the interviews was to provide 'thick' as opposed to 'thin' description.

> [Thin] ... simply reports facts, independent of intentions or circumstances. A thick description, in contrast, gives the context of an experience, states the intentions and meanings that organized the experience, and reveals the experiences as a process.
>
> (Denzin,2000:505)

The interviewees were made aware that there were no 'right or wrong' answers; they were not being tested on their powers of recollection, and their perception of events was of at least as much relevance and interest as their memories of when and where events took place.

The interview design incorporated the advice given by Rossman and Rallis that experts would respond best to 'inquires about broad topics and to intelligent, provocative and open-ended questions that allow them the freedom to use their knowledge and imagination' (2003: 134).

There were concerns that some of the interviewees might be uncomfortable discussing their personal experiences (food behaviours) outside of their professional lives. They were each warned before the interview began about the broad range of the subject matter and given the opportunity to confine their answers to questions about their working lives. No-one opted to do so.

The establishment of rapport in focused interviews is of paramount importance (May, 2002). Given the broad range of actors interviewed, it was essential that the way in which the researcher used language was flexible to the different needs of the participants. Legard, Keegan and Ward state that 'it is important to be sensitive to the language and terminology used by people and to mirror it as far as possible' (2006:155). The use of official, academic or bureaucratic language would impede some of the interviews. However, to have attempted to match the colloquial language

of the children in the focus groups or of some of the schools' employees could have been interpreted as patronising and the ability to employ a flexible use of terminology and of general vocabulary was essential.

Interviews reveal accounts of events that suit the personal, ideological and political agendas of the interviewee (Richards, 1996: 200). In some situations this may cause difficulties in assessing a fact-based narrative, but in terms of this thesis, the exposure of values-influence added to the richness of the data. In this study the personal agendas of the interviewees were an important part of understanding the policy process.

The likelihood of objectivity being compromised was also minimised, first by the large number and variety of actors interviewed, each, no doubt, with their own values-based agenda, and secondly by the availability of extensive documentation on many aspects of the process. Interviews need to be used in conjunction with other sources to 'check the integrity of, or extend, inferences drawn from the data' (Ritchie, 2006: 43). This triangulation of sources, 'comparing data from interviews, observation and documented accounts' contributes towards 'confirmation' of findings (Ritchie and Lewis, 2006: 275).

Interview Subjects

Semi-structured interviews were carried out in three stages, beginning at the point of delivery at schools level, covering local politicians and council employees at local authority level and ending with the policy elites, ministers, MSPs, civil servants and members of the HfS expert panel, at government level.

At schools level, six senior members of teaching staff were interviewed. Four were interviewed at their request in groups of two. Nineteen catering staff (three catering managers and 16 catering assistants), were interviewed. The catering assistants were interviewed in fluid groups, which changed in form as staff left and arrived to fulfil work obligations. Four requested additional one-to-one interviews.

At local authority level, interviews were conducted with five local councillors and with eight council employees. The majority of local authority actors were interviewed as individuals although some requested they be interviewed with a colleague. This pairing of interviewees can be of value when 'investigating subjects in which dialogue with others may play an important part, or where two people form a naturally occurring unit ... [ ] ... as colleagues' (Ritchie and Lewis, 2006: 37).

At Government level interviews were conducted with six MSPs, including former ministers, one former MSP and four civil servants. Six members of the HfS Expert panel were interviewed. All of these interviews were conducted as one-to-one interviews.

The elite interviews were conducted in the form of individual recorded semi-structured interviews, in some cases with follow-up queries by e-mail or telephone. These individual actors were identified for interview on the basis of their direct engagement with either HfS policy creation or implementation, or on the basis of their specialist knowledge of the subject. Interviews were conducted both with civil servants and politicians who had been involved contemporaneously with the origins of HfS and with those who were subsequently involved in its implementation. The politicians interviewed were from across the party political spectrum. They were considered to be elite or expert because they were 'well-informed, prominent and influential' in their spheres.(Rossman and Rallis, 2003). Fifty one interviews were conducted between November 2008 and November 2009.

All of the interviews were recorded. Modern technology has reduced concerns about the necessity of tape-changing and breakdowns interrupting the flow of a conversation. Other concerns about the tape 'adversely affecting the relationship between interviewer and interviewee' and inhibiting responses were outweighed by the many advantages. (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2003). The interviewer is able to focus on questioning and listening and is able to produce an accurate and unbiased record. Permission for recording the interview was sought and granted before every

interview. Given the large number of interviews conducted, their transcription or notes from the recordings, were made as quickly as possible after each interview to ensure that nuances of context were not lost.

Focus Groups

Individual interviews can offer clearer control and closer communication for research purposes (Morgan, 1997), but the evidence is that focus groups can be an especially effective way of conducting research with young children, 'a valuable method for eliciting children's views and experience' (Morgan et al, 2002). Until the 1980s, the focus group was used primarily with adult participants, but over the last thirty years there has been considerable literature to support the view that this research method is especially effective when dealing with children and young people. The validity of one-to-one interviews with children has been challenged because of evidence which suggested that younger people may be more likely to tailor responses to suit the interviewer (Donaldson, 1978; Heary and Hennessy, 2002). Focus groups may help to overcome those concerns by reducing the impact of the dominance of the adult-child relationship made explicit in a one-to-one interview (Lewis, 1992: Heary and Hennessy, 2002).

> In a group situation with familiar peers, pupils can prompt one another with information ... [children] ... are likely to feel more supported, relaxed and confident than in an individual interview with an unfamiliar adult.
> (Frederickson et al, 2004: 42)

A meta-analysis of studies which had used children in focus groups to conduct research into health policy found them to be an effective method of collecting data from young people, with distinct advantages over individual interviews (Heary and Hennessey, 2002). There can be problems with dominant or reticent participants, but these can be overcome by 'taking pains to emphasise the value of hearing from all the participants, perhaps employing humour' and by carefully forming questions to encourage open responses (Finch and Lewis, 2006: 183-84).

Heary and Hennessey's research recommendations about ethics criteria, groups of mixed gender, group size, interview length and benefits of friendship groups (2002:52) were used as the basis for the focus group design. By meeting the ethical and organisational criteria outlined in the literature, it was intended that the focus group would 'stimulate conversation and the expression of views independent of the moderator/facilitator'and, in doing so, 'obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive non-threatening environment' (Krueger, 1988:18). A further feature of focus groups which was useful in this study of child behaviours and values-influence was 'the spontaneity which arises from their stronger social context'. The interaction between the children becomes more influential than the interaction with the researcher and their use of language, their 'emphasis and general framework of understanding is more spontaneously on display' (Finch and Lewis, 2006:171).

One hundred and forty-six school children were involved either as part of invited small focus groups of between five and eight children or as individual interviewees, at their request. The groups were a mixture of boys and girls of different ages between five and 12 years old and proportionately representative of the numbers who took school dinners and those who had packed lunches. Additional information was collected because of one school's request that a 'pupil drop-in centre' be held over a lunchtime to encourage pupil engagement. Twelve children attended that session and expressed their views on school dinners. Seven individual interviews resulted from an invitation at the end of each focus group for children to continue the conversation privately with the interviewer if they wished to do so.

The children who attended the focus groups were selected by senior education staff, who cooperated by choosing children (or inviting volunteers) from among those who best represented a cross section of pupils both in terms of lunchtime habits (schools dinners, home dinners, packed lunches) and in terms of behaviours (articulate, inarticulate, shy, rowdy and so on). There were initial meetings with all senior staff to emphasise the need for a variety of pupils to be invited to take part and

to overcome the head teachers' initial instinct to present pupils who would portray the school in the best light. The nature of the research generated interest and enthusiasm among staff and pupils who were keen to contribute.

Observation

Observations were carried out at each school over consecutive weekday lunchtimes. At each school the children had been told that the researcher would be in their dinner hall for that week. The lunchtime observations were carried out from different perspectives[5] over a period of about two weeks within each school, with between six and nine separate sessions taking place in each school. On each occasion the researcher made herself known to canteen and supervising staff, then positioned herself at first in an unobtrusive area, where she could view the transactions between catering assistants and pupils.

Observation 'is a fundamental and highly important method in all qualitative inquiry. It is used to discover complex interactions in natural settings' (Marshall and Rossman, 2006: 99). Observations are often used in conjunction with interviews so, 'there can be understanding of how events or behaviours naturally arise as well as reconstructed perspectives on their occurrence' (Ritchie and Lewis, 2006: 37-38). In terms of this area of the research, observation was a 'particularly useful approach' because it allowed the researcher to study a process involving interaction between several individuals (Ritchie and Lewis, 2006, 35).

However, as a method of data collection it remains vulnerable to the imprint of the researcher and there is the concern that those who know they are being observed may act differently (Weiss, 1998). In this instance the atmosphere of general excitement and noise of a school dinner hall made it easy for the researcher to 'blend into the

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5 The use of the word 'perspective' is literal in that the observations were conducted from different physical places within the dining rooms. One lunchtime observation would be from the pupils' perspective as they selected their food, another session from the catering staff's perspective as they presented the food, another as they disposed of their trays and so on.

background' and remain unobtrusive. Field notes were kept at the time of the observations and transcribed into fuller notes at the end of each observation session.

Documentary Materials

Documentary analysis ' involves the study of existing documents, either to understand their substantive content or to illuminate deeper meanings which may be revealed by their style of coverage' (Ritchie, 2006:35). Every case study is likely to require the explicit use of documents, (Yin, 2008:102). They provide a useful check on information gathered through interview and can resolve questions thrown up when interview accounts conflict, (Weiss, 1998: 260), although the documents need to be assessed in a way which will reveal what is included or excluded, where the emphasis may fall and why, and the role of the state in this difficult policy arena' (Becker and Bryman, 2004: 293). The usefulness of documents in providing mutual confirmation in triangulation (Becker and Bryman, 2004: 98) has been discussed earlier.

HfS generated a useful and extensive library of published documents which provided contemporaneous accounts of the wider political agenda at the time of HfS creation and initial implementation, and also of its specific content and intent. The official record of Scottish Government parliamentary proceedings was used, as were the recorded minutes of committee meetings. Data also came from the records of speeches given by relevant ministers outside parliament.

There was additional analysis of HfS implementation advice documents distributed from Government to schools and local authorities and from within local authorities to schools. Speeches and papers prepared by the then First Minister Donald Dewar were also helpful, particularly in understanding the extent of the emphasis attached by him and his Government to the concept of Social justice.

There was additional documentary data supplied by the schools in the form of parental surveys on food and nutrition in general and on HfS menus in particular.

A general concern about the reliability and validity of documents is based on the potential bias of the document's author and of the way in which they may be open to subjective interpretation by the researcher (May, 2002: 176). In this study the documents were able to supply valuable timelines and narratives about the origins and creation of HfS and reports of formal communications between the different implementation levels.

Ethics

There were two factors which made it essential for the highest ethical standards to be employed. First, there was the involvement of hundreds of children both as interviewees and as the subjects of observation. Secondly the overwhelming majority of the adults involved required absolute guarantees of anonymity because of the potentially sensitive nature of what was being said about their places of work, employers and colleagues. Many of the interviewees spoke freely about their participation in 'bending' various rules to which their employers would have expected them to adhere. Others were critical of their colleagues and of their employers. Some of the politicians were critical of policies supported by colleagues or their political parties.

Any research involving children requires particular ethical awareness and sensitivity both in terms of acquiring the necessary and many-levelled permissions necessary for such interviews, and also in terms of gaining the confidence of the interviewee and ensuring anonymity.

All of the requirements of the University of Strathclyde's ethics committee and of the department of Government's ethics committee were conformed with. Permission for conducting research within schools was first sought from the local authority's education department which then delegated responsibility for allowing access to children to the heads of each school. Two of the schools then forwarded letters offering parents the opportunity to remove their child from the research process.

One school additionally arranged a parents' council meeting with the researcher to express any concerns. The researcher was also directed to attend a school assembly where the purpose and methods of the research were explained to the children. The parents of only seven children withheld permission for their child to participate. The third school took the decision to allow full access without any parent consultation on the basis that the history of any response to school communications was very poor.

Marshall and Rossman suggest that 'ethical considerations are generic – [requiring] informed consent and protecting participant's anonymity – as well as situation-specific'. Their recommendation is that an ability to 'continuously evaluate and construct behaviour' (2006: 82) was essential. This was especially important with the children in the focus groups, where the interviewer had first to ensure that individual contributions did not reveal anything which could cause the other children to feel uncomfortable or leave the interviewee vulnerable and then because of the need 'to be alert to signs of discomfort' (Ritchie and Lewis, 2006: 68).

The issue of anonymity also had implications for many of the adults interviewed, especially those who had agreed to discuss issues concerning their terms and places of employment. There is a 'duty to protect the identities [...] to safeguard information that is given in confidence and to ensure that it is not inappropriately used' (Becker and Bryman, 2004: 347). Those working for the Government or local authority only agreed to speak freely on condition that they – and in particular, individual schools – could not be identified. Appropriate precautions were taken to ensure their confidentiality was protected. Interview tapes were anonymised and coded. References to schools and interviewees have been disguised. The data has been collected and stored in a way which preserves confidentiality.

Chapter 3

POLICY CONCEPTION AND DESIGN

> To ensure that all clients' nutritional needs are met it is helpful to provide foods that are familiar to them. When planning menus and selecting dishes it is essential that their specific cultural and religious requirements are considered in addition to the need to provide healthy choices for everyone.
> (Eating for health: a diet action plan for Scotland, 1996: 26)

> There has to be a recognition at Government level that there is no point in developing policy that won't work"
> (Interview, manager, Cordia,September, 2009)

This chapter examines the HfS policy process from its point of conception at Government level to policy design to operationalisation and eventual evolution into legislation.

The policy process: The origins of HfS will be established by examining the political, practical and ideological drivers which led to its creation. Their relative significance in shaping policy will be identified and particular attention will be paid to whether the concept of social justice, the importance of which was identified in the introduction, was given practical exposition in the operationalisation of the policy.

Values and culture: To what extent did cultural divisions impact on the policy design? The evidence indicates that cultures/values disjuncture between different levels in the policy process can impede successful delivery, as well as influence the design shape. It has been already suggested that most damage may be done when no accommodation has been made to ameliorate cultural gaps between recipients and the policy makers. This chapter identifies the cultural influences on the policy design

and the way in which cultural divisions may have influenced eventual operationalisation.

Communication; the importance of effective communication throughout the policy process has been illustrated. Ideas and concepts must be clearly communicated at the earliest stages of policy design and effective strategies for communication between all the actors involved in policy creation must be in place. The operationalisation design must also include provision for setting up effective communication for evaluation, monitoring and feedback on the policy as well as ensuring that all actors involved in implementation understand the nature of their individual roles. This chapter examines to what extent provision was made to allow effective communication to take place.

Backward mapping: The previous chapter suggested that using backward mapping as an aid to policy design could be useful in identifying the kind of potential values and cultural conflicts with which this thesis is concerned. This chapter will examine to what extent the tools of backward mapping were utilised in designing HfS.

Social Justice

The role of social justice is particularly relevant in the context of this thesis because of the evidence it provides about the ways in which culture and values may impact upon the policy process. It should be reiterated that the concept was at the ideological heart of HfS from its inception. Social justice was an ideological flagship launched by Scotland's new Government and one to which all policies were expected to defer (Dewar, 1999). Details of the Labour majority's Social justice strategy were to be published within a few weeks of the first parliamentary debate and the strategy was intended to underpin the fabric of all the legislature activities which were to follow in the Parliamentary session ahead.

This agenda, which ambitiously sought to redress the social, health and educational disadvantages of the poorest, was not introduced as mere window dressing for the

purpose of political appeasement, or as some kind of decorative add-on. Scotland's First Minister had placed social justice at the core of the new administration and HfS was conceived as a policy which would address health and economic inequality (Dewar, 1999; O'Neill, 2003; Interview, Deacon, Oct, 2009). The consensus among the policymakers was that the health of all children could benefit from being given the opportunity to enjoy equally healthy lunchtime meals and that the administration of free school meals should be redesigned to remove the potential stigma attached to those who were eligible for them (Interviews: Deacon, Oct, 2009; Civil servant A, Oct, 2008; Civil servant B, Jul, 2009; MSPs A, B and C Oct, 2009). The connection between HfS and social justice was made explicit when the Minister for the new social justice department stood alongside colleagues from Health and Education to publicly launch the formation of the HfS expert panel (HfS, 2003: 15). The panel was convened to provide Ministers with a fully developed strategy for setting nutritional standards for school meals across Scotland and to eliminate any stigma attached to taking free school meals (HfS, 2003: 16).

As a concept, social justice may be interpreted in different ways. For First Minister Donald Dewar, social justice was the 'first principle' of his new Government. Social justice would bring an end to the social exclusion of those sections of society denied the chance to fulfil their potential. It would address poverty of attainment, of aspiration and opportunity and tackle inequalities of education and health (Dewar,1997 ; Alexander, 2005).

Much of the theoretical debate about the pursuit of social justice focuses on whether it can best be achieved through redistribution or recognition. If some forms of social injustice result from cultural as well as well as from economic differences, how are those differences best addressed? Is it about removing economic inequality through redistribution or about the recognition of the different needs of different cultures and ensuring that those differences are accommodated in a way which affords them equal opportunity?

Although not discussed in explicit terms of recognition versus redistribution, that debate lay at the heart of the decision by the expert panel, as noted earlier, not to make any special allowances for the most disadvantaged of their policy recipients – children from the poorest families. The recognition that the poorest children might have discrete needs was not disputed by anyone on the expert panel. Members had been given both the explicit remit to look at the question of stigma that might be attached to the consumption of free school meals and provided with the underlying framework that required policy to operate within a social justice context. The completed document was explicit in its acknowledgement of those needs:

> [these] plans are part of the Scottish Executive drive to improve the health and social wellbeing of children in Scotland. Poor diet is a significant contributor to Scotland's poor health record. Improving diet can make a major impact on health of children with beneficial outcomes for educational attainment and improved health in later life.
>
> (HfS, 2003: 15)

Panel members were agreed on the question of removing any potential stigma attached to the distribution of free school meals (Interviews, panel members, Sep and Oct, 2009). There was consensus that this group of children who were already recognised as economically disadvantaged by their eligibility for free tickets should not suffer any further kind of disadvantage in terms of exposure to their peers. Although their own research had indicated that any 'stigma' attached to being eligible for free school meals was not a significant factor in influencing uptake, the panel had nonetheless made several recommendations about how to eliminate any remaining administration systems which would allow these children to be identified by their peers. The provision of free meals to those in need would fulfil criteria for achieving social justice through redistribution and it was thought that the 'elimination of stigma' would enhance that process.

There was already an acceptance that Scottish schoolchildren should not be considered as a kind of amorphous mass. The panel report emphasises the

'importance of seeing children within the wider context of their lives'. This, the report stated,

> includes an understanding of their prior experience within pre-school services, the role of families and culture [and other influences] in developing their understanding of food and their eating habits.
>
> (HfS, 2003:54)

In keeping with the spirit of this recognition of cultural influences the panel identified different cultural groups whose particular needs had to be met within the new menus in order to stop them being disadvantaged by their ethnic or religious identities. Panel members had already identified the critical need for HfS to accommodate the needs of cultures which were recognised as obviously 'different' from the mainstream. There was consultation with representatives of religious groups and the final recommendations emphasise the need to recognise and accommodate cultural differences and 'faith communities' and quotes Hill, 1994, thus:

> Traditional foods and eating patterns of black and ethnic minority communities are part of the reality of the multiethnic and multicultural nature of British society today. Food is one of the most noticeable aspects of an individual's cultural identity and is closely linked with religious, social and economic circumstances. All over the world, societies have developed traditional eating patterns over centuries. They are based on foods available locally and influenced by cultural and religious beliefs. To produce a detailed and accurate profile of the food habits of each ethnic group in Britain is a very lengthy process and even then it would be unlikely to include all groups and variations within and between them.

Adding that, ' this statement is equally true for all faith communities' the HfS document goes on to stress that the needs of these communities should be met in a 'sensitive, informed and appropriate manner' (HfS, 2003: 62-63).

So there was a clear acknowledgement that recognition of the differences of some culturally distinctive groups was a way of achieving the desired 'social justice' for those groups. The difficulty here was in the labelling of the poorest families as only economically, rather than, in addition, culturally, different. The emphasis here was that these disadvantaged children be protected from a recognition of their poverty, and that all possible steps should be taken to remove any means by which they could be identified as eligible for free school meals. It was not that there was no recognition that these disadvantaged children were a group which might have a particular identity outwith that of shared economic disadvantage, but that there was never agreement that this shared cultural identity should give them the same privileges in terms of special allowances that the other culturally distinct groups were allowed. Panel members who argued that a more relaxed timetable or more flexible menu guidlelines would be needed to bring poor children from these different 'food cultures' on board, were told that such a move could be interpreted as patronising and that it was important to set a high bench mark to which all children could aspire (Interviews with panel members, September and October, 2009). The cultural divisions in the policy community which produced these different arguments are identified later in this chapter (p. 64).

The Policy Process

The Government which came to power in Scotland after devolution in 1999, took control in a country whose citizens were among the least healthy in the developed world. League tables of statistics showed that Scots suffered from worse health than almost all of their European neighbours. Tobacco and alcohol-related disease was prevalent and the country was on its way to having one of the highest levels of obesity of any OECD country[6]; only the USA and Mexico having higher levels. A rising number of children were obese or overweight and by the age of five years more than half of Scotland's children had dental disease, with a quarter of those

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6 Refers to those countries which are members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. In 2009, of the 30 member countries, 27 were designated as having 'high-income economies'. (www.oecd.org)

already having had at least one decayed tooth extracted (Towards a Healthier Scotland, 1999). Additionally the gap between the health of the most affluent and the most disadvantaged Scots was widening (Connolly, 2009).

It was against this background that the newly appointed ministers of state decided that the first formal debate of the devolved parliament would be on the subject of Scotland's health.

> We very consciously, as an administration, made that decision. This was a conscious and collective decision. The really big prize of devolution was to see if we could shed our tag as the 'Sick man of Europe' once and for all.
> (Interview, Senior Government Minister, Oct, 2009)

The new Health Minister Susan Deacon believed the decision to debate health at this point was a clear indication of the devolved Government's commitment to take the problem seriously:

> We had this big, chunky, real issue at the top of the agenda at the heart of the new institution, it was important.
> (Interview, Deacon, Oct, 2009)

That support for the issue came from the upper echelons of Government was emphasised by the exact nature of the proposed debate. The new Parliament would be asked to endorse the principles outlined in the White Paper *Towards a Healthier Scotland* – a report which had been authored by Scotland's new First Minister, Donald Dewar, in his pre-devolution role as Secretary of State.

The White Paper was accepted with a considerable degree of cross-party consensus. The only real division came in the form of some accusations by Labour MSPs that previous Conservative administrations had failed to acknowledge links between poverty and health (SPOR, 1999). In the context of HfS, this was relevant in that the schools dinner policy would be one of many developed under the auspices of addressing the issue of social justice,   Apart from that, perhaps predictable, difference of opinion, there was general agreement on the content of the document and Parliament endorsed the principles of Donald Dewar's paper below:

The White Paper proposed the development of:

- a coherent attack on health inequalities based on a comprehensive and co-ordinated use of health and other resources and agencies capable of influencing health
- a focused programme of initiatives aimed at improving and sustaining the health of children and young people
- major initiatives aimed at the prevention of Scotland's two major killing diseases, cancer and coronary heart disease - each of which accounts for approximately one-quarter of all deaths

Although this document did not refer specifically to school dinners, there were general references to health promotion in schools, to improvements in diet and the strongest possible emphasis on the new Government's commitment to redress health inequalities as part of its social justice[7] agenda.

> The Government agree that **tackling inequalities** [*sic*] has such importance that it should be regarded as an overarching aim.
>
> (Towards a Healthier Scotland, 1999:7)

The new Government had made a strong public commitment to tackling health problems and the first markers on the route map to HfS had been laid. Confident that the nation's health had been agreed upon as a priority of the new Parliament, and anxious not to waste time, Deacon and her parliamentary aides began to explore existing policy documents left by the previous administration. She decided that new and possibly time-consuming work was needed on National Health Service reform, but that an existing document on public health was sufficiently in tune with her views to serve as a loose framework for developing more general health policy. *Eating for Health, A Diet Action Plan for Scotland (*1996), which had also been cited in Dewar's White Paper, included a chapter on child health which identified the potentially vital role that could be played by schools in changing the nation's diet.

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7 The social justice initiative undertook to produce an annual report during the lifetime of the parliament to monitor the progression of equality objectives. The documents are available online at: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications.

Although Deacon dismissed some of the language of the report as 'too Conservative' in what she described as its 'value judgments' about the reasons for poor diet, she thought the document could provide pointers to help shape new policy development.

> I think it is an act of self-indulgence, although it is often done, for incoming ministers to sweep away what is on the floor for the sake of it. I inherited this and I used it… I did not want to lose a year with civil servants being sent off to write another policy document.
>
> (Interview, Deacon, Oct, 2009)

From a ministerial point of view, the creation of a healthy food policy would be evidence of the Government's stated commitment to a healthier Scotland and proof that continuing pronouncements about tackling the country's poor health were not merely rhetoric. The publication of several different documents at this time gave support to the significant potential of the role that schools could play in influencing the food choices of young people, with the focus turning to the potential role of school catering. The 2000 *Social Justice Annual Report*[8], outlined plans to invest £26 million to tackle health inequalities which emphasised the 'well-being of children as a priority' and which would include the introduction of fresh fruit and salad 'bars' in school dining rooms. *Our National Health: A plan for action, a plan for change, 2000,* identified schools as key stakeholders in securing the health of future generations. The *Programme for Government 2001* highlighted the need for schools to become 'health-promoting' environments, where positive messages about diet and exercise were part and parcel of the curriculum.

The year 2000 also saw the launch in April of the Food Standards Agency Scotland (FSAS) with a remit to work with the Government's Health Department to develop nutritional policy. The focus on schools as a potential conduit for the Government's healthy eating message came to a head at a conference in May 2001. *Food in Schools* (FiS) was set up with the full support of the Scottish Government [9] and

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8 See footnote 6.
9 The term used currently (2010) to denote the authority with responsibility for governing Scotland is 'Scottish Government' and for the sake of clarity and avoidance of confusion will be the term used to denote the instrument of government throughout this thesis. However, prior to devolution it was

organised by the Scottish Consumer Council, the Food Standards Agency and the Health Education Board. The conference's stated aims were to "identify barriers to the promotion of healthy eating in schools, describe the current situation and explore practical steps to change'. In her opening speech Susan Deacon placed the conference 'at the core of action needed in the drive to make Scotland a healthier place' (*Food in Schools,* 2001).

The development of a 'general foods policy' into a 'school food policy' was given a further nudge in October 2001, by the creation of a new Government post − a National Food and Health Co-ordinator, promoted by the Government (and welcomed by the media) as Scotland's first 'Food Tsar'. Although the Scottish Government's own press release (Food and Health Coordinator, 2001) emphasised the broad nature of the appointment, the new Food Tsar, Gillian Kynoch, already had her own agenda about what the priority should be. She had determined, even before her first meeting with her three ministers from the Health, Education and Social Justice departments that the focus should be on improving school meals. On her own admission, she came into Government having already decided that whatever authority she was given would be directed at changing school dinners.

> I was under no illusion that this appointment might be short-lived and what I wanted was to effect a broad-based, long-term change.
>
> (Interview, Kynoch, Feb, 2010)

Her experience of working with children in public health and within education was that school dinners offered an opportunity directly to improve the lives and health of a new generation. Given the expanding body of opinion in support of a schools-based healthy food initiative which had already been amassed, Kynoch found her

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known as the Scottish Office, with Donald Dewar as the final Secretary of State. The devolved government of 1999 had been known as the Scottish Executive until Labour's defeat by the Scottish National party in the 2007 election, after which the SNP decided that it should be known as the Scottish Government on official documents. An early indication of the antipathy which existed between the SNP-controlled Government and the Labour-controlled Glasgow Council was that official communications from the Council to the Government continued to address the government as the Scottish Executive.

new ministers ' very open' to the suggestion that the food policy initiatives focus on school meals (Interview, Kynoch, Feb, 2010).

Despite this - the confluence of Kynoch's appointment, the creation of the FSAS, the FiS conference and the publication of the three aforementioned papers - the pivotal factor in kick-starting the creation of HfS conclusively came from a powerful political force.

The final impetus for the Scottish Government to 'stop talking and take tangible action' was in the form of a growing campaign for the introduction of universal free school meals spear-headed by the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG). With hindsight, policymakers insist that the formation of HfS would have occurred anyway (Interviews; MSPs, panel members, Sep, Oct, Nov, 2009) but the evidence suggests that the eventual timing owed a great deal to expanding public and political pressure provoked by the free meals campaign. The CPAG campaign had won wide support from other community groups, some public health bodies and crucially from a stream of cross-party backbenchers led by the charismatic Glasgow MSP Tommy Sheridan. Within a month of the *Foods in Schools* conference, a proposal for a *School Meals (Scotland) Bill* which sought to provide 'universally free and nutritious school meals for every child attending a local authority managed school' had been formally lodged in parliament.

> Something like Hungry for Success would have happened anyway – there was some radical momentum going around – but it has to be to acknowledged that the timing of Tommy Sheridan and his free school meals proposal was a big driver. It bugged me because it was so simplistic, but you have to have an eye open when a popular idea catches roots.
> (Interview, former Scottish Government minister, Oct, 2009)

Opponents of the idea of providing universal free school meals criticised it as a simplistic idea, which took no account of the true complexity of the issue. It failed to address or examine the reasons which prevented so many Scots from eating healthily or to acknowledge the amount of funding which would be needed to meet the cost of the meals themselves *and* the investment that would be necessary to provide an

adequate infrastructure to provide them. Nevertheless the free schools meal campaign garnered sufficient support and gathered enough momentum to persuade the Scottish Government that it had to be seen to be taking action (Interviews: former Scottish Government ministers, MSPs, Oct,2009).

What ministers decided to do was to promote the idea that while Sheridan's bill might appear to offer some kind of 'quick and superficial fix', the Government would be looking to the long term by presenting a package of proposals, the combination of which would offer a broader-based and more lasting impact on the diet of Scotland's children. There is no record of exactly when the term *Hungry for Success* first came to be used, but those involved at the time recall that it was around this time (Autumn, 2001) and that its appearance was welcomed as a punchy 'catch-all' phrase that captured perfectly the hopes and aims of the initiative it labelled (I*bid*).

Three different ministerial departments came together in November 2001 to announce the multi-faceted approach that would be employed to change children's eating habits. Nicol Stephen, Deputy Minister for Education and Young People, Susan Deacon, then Minister for Health and Community Care and Jackie Baillie, then Minister for Social justice, announced their plans to:

> improve the provision, presentation and nutritional content of school meals for all Scotland's children as part of the Scottish Executive's drive to improve the health and social wellbeing of children in Scotland**.**
>
> (HfS, 2003: 15)

Included in the press announcement at this time was the decision to set up an Expert Panel, the responsibility of which would be to decide on the framework of the HfS strategy.

The Expert Panel on School Meals was convened for the first time in January 2002. The full panel[10] met seven times and additionally: carried out extensive consultations, visiting schools in eight local authorities; held a discussion workshop attended by catering representatives from most of Scotland's councils; and provided the opportunity for hundreds of stakeholders to join the debate. An interim report was presented to MSPs in June and responses to that document from Parliament and stakeholders were incorporated into the final recommendations accepted by Parliament in February 2003.

The final report *Hungry for Success – a Whole School Approach to School Meals in Scotland* was an impressive document to have been completed in such a comparatively short time, particularly given that the finished document was in substance very similar to the interim report which was produced in just four months. The completed report outlined seven *Underlying Principles* which in turn informed 24 key recommendations. The document ran to nearly 100 pages. The final report went beyond the basic remit requested by the Government, which had been to:

> establish standards for school meals, improve the presentation of school meals, to improve general uptake and to eliminate any stigma attached to taking free school meals.
>
> (HfS, 2003:16)

It also offered guidance on all food provision within schools including; breakfast clubs, tuck shops, vending machines etc. It concluded that the guiding principle was a desire for the 'very best of health, education and social justice for our children' (HfS, 2003:5).

The final recommendations were published in November 2002, eight months after the interim or draft report and formally accepted in February 2003 by the then Minister for Education and Young People, Cathy Jamieson. By the end of February 2003, the Scottish Government had distributed copies of the recommendations with accompanying advice about funding and implementation to all 32 of the country's

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[10] The names of the members of the Expert Panel are listed as Appendix C

local authorities. It had taken the expert panel less than a year to produce the HfS template and its recommended operationalisation framework.

The question of whether the deliberations of the expert panel were 'rushed' cannot be definitely proven one way or the other. Politicians and panel members say they worked to the schedule they were given without consideration of whether adequate time was being allowed. They were aware that a speedy conclusion to the deliberations was expected, but considered that the time pressure was caused by the enthusiasm of the new Government to demonstrate their commitment to the health issue so publically prioritised in that very first debate. Ministers wanted 'words put into action', they had the 'bit between their teeth', (Interviews: Deacon, Oct, 2009, MSPs B and C, Oct, 2009). There was no explicit or implicit acknowledgement that other external political pressures might have been influencing the release of the panel's findings. Indeed, one panel member (Interview, Oct, 2009) who had not been previously involved in policy-making and who was an enthusiastic supporter of HfS said that her perception was the whole process was 'painfully slow', so eager was she to see the recommendations put into practice.

However, despite the expressed views of those interviewed, the report itself makes it clear that deadlines were a problem. The issue of time pressure was explicitly referred to in the report in three separate consecutive paragraphs in the methodology section 'despite a very tight timescale' – 'conducted at very short notice' - 'in the time available' (HfS, 2003, 17). Some interviewees while denying they had felt time pressure in any way at the time which might have impaired judgement suggest that, with hindsight, things might have been done differently.

> If there had been more time, we could have done more trials
> of menus.
>
> (Interview, civil servant B, Jul, 2009)

The timing of the release of the interim report suggests that there were time pressures and that these were as much to do with political expediency as with a desire to begin speedily to tackle the problems. The momentum which gathered around the free school meals campaign seemed to have accelerated the creation of the Expert panel

in the first place. It may not therefore have been entirely coincidence that the interim report, which explicitly rejected the universal distribution of free school meals, was given to all MSPs the day *before* the proposal for the School Meals (Scotland) Bill was formally debated for the first time by the full Parliament. A Labour party briefing on the Bill, distributed on the same day, included party political analysis of the interim report. That the Labour party had been given the document prior to its distribution to all MSPs was challenged as unconstitutional by one MSP, but no further action was taken on the matter (Sheridan, 2002). It does however suggest further evidence that party politics played a role in HfS timing.

Policy Style

There was a consensus among all three Ministers[11] involved in the original launch of HfS that the successful implementation of this kind of behaviour-changing policy would depend on its delivery process being inclusive of all the actors involved (Interview, Deacon, Oct, 2009). As it happened, the non-enforceable nature of the original HfS recommendations and the short-term nature of ministerial posts conspired to make that impossible. As a result the policy style which evolved was neither a top-down imposition of aclearly defined operationalisation intent nor the process of partnership which everyone involved had agreed would be necessary to ensure delivery success.

Long before the appointment of the Expert panel, shortly after that first parliamentary debate on the nation's health, the new Health Minister Susan Deacon started to formulate a way of tackling Scotland's health problems by seeking the views of a very broad and varied constituency. Deacon began the process with a brain-storming session organised with another senior Government minister. Views of practitioners, rather than experts, were sought, so policy civil servants were not asked to contribute. Instead a variety of interested individuals including chefs, food

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11 Minister for Health Susan Deacon, Minister for Social justice Jackie Baillie, Deputy Minister for Education Nicol Stephen.

workers and the author of a children's cookbook were invited to spend a day together working out ways in which the Scottish diet might be improved.

The consensus was that strict legislative interventions were what were needed.

> the enthusiasm was for statutory maximums of this and that, banning this, banning that, legally limiting salt and sugar levels, heavy government control.
>
> (Interview, Deacon, Oct, 2009)

Those who attended the session had been asked to think about Scotland's diet in general, rather than only in relation to schools or children, but the consensus was that a healthy diet was something which would have to be effectively *imposed* upon the nation in the form of taxing 'unhealthy' food, legislative limitations on content and banning some kinds of advertising. There was no suggestion of encouraging personal responsibility and instead the message was that it was up to 'Big Government' to change the nation's eating habits through legislation.

Deacon has since left Government and has developed strong views on what she describes as the 'ineffectiveness of top-down policy making', particularly in terms of policy which seeks to change behaviour. Her rejection of the findings of that initial brainstorming session suggest these were opinions already held, if not explicitly acknowledged or expressed at the time. In what could fairly be described as a 'scattergun' approach, Deacon approached as many, and as broadly based a variety of interested parties as possible. The next months saw continued meetings, 'talking shops' brain storming sessions and so on, throughout Scotland with every type and size of grouping, including representatives from public health organisations, community groups, local councils and educationalists. Deacon's take on the collected 'conclusions' of these various workshops and focus groups was that while it might be necessary to set 'the direction of travel' from the top, attempts to change behaviour would depend upon education and encouragement and not upon the *imposition* of any kind of 'food policing'.

These views were reinforced by the Food in Schools (FiS) conference in May 2001, referred to earlier which had been set up with Government support by the newly formed Food Standards Agency in Scotland and other bodies. The conference findings concurred with what Deacon had already concluded about the need for education rather than imposition. Conference papers called for the government to lead the way with a cohesive national strategy and 'a shared vision' of what form healthy food in schools should take (*Food in Schools,* 2001).

Deacon was determined that HfS would be provided with the kind of implementation structure that would ensure partnership working throughout the process. Her own experience had convinced her that for HfS to work, it would be essential for every actor involved, especially those near the point of delivery, to be fully engaged in understanding and supporting the process. Although Deacon's fellow ministers (from the Departments of Education and of Social justice), with whom she had launched HfS, had been less involved in driving HfS from the beginning, there had been agreement among them that the implementation they would be overseeing would need to be an inclusive process. Personal and political circumstances, however, conspired to make that impossible.

After the death of First Minister Donald Dewar in 2000, Deacon had been reappointed to her post as Health Minister by Dewar's replacement Henry McLeish. Within weeks of the appointment of the HfS Expert Panel and the press conference in November 2001 to announce that fact, McLeish was forced to resign over a financial scandal[12] and was replaced as First Minister by Jack McConnell. Deacon, who had earlier opposed McConnell's leadership challenge and who was then pregnant with her second child, rejected the offer of a further cabinet post and retired to the back benches. McConnell's re-shuffle also saw the replacement of the Minister for Social justice, leaving only the Deputy Education Minister, of the original three, still in office.

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12 The scandal was over allegations that Mcleish had sub-let part of his tax-subsidised Westminster constituency office without it having been registered in the 'register of interests' kept in the Parliamentary office.

Earlier in this chapter there was reference to Deacon's stated determination that when she first took office she would make use of any intelligence amassed by her predecessors. There was no such continuity with her successor. Deacon is on record as criticising what she labelled as the 'day zero' approach of the administration appointed by Jack McConnell (The Sunday Herald, 2004). With little personal capital invested in originating HfS, subsequent ministerial involvement in the policy design seems to have been minimal. The Deputy Education Minister, who did at least retain his office until the implementation of HfS had begun, acknowledged that he had little involvement in decisions taken after the initial press launch. Other political issues had taken priority and he had also to adjust to the replacement of his own head of department.

Without the interested engagement of a ministerial 'heavy-hitter' HfS went ahead on the basis that the generally supportive attitude of local authorities and schools towards its proposed changes would ensure the level of partnership engagement that would allow delivery to succeed.

As has been explained, the 24 recommendations contained in the final HfS report and formally adopted by Parliament, were only recommendations. Some relevant indication of the difficulties in this area, are suggested by the fact that even the subsequent introduction of the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act, 2007, only enforced the need for local authorities to achieve the desired outcomes, not the methods by which they would be attained. However, given the make-up of the expert panel, with its local authority representation and given the subtle, if not explicit pressure, which Government is able to exert on local authorities, there was an expectation that the proposals would be acted upon and the supplied examples of good practice would be emulated where needed.

> We did not sense resistance from local authorities –   we did
> not feel there was a need to be heavy-handed.
> (Interview, panel member, Sep, 2009)

Implementation timetables and deadlines for meeting the main objectives had been agreed with the local authorities. Councils accepted that future menus were to be

designed within the suggested Scottish Nutrient Standards as devised by the Expert Panel. By incorporating some of the proposed outcomes into the criteria by which HMIE could judge school successes and failures, additional pressure could be brought to bear to persuade schools and education departments to meet the recommended targets. Additionally the Local Government in Scotland Act (2003), which replaced compulsive competitive tendering legislation with a duty of *Best Value*, was cited as a way in which the role of the school meal service would not be judged as simply a commercial trading activity but as   part of wider education and social objectives (HfS, 2003: 23-24). Various methods of achieving the desired outcomes were suggested:

> We point towards directions. The requirement is that children eat healthily. We have our health promotion guidance that talks about ethos and leadership and all the rest of it, the things you could be doing, should be doing, but there is no requirement that is explicit about the detail of how it is to be done. You can't. It's impossible to do that.
>
> (Interview, civil servant, Jul, 2009)

One of the difficulties of guiding, rather than directing, the way in which the operationalisation should take place was the wide differences which existed between local authorities. These contrasts were not only in terms of the vastly different demographics of Scotland's 32 councils, but also in terms of the existing schools meals systems already in place. While the school dinner programmes in some areas were already close to hitting HfS targets, others were struggling:

> Half of them are doing fine, or think they are doing fine and want to be left alone and the other half want to be led by the hand and told exactly what to do, so we have to tactfully offer a variety of ways for schools to achieve positive outcomes'.
>
> (Interview, panel member, Sep, 2009)

> My recollection is that some local authorities were already doing much more than we required of them. What we did not want to do was lower their level of activity, so we had to devise something like guiding, encouraging them, helping with resources and advice and guidance.
>
> (Interview, civil servant, Oct, 2009)

Panel members and government politicians recognised that there was a thin line between encouraging local authorities to 'come on board' and fully embrace HfS and antagonising those who resented the idea that they were being given directives:

> We took the view that as far as possible we should allow Local authorities to decide their own priorities and spend their resources … true for 90% plus of resources allocated. Now some people would call it ring fencing or dictat from the centre… and others would call it support and encouragement.
> (Interview, former Government minister, Oct, 2009)

This recognition of the potential delivery differences between Local authorities extended to an acknowledgement that it was also impossible to supply templates of best practice which could fit all schools. Several panel members referred to what they called the 80/20 principle, a recognition that while one size might not fit all, it would probably fit 80per cent. Councils – and to a lesser degree, schools – would be allowed the flexibility to decide for themselves on the best method of achieving the desired HfS outcomes. There is a suggestion that some areas where delivery may have been less successful were those where the local authority had not allowed individual schools the same degree of discretion given by government to the councils:

> I think flexibility would be the way to go there, but all we can do is make suggestions and it's up the local authorities to decide how they want to play it.
> (Interview, civil servant, Jul, 2009).

The policy style which evolved would be heavily reliant on the ways in which councils, education departments and indeed schools, would respond to the considerable degree of discretion they were to be allowed. The effect of allowing local authorities and schools this amount of flexibility in their implementation methods is examined in the following two chapters.

Cultural Divisions in the Policy Community

The two widest divisions within the policy community appeared to be between those who self-identified as 'practitioners' as opposed to experts – and almost as an extension of that divide, those whose experience was Glasgow-based – rather than from elsewhere in Scotland.   Additionally there were political and professional conflicts which affected some of the fine-tuning of the recommendations and the shape of the operationalisation.   Those *assumptive world* values referred to in the introductory chapter influenced the policy-makers' perception of the policy recipients in a way which consequently set up, even at the early developmental stage, the potential for values disjuncture within the implementation process.

'Pragmatic practitioners versus idealistic experts'[13]

Eight civil servants from the Health, Education and Social Inclusion Development departments sat alongside the 17 panel members, chaired by a local authority Director of Education (also representing the association of Directors of Education in Scotland). The other panellists included 'food tzar' Gillian Kynoch, academics, teachers, public health officials, children's charity representatives, a trade unionist and local authority officers. A sub-group (n: 7), chaired by Kynoch, was set-up to focus solely on the nutrient content of meals.

At its most basic level, the clearest divide in cultures and values among the panel members was between those who saw themselves as field practitioners with hands-on experience of children's eating habits and those who were experts and academics, less likely to have had recent practical experience. However, in terms of the professional backgrounds which might inform their choices, the panel members could not simply be divided into practitioners and experts. Different 'values sets' of individual actors and groups did impact on the panel's decisions, but there was some cross-over between groups and it was possible to identify different factions with the kind of shared values and experience that enabled them to operate as one entity.

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13 Description of the division among colleagues on the expert panel, by one of the members in an interview, 2009

This cross-over between 'members', was sufficient for most issues to be agreed by consensus. The members shared a view that they were at the stage in their lives where they all considered themselves to be 'professionals', although they may have taken different life pathways to reach that point. This community of professionals shared enthusiasm for the HfS objectives and for the most part were in agreement about the methods which would achieve them.

However in simplistic terms there was a kind of class divide, but one which was only really identified by those who saw themselves as still somehow 'in touch with the grass roots'. Those members who saw themselves as 'practitioners' rather than experts, academics and so on, felt that although their views were listened to, they were perhaps not accorded enough weight. One member who served on both the original HfS panel and on a second panel convened to give advice on the subsequent legislation was frustrated by what he perceived of as there being too many experts 'in ivory towers' removed from the 'real world'. As a senior manager it could be argued that he too was a long way from the front line, but his view was that at least he had once been there. Those who had become experts and academics were not dismissive of the experience offered by practitioners, but nor did they view themselves as being 'out of touch' with 'real life' in the way some of the practitioners suggested they might be. They did not view their own situation as removed from the practitioners' perception of a 'real world'. Given the time that had elapsed since those panel meetings (*most members were interviewed some five or six years after the panel had last met*) it was difficult to be precise about something as intangible as perceptions at that time. But nonetheless, there were divisions, and a general view among practitioners that while panel members were agreed on methods which would meet the needs of the vast majority of Scotland's school children, a 'corner had to be fought' on behalf of a minority. That minority was those children whose eating habits were so different from that which was considered 'standard', that concessions would need to be made to bring them on board; the very children suffering from the inequalities which might be reduced by the application of the concept of social justice.

Given that a large majority of the minority of Scotland's poorest children were based in Glasgow, the city's representatives were among those who argued that the diet of many poor children was so unlike that of the mainstream that special allowances were needed in terms of a more flexible timetable or in menu content.   They were supported in this argument by others in the practitioner community who expressed additional concerns that healthy meals which bore no relation to these children's usual diet would drive away the very children who would most benefit from a daily healthy meal.   The arguments against this came from the community of experts/academics who suggested that to make special allowances would be to add to their disadvantages by patronising them.   If, as was discussed earlier,   instead of 'disadvantaged' these children had been identified as merely another cultural group 'different' from the mainstream,   then efforts to accommodate them could not have been considered any more patronising than the similar 'accommodations' which were being offered to the other more obviously 'culturally different' groups. However the experts/academics argued that a universally high benchmark would give everyone a level to aspire to and that acknowledging and accommodating these different needs would only dilute the whole. These arguments had not been offered when discussing the crucial need to accommodate other minority groups.

 A further cultural values conflict between these practitioners and academics/experts could be considered to be the way in which this policy design might eventually have impacted upon their own careers and the way in which that might shape their sympathies towards different policy directions. The practitioners were likely to return to the reality of implementing the design and as such had very clear motivation to make sure that it worked on a practical level. While it would be unfair to suggest that the experts were therefore less concerned about the practicalities of policy delivery, it could be argued that to have been the co-author of a policy which set radical universal food standards might bring more professional benefits to them than to have been involved in producing some kind of 'flexi-template' with aspirations to

a universal standard *at some point*. One disgruntled 'practitioner' expressed the view that:

> There were those of us who had worked at delivery service and on behaviour changing and knew, we knew, what would actually work, and those who were simply unrealistic or idealistic and not prepared to compromise. They were conscious of what would go down best on the lecture circuit.
>
> (Interview, panel member, Oct, 2009)

Glasgow versus the-rest-of-Scotland

It has been mentioned that those panel members from Glasgow self-identified as practitioners. This leads on to a further cultural/values disjuncture which presented itself at this level of policy design and is one which should help clarify and contextualise the evidence which is presented in the next two chapters on the implementation process as it occurred in the city of Glasgow. It would be too crude to define this divide as being Glasgow against the Rest-of-Scotland but there is evidence that Glasgow's perennial status as Scotland's most deprived and disadvantaged city – and its consequent demands for 'special treatment' is a continuing thorn in the side of national government and a source of irritation to other areas in Scotland which have their own share of poverty, ill-health and unemployment. The details of the ways in which Glasgow is considered to be different from the rest of Scotland are considered at the end of the next chapter, but it should be noted that these differences may have also had their part to play in the HfS policy design. Glasgow's reputation for being synonymous with the poverty which requires additional support meant that any request for special allowances to be made for the disadvantaged could be interpreted as a direct plea for special treatment for the city. One civil servant admitted that it was not uncommon for Glasgow's continuous pleading for extra funding to cope with its particular difficulties to induce 'a kind of compassion fatigue' that may not always have allowed the city to receive a fair hearing.

Political values

The final cultural/values divide which may have influenced panel members and implementation success were political affiliations. There has already been discussion of the way in which the campaign for free school meals may have influenced the timing of the original HfS announcement and of the distribution of the draft HfS proposals on the eve of the first school meals debate. That draft criticised the proposed School Meals Scotland Bill, which sought to provide free lunch to all school children, on the grounds that:

> the proposals were inappropriate and did not tackle the main issues involved. [...] blanket provision is not the best way to ensure that deprived and vulnerable children take school meals. [while there is a recognition of] genuine problems for some children, our more comprehensive approach would be better.
>
> (HfS, 2003:83)

However this critique was one of the very few HfS expressed recommendations areas identified as a majority rather than consensus view. In interview, there were no members willing to admit to supporting or rejecting the proposal on party lines, but one confirmed the difficulty of remaining detached from party politics, by saying that whatever her own views on the Sheridan free school meals campaign, she would have found it impossible to support it in the context of the panel's work. It would have been unlikely that a Government sponsored expert panel would have come out in support of a proposal which the Labour-controlled government had clearly rejected, but it is worth noting that this recommendation was both the only one with clear political baggage and the only recommendation that was presented as a majority rather than consensus view. It would have been interesting to see how the support divided along political lines. It should also be noted that, at this stage of the policy design, the political make-up of the majority Labour government was reflected throughout Scotland. The 2007 government and local authority elections changed that political map with the election of an SNP-controlled government and the removal of all but two of Scotland's Labour-controlled councils. The next

chapter will consider whether the political values divide which occurred between the SNP government and Labour Glasgow impacted upon HfS delivery in the city.

However in terms of culture and values discord, it is equally relevant to note those cultural mores which were shared by the elite policymakers. As well as being interviewed about HfS, policy-makers and politicians provided information about their own culturally-based food behaviours and values. The same behaviours were common to the majority of them. They and their families were regular consumers of healthy food; the majority of meal times were eaten at a table with other family members; takeaway, processed and fast food were the exception, and so on. The relevance of this data will perhaps be more clearly seen when compared to food behaviours elsewhere in the policy chain.

Communication: Education, Monitoring and Feedback

The design of effective monitoring and feedback systems is entirely dependent upon the communication channels which are put in place. Good communication systems are as necessary during the process which turns a concept or idea into a workable policy as they are to the creation and success of effective monitoring and feedback structures. The information channels which are set up during policy creation feed into the policy's eventual framework. The policy's design has to incorporate efficient communication channels to allow for effective monitoring and feedback systems once the policy is up and running.

Communication within policy-making:

The impression of those who served on the panel was that internal communication between members was effective. The panel chairman was regarded as a good 'facilitator' and minority views were given opportunity for expression. There was some dissent about whether the panel members themselves represented a balanced enough spectrum of opinion (Interview, panel member, 2009), but there was agreement that communication among the members was set up in such a way as to

allow for a fluid exchange of views. Most recommendations were arrived at by consensus and even those whose views were eventually disregarded in the final recommendations felt they had been able to express themselves fully.

There has been reference made to time pressures on the work of the panel members. Nevertheless, despite the time pressures, the report provides a lengthy list of 'relevant agencies' with which various degrees of consultation were carried out in both the formative stages of gathering information and in the latter stages when critiques of the interim report were invited. The list is wide-ranging. Two hundred interested parties were contacted directly and asked for initial contributions and the post-interim report consultation stage involved petitioning some 400 'key stakeholders', about half of whom responded. Lists of the actors and bodies who were invited to contribute, show that the panel made a positive effort to be as inclusive as possible in their deliberations. All of Scotland's education authorities were additionally asked to contribute to an audit of existing practice. The panel's intent was to communicate with as wide a constituency as possible and to be able to demonstrate that they had done so.

Given the widely-encompassing nature of the panel's remit – from three different Government departments, and necessitating input from food, health and education experts – much of the consultation focused on those who might be eventually involved in implementing the recommendations. Contributions came from trade unions, local authorities, food standards agencies, food suppliers, and a selection of bodies representing the interests of young people and, given the underpinning interest in social justice, those living in poverty. There were also site visits to schools by panel members. Additionally, independent consultants were commissioned to gather the views of pupils although, as far as can be ascertained, the numbers of pupils involved were small, perhaps only a third of the numbers interviewed for this research.

If policy implementation were to be viewed as a linear process from government level to the sharp end at 'street level', the smallest proportion of 'direct consultation

engagement' was between the panel and those at the absolute apex of delivery – where the catering assistant who prepares the food hands it to the schoolchild. There are obvious reasons for this. The policy recommendations were not solely concerned with the point of delivery. The aforementioned time pressures must have influenced the division of time and labour. It is relatively straightforward to identify and engage with representatives of those who will be responsible for the business of implementing the policy - for example those who need to consider the practicalities of working practices, deliveries, contractual obligation, even food content, and so on. There are trade unions, professional bodies, civil servants, council officers and many others whose job it is to understand the processes which deliver policy and assess the way in which a particular set of recommendations would impact upon those they represent. There are also many agencies representing the views of experts on health, education and nutrition and indeed individual specialists who can contribute their views. Additionally, there are the many bodies, often run as charities, which present as advocates on behalf of 'parents', ' the poor', 'the family', ' the child', but which rarely have the kind of infrastructure or funding to allow them to solicit democratically the views of those they 'represent'.

All of those above were contacted, including some 38 'social inclusion' groups. However, very few effective mechanisms exist for collecting the views of the 700,000-plus school children who would be the recipients of the policy. Panel members met pupils, parents, teachers and catering staff at 16 schools in eight local authority areas across Scotland and, as has been stated, there was some independent research commissioned. But common-sense might suggest that inviting children to comment on abstract concepts such as healthier meals or more inviting dining facilities could be problematic.

> The best way to tell whether a child will find food attractive, or not, is to serve the food to the child.
> (Interview, MSP, Oct, 2009)

> We did do tasting sessions with parents and children.The menus were tested, but obviously if there had been time, it would have been better to have more trial runs in different places.

In many ways the communication strategies employed were successful. However, in terms of balance it seems that more time was spent on investigating the tangible, practical and perhaps most controllable facets of HfS – the physical delivery of the policy and the menu content – than on identifying the far less predictable outcome of children's response to the food given to them.

Communication within policy design

The HfS report identified the importance of effective communication channels in three separate areas; knowledge, training and monitoring. The lack of legislative enforcement meant that successful communication, especially in terms of knowledge transfer and training, was entirely dependent on the cooperation of individuals and communities of actors in the implementation chain. This cooperation itself might depend, for example, on changing political affiliations between central government and local authorities.

Parts of the suggested monitoring and feedback frameworks could be described as more stable in that they depended upon nationally collected statistics, but recommendations that self-evaluation form part of the monitoring system would again be dependent upon cooperation. The decision additionally to incorporate HfS inspections into the existing system of HMI reports meant they would share the inherent limitations of HMI. Crucially there was no specifically designed monitoring framework which would distinguish between   meals supplied/served and meals eaten. Feedback from that area was limited to what could be supplied by the HMI reports, self-evaluation and specific research projects commissioned by Government or local authorities, if they chose to do so.

Earlier references in this chapter to the recognition of a need for a partnership style of policy design are emphasised throughout the report. The emphasis is on the crucial need for all actors involved in implementation to be brought on board in

terms of both understanding the origins of HfS, and the way in which it should be delivered. The report returns repeatedly to the theme of 'partnership working', stressing that policy success would be dependent upon 'effective partnership working and the development of a participative and consultative ethos,' and again, 'our vision is of a partnership between children/young people, school, family and the community' (HfS, 2003:8). Local authorities would be expected to 'work in partnership with catering professionals, schools and the schools communities' (HfS, 2003:4). Links had to be made between local authority catering managers, school management, teachers, pupils and parents. The importance of pupil 'consultation' was a 'major element'. The emphasis was on a transfer of policy knowledge and a consequent 'empowering' and 'enabling' of the actors and agencies involved. There was also an underlying emphasis on the need for a holistic approach to HfS within a school. It could not only be about the lunchtime menu. All food-related education and activities had to be part and parcel of the whole. The left hand always had to be aware of what the right hand was doing to enable the whole school community to be involved in promoting the HfS ethos - an approach completely dependent upon effective communication structures.

The report described the need for training as a 'key element of effective implementation', but did not indicate the need for specific training in relation to the particular make-up of HfS. Instead it recommended that all school catering and dining room supervisory staff undertake 'appropriate training'. It identified a particular 'elementary Food and Health' course under development by the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) as suitable (HfS, 2003:72). Given the revolutionary menu changes which were being suggested – and the reasonable expectation that catering staff would already participate in some kind of generic food and health training in order to perform their jobs - it could be argued that the setting up of an HfS-specific training course would have been a useful addition.

As well as the recommended formal training, the report highlighted the need for 'training by example' in the form of disseminating examples of best practice to local

authorities and schools. These 'training templates' of best practice also applied to examples of how parents might become more involved, how the support of school communities (parents, pupils and staff) for the HfS principles and ethos might be encouraged and examples of how staff and pupils might be offered incentives to support the HfS objectives:

> From research and in the course of our visits we saw much good and innovative practice in relation to incentives, which we feel could be shared across Scotland.
>
> (HfS, 2003: 66)

Given the report's emphasis on the importance of bringing the whole school community 'on board' (and indeed on other matters considered essential to successful HfS delivery) , it perhaps needs to be reiterated that in its original form[14] these proposals could only be presented to local authorities as recommendations. While local authorities signed up to the broad-brush HfS policy aims - to meet the new nutrient standards for school meals, to work towards improving the presentation and uptake of meals and to eliminate any stigma attached to taking free school meals - the means by which local authorities would meet those objectives was left up to them. With no means of enforcing suggested systems and structures, the report had to focus on means of persuasion.

Policy monitoring:

Policy evaluation can be carried out in several ways. The expert panel's report made several recommendations as to how the delivery of HfS's objectives could best be assessed, all within the framework of the then newly-created School Improvement Framework[15] (SIF), which identified formal *National Priorities for Education* in

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14 The body of HfS recommendations later formed the basis of the enforceable legislation which made up the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act, 2007.

15 The Standards in Scotland Schools etc Act 2000 had created a statutory framework for schools education that required education authorities and schools to plan, monitor and report on improvement in education – an improvement framework (HfS, 2003,para 5.7) School meals provision was one of the identified key policy themes which local authorities had been asked to refer to specifically in their SIF.

Scotland's schools. The report recommended that National Priorities 2 and 3[16] be used as 'a vehicle for monitoring the implementation of improvements in school lunches'. Schools would be encouraged to self-assess HfS delivery using the kind of performance indicator and quality measures devised to evaluate broader education priorities.

> There was a lot to monitor – the operational context of how the food is being delivered, marketed and what have you...and then the context of within the school. So we needed a mixture of self-assessment, sample inspections, local authority inspections, so that something was checking every bit of the structure that was relevant to the whole operation.
>
> (Interview, civil servant, Jul, 2009)

Four separate levels of assessment were to be additionally encouraged. First there would be annual national monitoring of relevant data – including government level assessment of local authority statistics on general school meals uptake and on the percentage of free school meals uptake. Secondly, while the HMIE programme of schools inspections would continue to present feedback on the quality of dining accommodation, facilities and general meal uptake, a sample of inspections would also incorporate more detailed food-focused assessment which would include pupil interviews, an evaluation of menu provision for minority/ethnic groups and of the promotion of healthy eating within the school. Thirdly the HMIE would be commissioned to prepare a detailed evaluation of school meals provision to monitor progress over several years. Lastly the Scottish Government should commission independent research to examine progress after four years (HfS, 2003:71).

The monitoring would depend heavily upon HMIE and in response a specialist group of inspectors would be engaged and trained to carry out specific assessments of HfS delivery. The HMI reports would supply feedback to Government, schools and the education authorities and the way in which HMIE reports operated would mean that schools (and local authorities) would be expected to act upon negative feedback.

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16 National Priority 2 outcome: enhanced school environments which are more conducive to teaching and learning, National Priority 3 outcome: every pupil benefits equally from education

HMI isn't the kind of legislation where you get banged up if you're not complying. It's about cajoling. You read in the papers about schools failing to meet requirements and HMI tells them about it and gives six months or a year or whatever to sort it out. School meals would be part of that whole assessment.

(Interview, civil servant, Oct, 2009)

However, a difficulty here which may have been under- estimated was the division of responsibility for HMI outcome assessments. Until the legislation of 2007, which enshrined parts of HfS as enforceable law, any failure of the school to meet educational standards was the responsibility of the head teacher, while failures in HfS delivery remained the responsibility of the specific catering divisions or departments which delivered the food. Some of the problems this caused in delivery are identified in Chapter Five. The other perennial issues with the HMI inspection system is the necessarily snap-shot nature of the inspection and the practical limitations on the number of schools which can be visited. HMI monitored HfS delivery in less than ten per cent of primary and secondary schools between 2004 and the legislative changes introduced in 2007. The HMI's first HfS progress report (2005) was based on visits to less than two per cent of primary schools (HMIE, 2005, 2008).

Whatever the methodological shortcomings, the formal monitoring systems did find that HfS implementation was generally successful in the broad area the policy had set out to change, that is, the delivery of nutritionally balanced meals across Scotland's schools. It should be recognised that HfS, *for the most part*, had effectively delivered much of what it set out to do. However, research for this study has found that the area where policy delivery was at its weakest was in the delivery of healthy meals to those children from the most disadvantaged homes. These were the children who in terms of the social justice aspirations of the policy might have been expected to derive most benefit in terms of redressing health inequalities. The detail of this is explored in Chapter Five. Given the overwhelming importance attached to the concept of social justice and the emphasis given to the need to address health inequality, this failure is significant.

Backward Mapping

This chapter has identified some disparate ways in which the policy process at this level was less effective than it might have been. How might backward mapping have been able to anticipate and ameliorate some of these difficulties?

The essence of backward mapping theory as a policy tool is that its initial focus is upon the point at which the policy is to be delivered (Elmore, 1979, 1980). Former Health Minister Susan Deacon has stated her disillusionment (*p.*68) with the effectiveness of top-down policy in delivering to those who may be most in need of its benefits. Top-down policy is the antithesis of what backward mapping sets out to do. Backward mapping would have made it more likely that evidence of the potential failure of HfS to engage with the most disadvantaged would have been identified at an early stage.

Given the need for a point of delivery to exist in order to effectively backward map to the level of policy formulation, backward mapping is more effective as a tool of policy analysis rather than of policy formulation. However backward mapping has a practical application in policy enhancement as long as there exists some kind of real or even well-imagined end-delivery point. This would have made it particularly effective for use in the creation of policy like HfS which, while seeking to bring about long-term changes across broad areas, depended upon initial short-term intensive trial runs. Furthermore, backward mapping may have been able to identify those most disadvantaged of the recipients whose cultural values, or 'assumptive world' were furthest removed from those of the policy makers.

Backward mapping may additionally be useful in successful delivery of this particular kind of cultural-influencing policy because of its ability to see beyond a superficially statistically successful delivery. It reduces the dependence of policy analysis or policy formulation on broad statistics that may fail to supply nuanced qualitative information which may contradict the bigger statistical picture. For example, it is perfectly possible for a trial run to suggest that HfS successfully delivered X number of nutritionally balanced meals to X number of children.

Backward mapping, which would involve close observation and interviews, may demonstrate that only five per cent of those meals were eaten as served. That identified failure to deliver would then precipitate further research at the local level to identify the factors responsible for the failure.

In terms of HfS, and given the differing operating styles of Scotland's diverse and contrasting local education authorities, the trial runs would have needed to be planned in a way which were representative of those differences. Elmore's suggested framework requires a clear understanding of the behaviours which have provoked a need for policy introduction and identifiable policy objectives. The policy's stated aim of addressing health inequalities would mean that any trial runs would also need to include schools which were able to represent those inequalities. The 'backward mapping lens', defined as 'stakeholder perceptions of specific and important effects and local organisations' characteristics within a community environment' (McLaughlin, 1987), would be applied from the point of end delivery back through the implementation process to, in this instance, Scottish Government level. The stakeholders themselves would be both implementation actors and the targeted recipients – that is, any individuals or communities with a vested interest in policy delivery in that the policy could affect them or, be affected by them (Bryson, 1990).

Any statistical analysis of the trial run results would be complemented and enhanced by additional data based on ground-level observation and interview techniques referred to earlier. In those situations where actor discretion was recognised as a significant influence on delivery, whether positive or negative, that knowledge could be utilised to improve delivery. Backward mapping trials must produce not just evidence as to what has happened, but must contextualise those results in a way which attempts to understand the influences which have produced the results. It acknowledges that each and every actor may have the potential to mutate policy and therefore provides the opportunity of creating a policy implementation design which offers protection from that mutation. Thus a framework for using backward mapping on HfS would have:

- Identified the behaviours which generated the need for policy creation.
- Identified the policy objectives.
- Ensured that the policy trials were representative of the diverse nature of Scotland's population and local education authorities, and that they provided an opportunity for comparing delivery behaviours between contrasting economic and demographic areas.
- Identified grassroots stakeholders, individuals and communities at the point of policy delivery
- Employed statistical analysis, observation and interview methods to assess delivery success, acknowledging the potentially critical influence of individual's and community's acceptance and sympathy towards policy change.
- Mapped the process from the end point of delivery to Scottish Government, again identifying actors and individuals at each level with the potential to shape policy, any ways in which they may do so, and critically, *why* they might do so.
- Flagged-up those identified discretion 'hotspots' and amended the policy process to accommodate or negate them in such a way as to limit their potential to damage policy delivery.

The research findings of this chapter indicate that the formulation of HfS did incorporate some of the backward mapping methods outlined. However, given the time pressures which have been identified it would seem that some of the methods employed were conducted too speedily to ensure, for example, that the trial runs were extensive or inclusive enough. In particular, more representative trial runs might have uncovered evidence which would have supported the concerns about the potential for culture and values conflict which were raised by some panel members, based on their own experience of street level delivery. This would have given those expressed concerns greater weight in terms of influencing the panel's decisions.

Conclusion

It has been shown that the origins of HfS were rooted in a determination to tackle Scotland's tag as the sick man of Europe. The pressure experienced by a newly-devolved Government anxious to be seen to be doing something tangible about the health issues that had been identified as a priority in the first parliamentary debate, drove the policy's broad-based direction. But the narrower direction of that policy in terms of its focus on children and school dinners seems to have been influenced by the appointment of a determined individual, with a prior agenda, Gillian Kynoch, the 'Food Tsar', who described the appointment as her one chance to make a difference.

The decision by Ministers to embrace this focus on school dinners was influenced by the promoted ideology of the new government; the Social justice agenda which formed the very foundation of the devolved parliament. Social justice, as vigorously promoted by the First Minister and his cabinet, lay at the very heart of the original HfS conceptualisation. Social justice might have been expected to be woven into the very fabric of HfS, but cultural divisions between (crudely) 'experts' and 'practitioners' among the policy elite led to conflicting interpretations as to how social justice could best be attained. The fall-out from the decision to focus on economic redistribution rather than recognition of the special needs of the disadvantaged may have been further compounded by a policy style which suffered from ministerial changes at the very top and a decision to rely on the cooperation rather than the coercion of local authorities. As a result, a consensus that there should be an implementation framework in place which ensured that all policy actors – including those at the point of delivery – were made fully cognisant of HfS objectives and the reasons for them did not materialise.

The Government's own evaluation systems had generally reported that HfS had succeeded in achieving most of its targeted objectives most of the time in most places. The policy had indeed succeeded as explicitly intended in ensuring that Scotland's schoolchildren had access to a healthy daily mid-day meal – a considerable achievement, by any standard. However although it could be demonstrated that the food being *served* in Scottish schools was unquestionably

healthier, it was harder to show what proportion of the healthy food being served was being *eaten*. There was further evidence which suggested that the evaluation systems which were in place failed to provide the kind of feedback essential to assessing policy implementation.

However, the kind of considered process which might have tempered or at least identified these potential difficulties would not have been possible within the time constraints which were imposed on the HfS policymakers. These constraints have been shown to have been primarily driven by political considerations. The new Government was anxious to be seen to be taking tangible action on a subject of such import that it had been the topic of the first debate in the new Parliament. There is additionally strong evidence that the specific timing of HfS was forced by the growth of a popular campaign in support of the provision of universal free school meals to every Scottish child. It seems likely that this political and popular pressure had accelerated the initiation date of the project and imposed a time-limit on the research and discussion which formed the recommendations. More time would have allowed for more productive and influential trial runs.

Chapter 4

DELIVERY IN GLASGOW

> to understand actions, practices and institutions, we need to
> grasp the relevant meanings, the beliefs and preferences of
> the people involved.
>
> > (Bevir and Rhodes 2004:130)

If the implementation of HfS is the policy's journey from its inception, origins and design at Government level to its eventual delivery at schools' level, this section is an exploration of the policy as it travels between those two points – 'post-decisional' in Parsons' terms (1995:457). This stage of the policy journey takes place within local government, where policy theory and design is converted into practical application and where both council officers and local politicians become engaged as actors in the policy's implementation.

The role of effective communication in the successful delivery of policy has been well established, with research demonstrating that some levels of values discord could be overcome or ameliorated by improved communications. For example, the introduction cited evidence that delivery models founded on appeals to 'common values and creeds' may be especially effective in policy areas like health and education (Gray and Jenkins, 2001:221). This chapter explores whether this 'communion' mode of governance had been employed to foster successful communication channels within the local authority. It will also inquire whether top-down communication *from* national government and *to* schools level had been effective in providing a frame of reference for HfS which fully engaged implementation actors in the policy process.

The literature supports the argument that values impact on delivery may also be contained or exaggerated by the levels of discretion allowed to implementation actors (Maynard-Moody and Musheno, 2003). So this research at local authority level seeks to identify how much discretion was allowed *to* local authorities from national government, how much discretion was formally allocated to actors or communities *within* local government, and how much was allocated by local government to schools at the point of delivery. It will also look at whether the discretion formally allocated differed from that employed in practice.

In terms of values, it could be assumed that similar values might be shared by those professionals who make and implement policy at both Government and local authority level. This research seeks to establish what kind of values communities existed at local authority level and the degree to which those values were in harmony or conflict with other implementation actors or communities of actors elsewhere in the policy process. As was discussed in the introduction, the values which may influence the way in which policy is delivered depend upon a variety of influences including those of political or ideological beliefs.

Given this accepted influence of political beliefs on values systems, it will help to establish the origins of actors' values and compare them among the different communities identified. It would also be reasonable to ask whether values conflict within local government is likely to be exacerbated by actors' membership of different political communities. The value of this interpretive approach is that it allows actors to explain their actions in their own terms which may help identify cognitive disjunctures at this stage of the policy process. Given the change in political colour at national government level[17], it will also be asked whether this change affected the way in which actors perceived HfS.

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17 HfS started life as a policy, with support from all parties, under the then Labour-controlled Scottish Government. The Scottish National Party inherited it when they took control after the 2007 election. Glasgow was one of only two Scottish local authorities which remained under Labour control after that election

The main body of this chapter will closely examine implementation within Glasgow City Council – the authority which is home to the schools where the research detailed in Chapter 4 was conducted. In terms of population and budget costs, Glasgow City Council is Scotland's largest local authority and because of its size and high levels of poverty it has long claimed special status in terms of various national policies. That claim may be more easily understood in the context of this policy by knowing that the percentage of school children in Glasgow who were registered for free school meals had consistently remained around twice the national average between 2005 - 2009 (School Meals in Scotland, 2009).

General Background

Prior to April 2009, school meals were delivered by Glasgow Council's Direct and Care Services (DACS) department, based within and controlled by the local authority. From April, responsibility for school meals was given to a new company Cordia, created by Glasgow City Council as a limited liability partnership (LLP). The LLP structure meant that as well as continuing to supply the services previously supplied by DACS, Cordia was additionally able to tender for work in the private sector. Under the terms of the LLP, Glasgow's education department became a Cordia client, with Cordia employed by the Education department to deliver school meals. Despite the change to an LLP, the organisation's structure and the role of individual actors within that structure was changed very little. The same key individuals remained in charge and most of the 8,700 staff transferred from DACS to Cordia without any personnel changes. Cordia remained under council control through the management board where the four elected members outnumbered the three Cordia staff members.

The creation of Glasgow's LLP might at first appear to have added an additional layer of administration for policy delivery to transit, but Cordia's set-up was similar enough to the former DACS department within the body of the Council for the Cordia implementation process to mirror closely the previous DACS's system.

Communication: Education Monitoring and Feedback

Communication can impact on the success or failure of several discreet areas of implementation. Initial and ongoing training can only work if the policy requirements have been adequately communicated to those involved. Actors engaged in the process need to have been properly informed and educated about their individual and community roles in order for the policy to be successfully delivered. An understanding of the policy context can mean the difference between actors fully engaging with policy objectives or actors merely 'ticking boxes'. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are worthless unless efficient processes for disseminating that information to the relevant bodies are in place.

As outlined in the previous chapter, Government advice to local authorities for initial HfS policy specified nutritional guidelines and made several recommendations about best practice, but left the detail of delivery to the councils themselves . When enforceable legislation replaced the original HfS recommendation, government continued to allow local authorities to arrange the detail of implementation autonomously and limited its legislative directives to the delivery time table and nutritional content of meals. The importance of clear communication channels and an emphasis on the need to bring actors on board within local authorities was to be encouraged and examples of best practice were supplied, but the methods employed to do so were to be left to the local councils to decide upon.

In theory, both Cordia's external communication channels, and their 'internal' or top-down communications towards the schools were open and flexible. The communication channels in place between Cordia and the Council in particular were effective and mutually beneficial. However in practice there were some complicating factors. While Cordia and the Council did communicate freely and frankly with the Government, there was a strong perception that those communications were not generally listened to. There were also concerns about the success of the delivery monitoring which Cordia itself undertook or commissioned others to do on its behalf. There was a consensus that evidence from feedback might demonstrate that healthy

meals were being served but did not necessarily demonstrate that healthy meals were being eaten. HMIE reports on schools dinners provided only 'snapshots'.

External communication channels

Effective knowledge transmission between all the actors involved was essential to successful policy delivery because Cordia's school meals operation – which formed only part of a much wider services and catering remit – had had to conform both to the specific 'client' requirements of the Education department and Council Executive and to the regulations as supplied by the Government.

Communication Channels Between HfS Communities.
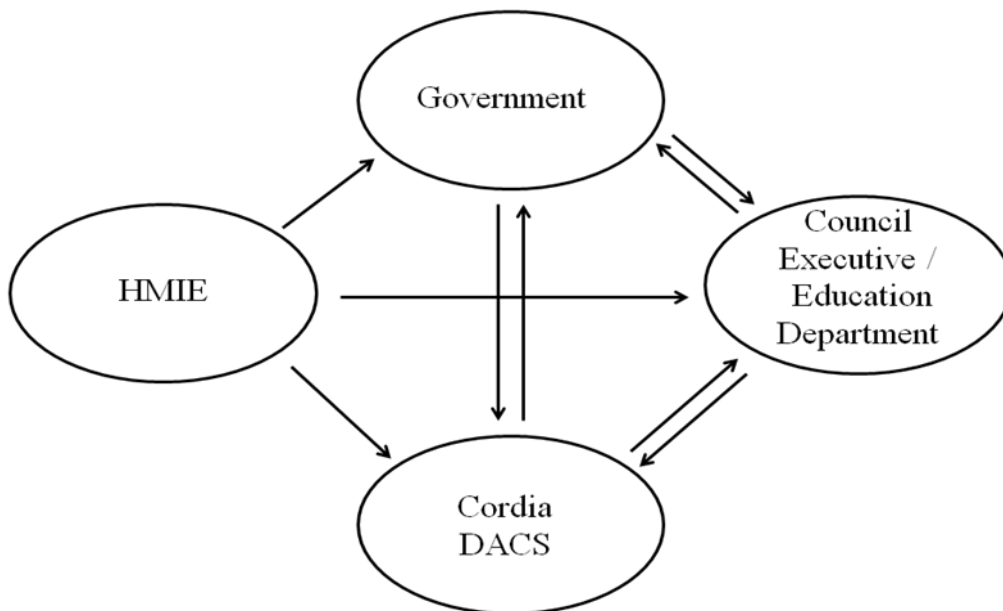
As can be seen above, several communication channels were in operation between the various bodies involved in HfS at this level, some duplicating the distribution of information. The contact between different levels here occurred in many different forms.

There were no regular formal channels in operation between Cordia and the Government but ad hoc meetings were arranged to deal with specific issues as needed. There were about 20 annual meetings of this nature between Cordia senior management and Government officials or MSPs (Interviews, Cordia managers, Oct, 2009). Government information about policy updates, examples of best practice and other relevant information was supplied by the Government in the form of e-mail or documents/letters directly to either Cordia management or to Cordia via Glasgow Council, depending on content.

Communication between Cordia and Glasgow Council took many different forms. The management board with its mixture of council-elected representatives and senior Cordia management met every eight weeks. A senior manager would also attend the External Governance Scrutiny Committee which met every six weeks. In addition six-weekly meetings of Glasgow's Extended Corporate Management team were attended by all council directors and managing directors of the council's various 'arms' length external organisations, which included Cordia. Other formal meetings were arranged as and when needed and less formal contact was harder to pin down.

> It is impossible to exactly quantify contact with others; there are so many people involved and the type of contact is not just formal meetings or emails, but very often takes place on the phone or when we bump into each other in corridors, etc.
> (Interview, manager, Cordia, Oct, 2009)

Communication between HMIE and the other bodies was in the form of notification of planned inspections and the supply of copies of the finished report. If necessary a formal meeting with the local authority or Cordia could be arranged to discuss a particular issue, although that would be an unusual occurrence.

Different methods of communication were used to convey different messages. Directives about the nutritional content of meals and examples of best practice were fed directly to Cordia from the Government and additionally supplied by the Government to the Council Executive.

Political decisions were taken by the Executive and conveyed to Cordia either directly through communication between the Council leader and the Cordia director or through the elected representatives on Cordia's management board. Cordia supplied feedback on operating systems in the form of uptake statistics and costs directly to the Education department.

Individual members of Cordia's management team also supplied Government-level civil servants with feedback and responses to HfS developments. Individual members of Cordia's management had acted in advisory capacities directly to Government and had established relationships with individual civil servants and politicians over many years, which resulted in some of that contact being of an informal nature. Specific queries or concerns were sometimes addressed with a telephone call or at a casual meeting. All the actors at local authority level were confident that their views on specific problems with aspects of implementation had been conveyed to the highest level. Overall Cordia had good formal and informal communication systems in place with Government, Council and Education department levels.

Glasgow's particular problems

While the systems were effective in conveying information, there was however, a view that the Government was not listening to opinions expressed which challenged aspects of the Government's own policy agenda. In this instance, feedback was merely noted, rather than acted upon. This difference of views focused on Glasgow's continued assertion that the city needed allowances made to accommodate its particular demographic problems. The Government position was that the policy needed to be applied equally to all schools throughout Scotland. The benchmark of nutritional levels to be enforced in a national timetable was set so that all children would enjoy the same benefits at the same time. The Government's view was that to do otherwise would penalise the city's children. This issue will be returned to in terms of the cultural conflict it illustrates, (*p.113*) but the request by Glasgow for more flexible time scales and menu content – and the Government denial of these

requests - represented a communication failure with implications in terms of delivery. The debate between the national government agenda and the local Glasgow agenda over the city's special status and their impact on policy delivery was ongoing. Cordia's senior management and elected representatives on the Council had made direct appeals to Government level about what they perceived to be problems which were peculiar to the city. All the actors, apart from the SNP supporters, blamed the Government for what was viewed as a failure to acknowledge the city's special needs.

> Yes, they [the Government] consult with their customers, but if they're asking for something that doesn't fit with the policy, then the answer is: 'No'. That's not consulting. That's listening, but not hearing.
> (Interview, manager, Cordia, Sep, 2009)

Several individuals cited the same example of a secondary school with very low uptake where a concerted campaign of spending resources and time had still failed to improve the situation.

> We had everybody and their auntie out; government advisors, politicians, an entire team over six months and what was needed was flexibility, but no-one listened. I fail to understand the point of the exercise. Why ask for people's opinion and feedback that can be substantiated, when you just don't listen?
> (Interview, manager, Cordia, Sep, 2009)
.

However, the one opposition councillor on the management team, and a relative newcomer (2007) to the authority, challenged the assumption that the city's needs were so very different from other parts of Scotland. While acknowledging that Glasgow did have difficulties and that Cordia staff worked hard to address those problems, she suggested that it also suited 'everyone's agenda' to portray the city as somehow 'special' or 'different' with greater needs and wants than those everywhere else.

> We do have terrible problems with diet and health and there are schools that are surrounded by shops and vans and so on, but lots of other places have similar problems. I don't think it's just a West coast Glasgow problem.
> (Interview, opposition councillor on Cordia management board,Oct, 2009)

Given the weight of evidence about the extent of Glasgow's poverty, the argument was not over whether the city's problems existed, but how best to resolve them. As a result, there was tangible frustration at Glasgow level that even the most effective knowledge gathering and feedback systems could still result in deadlock when local feedback failed to conform to a predetermined national policy agenda.

Monitoring

The other external body with a watching brief in the HfS process was, as has been indicated, HMIE which monitored schools on behalf of the Government and distributed their findings to Cordia and the Council. One senior manager when asked specifically about a school where almost no vegetable portions were taken responded that this was the kind of problem he would expect the HMIE inspections to identify.

> If vegetables aren't being picked up, then that would be picked up by HMIE.
> (Interview, senior manager, Cordia, Oct, 2009)

Given the way in which schools prepare in advance for HMIE visits and given the infrequency and the 'snapshot' nature of HMIE inspections, reliance on them at this local level as a way of monitoring delivery could cause difficulties and would be unlikely to be able to supplement usefully the information already supplied through effective pupil forum or cascading information systems. Other actors described HMI reports as 'useful' but only as a reflection of the time of the inspection, 'not the rest of the year' (Interviews; teachers, Cordia managers, Glasgow councillors, Jan, Sept, Oct, 2009).

Internal and top-down communication

 A clear understanding of the *internal* communication channels within Cordia was harder to pin down. While actors were afforded regular and flexible opportunities to communicate with others, the contacts were often informal or in response to a specific situation and as a result difficult to quantify. The part of the LLP which dealt with school meals was organised in a fairly conventional pyramid/line manager structure, with the Managing Director (MD) at the top and the city's 29 Canteen Managers with direct responsibility for each school's kitchen at the bottom of the pyramid. Canteen Managers were expected to report to Area Managers, who reported to their Operations Manager, who reported either directly to the MD or the Head of Service. The chair of the Cordia management board described the communications process within Cordia as operating on a 'cascading system', dependent upon each tier of management keeping the one below or above updated on any developments.

Internal Communication Channels: Cordia Schools' Services
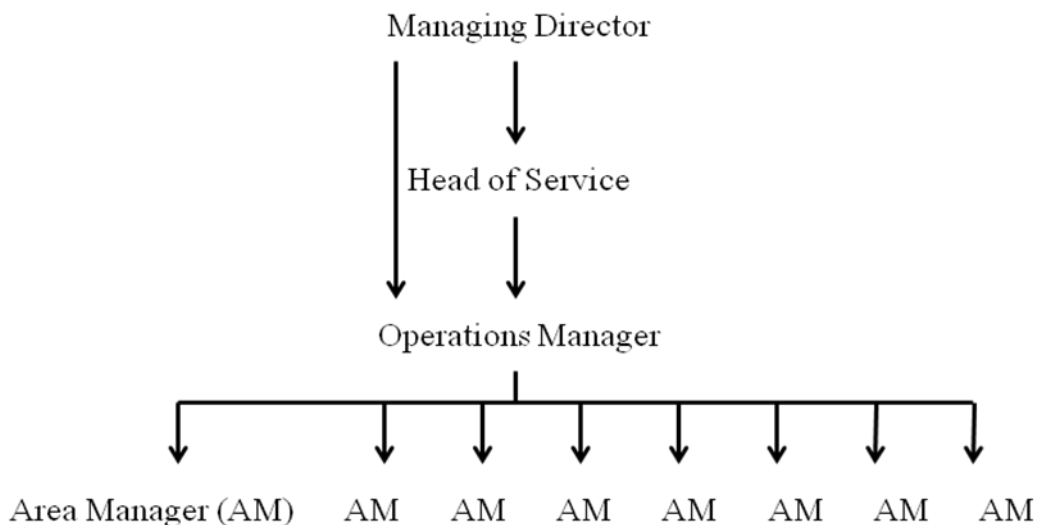
Each Area Manager had two assistants. The schools services responsibilities extended beyond catering to include janitors, cleaners and school crossing workers, all of which used a similar communications structure. All of the staff members described communication and feedback opportunities within Cordia as being

effective and fluid, with some regulated contact in place, but more often less formal and reactive to circumstances.

Training

There was no formal set up for training elected representatives who served on the board. Policy briefing documents were made available and the councillors were given an open invitation to arrange visits to schools and kitchens and any other part of the operation that they wished to see. Their level of involvement, other than attendance at the board meetings, was not prescribed, but the high media profile of HfS meant that councillors believed themselves to have a good understanding of the policy. All had taken advantage of school visits and regular briefings from Cordia staff as offered.

Most of the managers had been involved with HfS since its inception and exhibited a detailed working knowledge of the policy content and delivery process. Cordia had responsibility for training catering staff, but there was recognition that training someone in how to perform their work would not necessarily be enough to encourage them to engage with the whole HfS ethos.

> It's not highly skilled staff and they're all there for different reasons. You have people very committed and you have some that it's just their job, they just do it, and then you have some who actively don't agree with it because it's not how they would do it.
>
> When you talk, it's all, oh yes we support this, it's all great, but then they might not do the work in that way.
> (Interviews; area managers, Cordia, Oct, 2009)

At the base of the pyramid there were minimum numbers of recommended meetings stipulated as being necessary between catering managers and area managers. However some area managers felt these were insufficient for effective communication and instead arranged that the meetings be held three times as

frequently. Similarly, while an annual audit was required practice, some areas arranged for twice-yearly audits.

All levels of management emphasised that they operated 'open door' systems in terms of welcoming feedback and were confident that this informal type of communication was effective. Many of the senior staff, down to area manager level, had worked closely together for more than a decade, but while this had resulted in creating genuinely good relationships and mutual respect between the different management levels, this system depended heavily upon both the perceived 'approachability' of individuals and the assumption that all members of the workforce would be equally informed, motivated and capable of conveying concerns and criticisms. The fact that some staff initiated more frequent meetings than others 'so you know exactly what's going on' indicated that was not always the case (Interview, area manager, Cordia, 2009).

The large majority of the actors involved in HfS delivery within Cordia did present as highly motivated in ensuring that knowledge and information about HfS circulated freely But the methods employed to ensure that free flow of information partly depended upon each individual's perception of what was necessary:

> The teams embrace Hungry for Success, but it is left to the stakeholders to self-generate levels of enthusiasm. They know it's their job not just to deliver strategy but to engage staff.
> (Interview, manager, Cordia, Sep, 2009)

Evaluation

A variety of methods were used to gauge success. As well as recording the base line of all school meals uptake, Cordia also used free school meal uptake as a barometer of the menus' popularity. Other performance indicators used included benchmarking against other Scottish local authorities and comparing uptake to national statistics from the larger English and Welsh cities. In terms of feedback from the schools, Cordia commissioned focus groups and had invited pupils and

teachers to use existing pupil forums such as school councils to contribute views. Schools were encouraged to carry out self-evaluation.

However there were some contradictions. While senior management was confident that existing communication channels were successfully allowing for delivery assessment from the ground-up, other actors, who had generally spent more time 'in the field', acknowledged that it was difficult to know exactly what was going on within the dining rooms. It was generally accepted that the picture painted from statistics on the numbers of meals delivered in schools could not reveal the whole story but those staff who spent most time out of the office were the least likely to view the numbers of healthy meals served as an accurate reflection of the number of healthy meals eaten.

> The primary schools look as though Hungry for Success has bedded in very well. But it would be interesting to see what they're actually eating, because obviously they would all need to be eating the entire package to get that balanced meal. And they don't. They don't choose it all and they don't eat it all. They leave it and they substitute it with [sic] fizzy drinks or crisps or whatever.
>
> (Interview, area manager, Cordia, Sep, 2009)

It was also evident that area managers in some parts of the city were more pro-active than others in information gathering and knowledge dissemination and that the system allowed for those discrepancies. Checks and balances ensured that the minimum requirements were met but depended upon individual commitment to judge whether more were necessary. It was suggested that budgetary restraints also impacted on the degree of monitoring.

Local communication

One manager who listed a long menu of steps taken to ensure that a two way flow of information between area managers and schools was as effective as possible, said that nonetheless any system of this nature had to depend at some point upon individual commitment:

> It falls apart if there isn't a good relationship, but that is the human error part and that would happen everywhere. You then have to look at control methods and see if you do need more close monitoring, but then eventually you get to the point where you have to ask if you have the man-hours available to do that, to spend that time and money for one individual.
>
> (Interview, manager, Cordia, Sep, 2009)

In contrast, there were no criticisms of communication channels at local level between Cordia and their clients the Council and Education Department, where a cooperative/communal approach was employed.

> The local authority would rarely say, we would like to see X or Y. It's a bit of them and a bit of us, more of a partnership, more cooperation.
>
> (Interview, manager, Cordia, Sep, 2009)

This could perhaps be anticipated, given that many of the senior individuals involved had been working successfully together on similar projects for several years. In practice, the ease of communication between the Council and Cordia was of general benefit. There was no evidence that the 'cosiness' of that relationship had developed into complacency.

Discretion and Flexibility

The form in which the HfS initiative was adopted as a national strategy by Government in 2003 allowed for considerable flexibility on implementation by local authorities. Scottish Councils were encouraged to follow nutritional guidelines, were provided with examples of best practice, were advised about targets and aspirational benchmarks and then strongly encouraged to delivery the policy recommendations to the best of their ability. The legislation which evolved from the original policy was far more prescriptive. Both *The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland)*

Act, 2007 and the *Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations, 2008* identified clear guidelines on establishing standards for all food and drink in schools which local authorities were required to meet by law. Local authorities were offered flexibility in terms of menu design and cost, but the nutritional make-up of school lunches was highly prescriptive and was expected to be applied in standardised form across all of the country's local authorities.

Communication from Government to Cordia and to the Council tended to be in the form of instructions about menu content, with no leeway in terms of specific nutrient levels or the timetable for implementation. Government directives which resulted from the 2007 and 2008 legislation were legally enforceable and not open to any negotiation.
.

Budget decisions were made by the local authority. The Government had made no stipulation in terms of funding and the cost of each school meal and the ticket price paid varied enormously across different local authorities. The most expensive price for a school meal ticket was the £2.25 charged in Edinburgh's secondary schools which compared with the lowest price of £1.15 charged by Glasgow for all school meals provided. As of 2009 the Glasgow ticket price had remained unchanged for seven years (School Meals in Scotland, 2009), although this did not necessarily reflect the true cost of the ingredients which was not publicly available because of 'commercial sensitivity' (Interview, manager, Cordia, Oct, 2009). In Glasgow it was Cordia's job to supply the city's school meals within the Council-allocated budget while meeting the Government-imposed nutrient standards.

Much of the burden of conforming to those two immutable forces was carried by the unit which created the schools' menu. The unit manager strongly supported HfS objectives but criticised the inflexibility of the nutrient standards system imposed and suggested that to imagine that the nutrient content of meals could be standardised across the board was based on a false premise:

> The staff can't move anything, they can't breathe, they can't change anything and it means nothing....we are not lab rats so food prepared on each different site is going to be slightly different anyway. Food is about so many factors coming together. If just one thing changes from what you've forecast, even in the slightest way, then the whole thing no longer stands. It's no longer balanced. It knocks it right off. You can't be that prescriptive.
>
> (Interview, manager, Cordia, Oct, 2009)

Ironically this manager's attempts to supply her staff with some of the flexibility she herself had been denied had failed. In response to recurring complaints about the rigidity of the menu, canteen managers had been regularly invited to supply new recipes which would be re-written to meet nutrient standards and included on the menu. The manager reported that, 'in all these years I've had only one recipe submitted; it's part of the manual now'.

Without exception, all the actors shared the view that the enforced restrictions imposed on menu creation by the HfS nutrient standards were creating menus which would reduce meal uptake. Speaking in business terms, a senior Cordia manager described the inflexibility of the Government's restrictions as:

> dangerous to our business model, and in terms of customer satisfaction, hugely dangerous. A degree of local flexibility is required where you are faced with challenges in some of the inner city areas in Glasgow.
>
> (Interview, Oct, 2009)

Continued requests to Government for an extended 'bedding in' period for parts of Glasgow had been refused and there was a consensus among all the actors that the prescriptive nature of the nutrient standards, particularly with their emphasis on the removal of salt and sugar from menus would 'drive pupils out of dinner halls' (Interview, Glasgow Councillor, Sept, 2009).

In contrast to the rigidity of the imposed nutrient levels, local authorities were given a great deal of flexibility in the way in which they chose to deliver the menus.

However some Glasgow actors found it unhelpful to be given examples of best practice successfully being implemented in other local authorities and suggested the promotion of some successful deliveries was an indication of the Government's 'misplaced conviction' that 'somehow one size can fit all':

> Rural Ayrshire has been experimenting with local organic food. Well that's good and it's been hugely successful, but you can't translate that to the middle of Glasgow. We don't have farmers' wives. One shoe does not fit all. There has to be flexibility built in to meet the needs and issues and difficulties of this area, and I'm equally sure that every area has its own set of requirements.   .
>   (Interview, manager, Cordia, Sep, 2009)

Standardization at local level

The requirement of enforced standardization did not only apply to nutrient content across Scotland. Paradoxically, given Glasgow's complaints about the enforced homogenisation, Cordia itself had implemented HfS in a way which tried to ensure that menu content be standardised across every Glasgow school. The argument was that, while smaller local authorities with fewer schools may be able to be more flexible in terms of allowing individual schools to create their own menus, allowing that flexibility in Glasgow schools would make it impossible for Cordia to maintain health and safety standards. The inflexibility was necessary to protect 'vulnerable clients' from hazards such as food poisoning. If individual cooks were allowed to experiment without central testing there would be difficulties guaranteeing standards and the numbers involved prohibited any possibility of centrally-testing different menu suggestions from every school. Additionally, a standardised approach helped to ensure there were no inequalities across very large areas where some schools might already have enjoyed advantages because of demographic differences (Interview, Cordia management). While Cordia may have had justifiable reasons for its standardisation of menus, it can be seen in the chapter on schools delivery (p.121) that canteen staff felt constrained by them in the same way that Glasgow itself did by the Government's imposition of a 'one size fits all' policy.

However, there were allowances made for particular circumstances. Individual schools could make some decisions about best practice for them in terms of presenting the food. Schools which reported a particularly low take-up on an unpopular option were offered alternatives, either with a new option altogether or an altered recipe. The inclusion of Halal meals on school menus also depended on each school's circumstances, but they had to be available if there was any demand. It was possible that one school would produce only Halal meals while its neighbour might deliver none. One small primary school was able to introduce a Halal option onto the menu within 24 hours of a Muslim parent enrolling five new pupils and requesting that the menu be changed to accommodate them. The area manager for the school took some pride in the way in which her entire team had demonstrated their adaptability in providing that service so quickly (Interview, Oct, 2009).

Role interpretations

Again, as with communication, it became obvious that in terms of discretion, the importance of individual commitment to HfS played an essential role in policy delivery. One Councillor (Interview, Sep, 2009) reported that he had seen short-staffed canteen assistants struggling to maintain service while the canteen manager could be seen 'sitting doing paperwork'. A head teacher (Interview, Nov,2008) complained that, when teachers were absent she would work in the classroom and would not have the option of claiming, as the canteen manager had done, that her designated timetable and job description prevented her from 'mucking in'. As has been demonstrated elsewhere, the discretion allowed to an individual in interpreting their workload could also lead to improved service delivery. The area manager who regularly organised more than the minimum number of required feedback sessions gave several examples of how this extra engagement with her staff had enabled her to respond quickly and effectively to problems which had arisen.
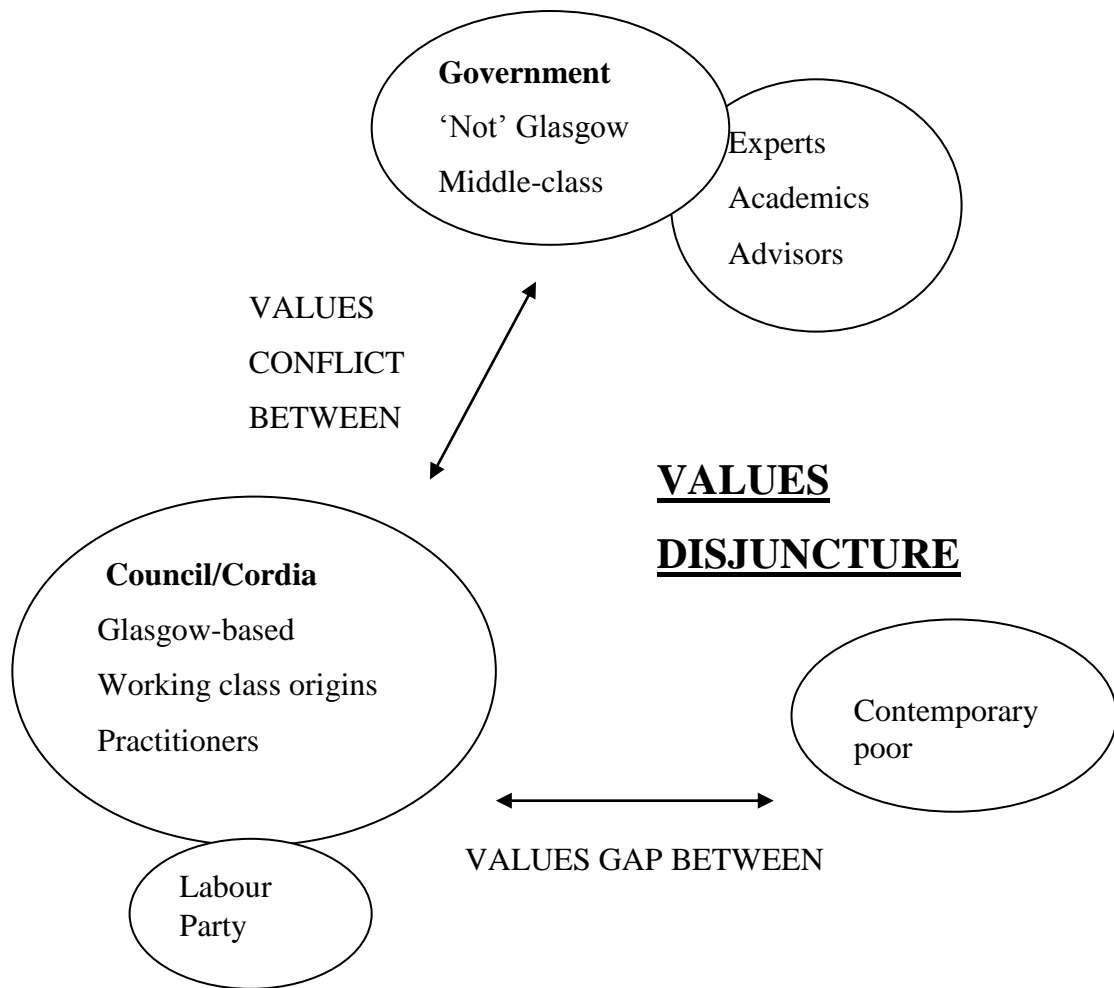
Culture and Values

Cultural and values conflict was most clearly pronounced between the actors at local authority level and those in Government. The actors in Cordia and with Glasgow Council appeared to be one cohesive community, sharing similar origins and self-identifying as 'Glaswegian'. Additionally most members of this community also represented themselves as being 'workers in the field', setting themselves apart from those they considered to be only theorists. All but one of the elected representatives involved were also members of the same political party (Labour). The Glasgow community perceived the Government as being out of touch with the reality of life in their city, advised by academics and theorists and experts and without any practical or personal experience of poverty or its results.

An additional cultural/values disjuncture was identified between this Glasgow level community and the poorest Glasgow families. Despite their own working class backgrounds and expressed empathy with the plight of the poor, there was a clear cultural gap apparent in expressed concerns about the behaviours of some of those living in contemporary poverty. The figure below illustrates the complexity of the values relationships between Government level, Glasgow level and the poorest recipients.

Values Disjunctures: Glasgow, Government and the poorest policy recipients.

Government
'Not' Glasgow
Middle-class

Experts
Academics
Advisors

VALUES
CONFLICT
BETWEEN

VALUES

DISJUNCTURE

Council/Cordia
Glasgow-based
Working class origins
Practitioners

Contemporary
poor

VALUES GAP BETWEEN

Labour
Party

Cultural values homogeneity at local level

In theory, the creation of Cordia had meant that the LLP would be operated at arms' length from the Council with its own agenda in terms of finance and targets. The reality was that the two presented very much as part of the same community.

The actors within Cordia and Glasgow Council shared both similar demographic backgrounds and a strong attachment to the city of Glasgow. Among the shared values and experiences which united this community were similar employment paths.

A common thread among these actors, all with professional jobs in senior management, was that a majority of them described their family of origin as 'working class' and said they had reached their present position by working their way up from the bottom. Actors shared similar educational backgrounds; most had worked their way from very junior to senior positions within the same employment stream and had relationships with each other extending back over tens of years.

This presentation of the two organisations as one community was further strengthened by the way in which elected representatives, council officers and Cordia employees also shared an expressed commitment to their city and mostly self-identified as Glaswegian. This may be somewhat whimsical in this context but there was a shared representation of the city as a much-loved but badly-behaved child, with the actors in the roles of frustrated parents who were determined eventually to win through. Everyone at this level shared the view that Glasgow's acknowledged poor health record and relative general poverty meant that the city should be regarded as 'a special case', requiring extra attention and patience and funds in order to address its particular difficulties. Even the one dissenting SNP councillor, who had pointed out that there were other parts of Scotland with similar levels of deprivation, accepted that the scale of disadvantage in Glasgow exceeded that of other areas (Interview, Oct, 2009).

The consequence of this shared background was that as well as their professional involvement in their work, many of them expressed an emotional engagement with those disadvantaged Glasgow families who could perhaps most benefit from successful HfS delivery. This engagement, however, was tempered with frustration at the differences between their own experiences of poverty and the behaviour of contemporary disadvantaged families. This in turn revealed an unexpected cultural values gap with the potential to impact upon policy delivery. The actors' recollections of their own childhoods involved traditional Scottish food cooked by working mothers or grandmothers who, despite relative poverty, had nonetheless produced nourishing meals in the form of soup and 'mince and tatties'. So despite a strongly expressed empathy with the hardships and special needs of poverty based on

personal experience, their own experience and cultural behaviours had been different from that exhibited by contemporary families living in poverty. Families currently suffering third generation unemployment and unequipped with even the most basic cooking skills represented a level of disadvantage which they had not experienced.

> You have children who have never eaten a home-cooked meal at a table.
> (Interview, manager, Cordia, Sep, 2009)

> There are quite terrifying cultural differences in the city and I think Glasgow City Council has put lots of policies in to try and change that, but policies don't change culture – they're just not hitting the mark.
> (Interview, Glasgow councillor D, Oct, 2009)

> There are big challenges and a lot of them are cultural. Not just poverty of income, but poverty of knowledge and of education and of aspiration.
> (Interview, Glasgow councillor E, Oct, 2009)

This combination of empathising with the poverty but not really understanding some connected behaviours made some actors doubly frustrated that merely presenting healthy options was not in itself enough to overcome the cultural disjuncture between the recipiemts and those delivering the policy.

> We have the new healthy living centre, but no-one who lives there uses it. Maybe I exaggerate but they won't cross the road to go in and do the classes.
> (Interview, Glasgow councillor, Sep, 2009)

> It's all very well having robust nutritional standards and encouraging them to stay in, but you still can't make them eat the vegetables, if they don't want to.
> (Interview, manager, Cordia, Sep, 2009)

Cultural disjuncture between Scottish government and Glasgow

The most acute cultural disharmony occured between actors at local authority level and those in Government. The existence of party political differences may have been

a contributory factor but party differences were not clearly articulated as a source of conflict except by some Labour elected representatives. Council officials and Cordia staff stated that the change of power had made little difference to relations with the Government. It should be noted that while HfS was originated by one political party (Labour), it was then implemented by a subsequent government with a different political-make-up[18], but the argument that Government had sometimes failed to respond to Glasgow's particular demographic needs was one which had existed even when the majority political parties at Government and Glasgow levels were one and the same. The suggestion that this difficulty was exacerbated after the change in political power occurred was raised by Labour's supporters, but denied by Scottish National Party (SNP) supporters. The party political conflict between those in control of Glasgow and those in control of the Government would be unlikely to have improved communication, but whatever the truth of the matter, it was not generally cited as a cause of conflict. Only Labour politicians suggested the situation had been made worse by the post-election political conflict.

However the Glasgow community as a whole was united in a strong perception that Government had failed or refused to accept the special needs of their city's most disadvantaged families. The difficulties in addressing any delivery problems resulting from culture disjuncture were seen to be caused by a policy designed without the flexibility to accommodate cultural differences of this nature (Interviews: Cordia managers, council officers, councillors, Oct, 2009) .

While HfS delivery had succeeded in many primary schools in terms of meals uptake, there were concerns about the policy's failure to engage with older children and with what was considered to be poor evidence that the provision of a healthy lunch would have any wider impact on children's food behaviours outside school. The Glasgow community blamed the gap between policy aspirations and delivery to

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18 See footnote 21HfS started life as a policy, with support from all parties, under the then Labour-controlled Scottish Government. The Scottish National Party inherited it when they took control after the 2007 election. Glasgow was one of only two Scottish local authorities which remained under Labour control after that election

the poorest on the Government's failure to recognise the extent of the cultural differences between the 'normal majority' and the city's most disadvantaged. (Interviews: Cordia managers, council officers, councillors, Oct, 2009).

> The policy as it exists is lacking any recognition of cultural extremes, of anything outside 'middle' and 'normal'. HfS is targeting averages and what is average?
> (Interview, manager, Cordia, Oct, 2009)

> This might work for 80 per cent of the kids, but what about the other 20 per cent.
> (Interview, manager, Cordia, Sep, 2009)

The nutritional restrictions imposed by Government were described as 'alien, particularly to the diet on the west coast of Scotland, where people are used to high, high salt content. Of course there isn't any salt now, so to them it will be tasteless'. The refusal by the government to allow Glasgow some kind of dispensation to phase in sugar and salt reduction and the other dietary restrictions would 'drive kids out of the dinner halls'. Actors argued that Glasgow's cultural problems were additionally compounded by the city's retail environment. Dietary restrictions could be successfully implemented in isolation in some areas because the schools themselves were 'in isolation'. There were schools in Scotland with no surrounding shops and no consequent temptation to leave the school grounds at lunchtime. Glasgow suffered from a proliferation of fast food outlets selling poor quality lunches. HfS significantly restricted what the schools could sell and had placed a duty on the schools to promote health, but there had been no legislation to 'control whether kids can leave at lunchtime or what can be sold outside' (Interview, manager, Cordia, Oct, 2009).

> We have one school and within 250 yards there are 40 different offerings ranging in terms of health and diet from mediocre to the utterly appalling. You have these shops opening specially to take £600 in a week selling chips and curry sauce at lunchtime and we are telling these kids stay in school where you can't even buy fruit juice unless it's below 250mls, where you can't buy flavoured water or bag of crisps. Oh and there's no salt or sugar in the meal.
> (Interview, manager, Cordia, Oct, 2009)

Despite accusations that the policy failed to recognise or accommodate the extremes of cultural behaviour, of which Glasgow would say it had more than its fair share, the Government was not unaware of these problems. Senior Cordia managers and local politicians had all made representations to the Government about Glasgow's special needs, for which they wanted recognition in the form of concessions and special allowances and a different timetable. The difference was in approach. While Glasgow asked that the final and most restrictive phase of HfS be phased in at a pace which it thought the city could manage, the Government's redistributive view was that to do so would only prolong the agony. Their counter argument was that if the bar were set high enough, everyone would rise to it. On both the original HfS expert panel and the more recent HfS Bill Working Group, practitioners working closely and regularly with the targeted recipients (school children) had been largely outnumbered by experts. The decision not to allow policy flexibility, and instead to go for the more aspirational 'purist' approach was blamed on too much time spent listening to experts rather than practitioners.

> I do put a lot of blame on these academics and nutritionists for the state we are now in. I do think a lot of them rarely come out of their ivory towers and see what's going on and a lot of the fault lies there.
> (Interview, manager, Cordia, Oct. 2009)

Those with daily experience of behaviour patterns in school dinner halls had a different perspective on the needs of the policy recipients from the theoretical nutritionists and other experts.

One final issue which relates to cultural differences was the identification of the most disadvantaged as a community which was unable to make effective representation of its views in the way that other cultural groups had succeeded in doing. As a lobby group, those in extreme poverty failed to present themselves as a political force. The obvious political pressure exerted when it came to meeting the special requirements of religious or ethnic groups, was not extended to accommodating the culture of the

poorest families, although there was, for example 'huge amounts of effort expended to get the food right for the Asian kids, for the Muslim kids' (Interview, manager, Cordia, Sep, 2009).

Conclusion

Research at this level has identified several issues which impacted upon implementation.

Communication between Cordia and the Council appeared to be effective and cohesive. Several different communication and monitoring network systems were in place within the organisation which worked as a baseline. Additional communication successes depended upon different management styles and the work ethos of individuals. The fact that those who worked most closely with the schools were least likely to accept that statistics about meal uptake represented an accurate picture of consumption suggests that meal uptake alone should not be taken as an indicator of successful policy delivery.

The evidence suggests that much of the communication between the local authority level and Government only operated in one direction, with the Government failing to respond positively to feedback or policy suggestions which did not fit within what was viewed as a specific agenda to ensure standardisation of content and the delivery timetable across Scotland. The main area of conflict here was between the Government's aim to raise the nutrition bar for *all* of Scotland's school children by using one template across all the local authorities and Glasgow's conviction that concessions needed to be made to bring on board those children from the most disadvantaged families. Glasgow's experience was that the poorest children, that is, those children the hypothesis argues who were least likely to be culturally in tune with the new menus, would not accept such prescriptive menu changes. Evidence to support Glasgow's concerns about this issue's impact on policy delivery will be examined in the next chapter.

Monitoring by HMIE inspectors was only able to reflect accurately the short period during which the inspection took place.

In terms of discretion, while the Government had allowed councils to design their own menus and set their own budgets, the nutrient content of all meals had to be strictly adhered to. In Glasgow, the prescriptive nature of the nutrient content had made it difficult for actors to design healthy meals which would be attractive to children whose usual diets fell outside culturally 'normal' eating patterns. It was feared rightly as it turned out that the rigid application of the nutrient standards would drive some children away from school dinners. There was some flexibility allowed to individual schools in the way the food was presented but health and safety considerations meant that canteen staff were not allowed to introduce any variation on the menu prescribed by Cordia central office. The consequences of these various Government and Glasgow imposed menu limits will be examined in the next chapter.

A significant cultural and values disjuncture was identified between Glasgow and the Government. The conflict centred on disagreement over the most effective way to tackle delivery problems which might arise because of the city's particularly high level of poverty. The Government maintained that by promoting a standardised nutrient content and time table across Scotland, less advantaged areas would be encouraged to step up to the mark and would be encouraged to adopt the food behaviours promoted by HfS. Glasgow argued that successful policy delivery would be more likely if there were allowances made for those cultural differences in food behaviours associated with the poorer social class.

There was little if any cultural conflict identified at this stage of the research within the local authority level. Actors at Cordia and Glasgow performed as one community with shared values and aims. They additionally displayed strong cultural empathy with families on low incomes while recognising that the culture of the most disadvantaged was far removed from their own experience of food behaviours.

Chapter 5

DELIVERY IN THE SCHOOLS

> [A design perspective should] ... reflect a perspective that recognises the power of individuals to impact policy implementation and establishes a framework where competing values are uncovered and examined.
>
> (Duemer and Mendez-Morse, 2002: 50)

This chapter explores what happens to HfS during the final stage of its journey to the children who are its targeted recipients. The final stage of policy delivery takes place within schools. The exploration is based on data collected from the actors within the schools environment.

The introduction to this thesis identified three critical factors in the policy chain with a bearing on policy success. The first was communication between actors at different stages in the policy process. Successful communication of policy is important in the implementation of any policy, but an actor's understanding of the wider policy context may have particular repercussions at the point of delivery when the policy is seeking to change behaviour. This chapter, therefore, asks how much and what kind of knowledge about HfS had been communicated to those who were participating in the policy process within the schools? What had been the source of that information and by what means had it been conveyed? Was communication a one-way channel or had provision been made for reciprocation?

A second factor with the potential to impact on policy shape was the discretion that actors at different stages were able to operate in the course of implementing the policy. Flexibility in the implementation of policy can have both negative and positive impacts on outcome. The amount of discretion formally allowed for in the process may not be the same as that employed by the actor at the point of delivery.

So this chapter seeks to identify if there is a difference between the formal allocation of discretion according to the policy design and what happened in practice.

The third issue and the most significant according to the hypothesis, related to culture and values. It has been argued that values disjuncture between actors or communities at neighbouring stages in the process might undermine successful policy implementation. It has been further hypothesised that values disjuncture between policy creators and policy recipients might further negatively impact upon policy success. This chapter, therefore, seeks to identify culture and values in relation towards foods and eating behaviours which might influence the engagement of actors with HfS. To what degree were actors familiar with the menu content of HfS? Were the eating behaviours encouraged or enforced at school similar or different to those experienced at home? This chapter also explores whether actors within the schools might share a collective cultural identity and asks if the existence of such a cultural identity might influence that community's orientation towards HfS.

The overarching hypothesis of the research is that value disjuncture in policy implementation will be particularly sharp at the point of delivery where policy recipients are located in a disadvantaged socio-economic milieu that does not subscribe to the values that inform the policy. Research in the schools was designed to test this hypothesis by investigating the effect of variation in social class on the intensity of value conflict and its impact on policy delivery. The selection of schools[19] was designed to capture variation in the socio-economic environment in which HfS is delivered. School A was located in a relatively middle class area of the city. Schools B and C by contrast were in areas of acute socio-economic disadvantage.

This chapter presents the evidence found within the schools[20] under the three main headings of Communication, Education and Knowledge, Discretion and Flexibility,

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19 A description of the three schools can be found in Appendix B

and thirdly, Culture and Values. Within each section the data from each of the communities will contribute to the whole, with observational data included where relevant.

Communication, Education and Knowledge

One of the wider objectives of this research was to explore whether an understanding of the policy origins and context would lead to a more successful implementation. Any analysis of whether support for a policy can increase implementation success depends upon first determining how much those who are responsible for delivery understand the policy and their role in delivering it. So one of the intentions in examining the communication channels at this level was to explore to what degree actors understood and felt part of the process. Were they simply given instructions or was there more to it than that, and if so did that impact upon the way they did their designated job?   Were policy aims being misinterpreted as a result of poor communication?

There are several discrete dimensions to communication. There is top-down communication, most often communication to the schools from outside bodies elsewhere in the policy chain, usually from the local authority. Additionally schools may also sometimes be in receipt of information which comes direct from Government level, by-passing the local authority. This dimension would also include communication from the school to parents. With policy which seeks to change behaviour, communication between levels of implementation may need to be more than instructions accurately conveyed and successfully carried out and monitored. There is the potential for policy actors at schools' level to feel that they are involved in more than just a rudimentary implementation of a particular system of agreed activities. Certainly the HfS policymakers had envisaged a process where implementation actors were 'brought on board' in terms of understanding the broader context of what the policy had been designed to achieve (Interview, civil servant, Jul, 2009). On this basis it was important to find out the kind of information actors had been given about what their function in this process was to be and from where

the information had been delivered. Did actors feel that they were simply instruments of implementation or did they feel any ownership of the policy? Had education staff attempted to inform and educate parents about HfS either indirectly through successful engagement with their pupils or by communicating directly with parents?

A second dimension of communication is the channel between schools and the local authority, or the Government. Even those who have not been involved in the creation of a policy may feel more engaged in its implementation if their views are sought as part of a policy assessment. Had opportunities for feedback been provided? Were actors aware of implementation monitoring and did they feel that their feedback was needed or appreciated?

A third channel of communication is that which takes place *within* the school. Although this chapter deals with implementation at 'schools' level, the schools in this context should not be viewed as one cohesive unit or link in the policy chain. Schools may in some instances meet part of the criteria for a 'policy community' where mutual interdependence might foster shared values among the actors within that institution. In this study there were clear divisions between education and catering staff. Within the schools, three distinct communities were identified: staff employed by the catering and services division of the local authority, with responsibility for the preparation and presentation of the centrally-devised menus according to the HfS remit; teachers employed by the education department responsible for the supervision of the children during lunch times; and the school children themselves – the 'policy recipients'. The existence of these distinct strands within these schools provided further opportunity for communication success or failure both *between* those separate education and catering-based divisions and *within* the existing management hierarchies of those kitchen and non-kitchen staff.

In terms of the original HfS policy design, the need for effective communication channels was clearly recognised and emphasised. The details of *how* these channels should be structured and implemented were left up to individual schools and local authorities to organise although there were recommendations of best practice as to

how this might be achieved. Among the recommendations was the suggestion that schools should employ regular self-evaluation and were encouraged to do so by Government supplied pro-forma documents. The importance of top-down communication and feedback processes were acknowledged within the original policy design, but again these were disseminated in the form of recommendations, not directives.

Government monitoring of Scotland-wide HfS delivery success was to be based upon the take-up figures for school meals as relayed by local authorities and additionally upon individual school reports provided by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools (HMI), where the standard HMI report was to be expanded to include monitoring of HfS delivery by specially trained inspectors (*see* p. 85-87). These HMI reports were to be supplied to the schools concerned and were to be made available to local authorities.

Initiation (top-down communication)

The first point of contact between a new policy and those responsible for delivery provides an opportunity to set up efficient channels of communication which should benefit overall implementation. In the schools visited, with very few exceptions, the staff did not think that opportunity had been taken. The majority of actors had learned about HfS from unofficial sources. Catering assistants at schools B and C, and some senior teaching staff could not recall any formal attempts being made to brief them on the original HfS policy. The perception of catering staff at school A was different in that they thought their management had kept them 'in the loop', although there was little evidence to support this different perception. Introductory communications about HfS to most actors from both local authority and Government levels had been poor and uncoordinated. Subsequent ongoing communication focused only on meal content, not on the ethos (Interviews; teaching and catering staff, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009) surrounding the meal content.

Staff impressions of their initial introduction to HfS, some eight years previously, were of a policy imposed upon them. The actors had no recollection of prior consultations or of the policy being presented to them in a way which had attempted to engage them in their roles (Interviews, catering staff, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009). There had been an initial flurry of activity - a 'large fanfare' of rebranding of the kitchens and menus with tasting sessions of the new menu, but ongoing official communications in the form of e-mails and leaflets emphasised menu content, not context (Interview, head teacher, school C, Nov, 2008). E-mails came from the local authority catering services division, providing information about menu changes. Central government's education department sent leaflets or occasionally 'hefty policy documents' (head teacher, school C). Some catering staff recalled that when HfS had been initiated, senior staff had gone for a day or half a day's induction although no-one remembered being part of any earlier consultation process about the way in which it might work:

> We weren't asked for any objections against it, you know
> what I mean, it's just done and dusted what comes to us.
> We've got no input.
> (Interview, senior catering assistant,who was acting catering
> manager at school C at the time of HfS launch, Nov, 2008)

Those who had been promoted to senior positions in subsequent years were not given specific HfS training sessions but attended meetings twice yearly based around the bi-annual menu changes where some context was provided (catering manager, school C). A dinner hall supervisor, who had worked for 20 years on lunchtime duty at the same school, knew about HfS because she keeps her 'eyes and ears open'. Her formal training, however, had been confined to ways of dealing with disruptive children (Interview, supervisor, school C, Nov, 2008).

Knowledge of the existence of HfS was nevertheless widespread among all schools staff and pupils. Everyone was aware that school meals had undergone changes as part of a campaign by the 'authorities' (variously referred to as the government, the council, MPs, schools) to promote healthy eating among Scotland's children, (Interviews, catering and education staff, pupils, schools A, B, and C, 2008, 2009).

However the greatest sum of actors' knowledge about HfS had come from newspapers and other media (Interviews, catering and education staff, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009). Although it could be said that from a marketing point of view, HfS had therefore achieved almost saturation brand recall, this did not appear to be as a consequence of effective, formal, inter-level policy communication.

Poor top-down communication had left catering staff at the two poorer schools unsupportive of a new regime which they regarded as inflexible and alienating to many of their children. While staff knew about 'obesity and health' , from reading the newspapers, there had been no official attempt to convey contextual input about why the new rules had to be imposed in such a rigid manner, 'they just brought it in and that was that' (Interview, catering assistant, School C, Nov, 2008). Catering staff had been given detailed prescriptions about salt and sugar levels. They were told what needed to be done and how to do it, but had not been told why. They did not feel part of any wider process to encourage healthy eating. On the contrary, they felt excluded from the policy decisions which they were required to implement. HfS information came only in the form of direction about the detail of food ingredients, display and distribution, always about the minutiae of what they should do and not about the reasons for doing it (Interviews, catering staff, schools B and C, 2008, 2009).

There was no evidence that catering staff at school A were given any further contextual information than their colleagues elsewhere but a different management and communication style had created a different perception. The staff's expressed isolation from the policy process at schools B and C was not shared by their peers at school A who were aware of the ethos of HfS and broadly supportive of it. Mutual communication channels between catering staff, management and teaching staff were effective and catering staff said they were additionally in receipt of regular updates on HfS policy in the form of leaflets sent to their homes (Interviews, catering staff, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009).

While more effective communication would not necessarily have converted the disgruntled catering staff at the other schools into enthusiastic supporters of HfS menus, it might have gone some way to alleviating their expressed frustration. There was no indication that they had been 'brought on board' in terms of understanding HfS. Instead there was resentment that their job was less pleasurable than it had been pre-HfS because they now felt they were making children unhappy. There was no sense that they were part of a process which could bring long-term health benefits to pupils.

There was however some evidence that the responsibility for this lack of engagement may not entirely have been as a result of top-down communication from outside the school. One recently-promoted head teacher had received no formal briefing about HfS in her previous role as deputy head but identified that communication gap as the responsibility of the head teacher in post at that time. As a new head teacher she had interpreted *her* responsibilities differently and had made the decision to disseminate any received HfS policy information to *her* deputy and to staff generally (Interview, head teacher, school A, Jan, 2009). Discretion is discussed in more detail in the next section, but this actor's experience of being able to define her own communications role illustrates a way in which implementation flexibility can impact upon communication channels.

Feedback

Despite the policy makers theoretical support for the importance of effective feedback systems, the majority of the actors had not had any opportunity for meaningful input into shaping the policy. Few of the actors were aware of any ongoing assessment of HfS. Those who had participated in feedback processes described them as paper exercises or focusing on figures rather than genuine attempts to canvass the views of the implementers.

Teaching staff, catering staff and pupils all felt their proximity to end-delivery of HfS gave them valuable, but untapped insights, into policy delivery. The emotion

most frequently voiced was one of frustration, coupled with the repeated refrain that 'of course' no-one was interested in what they had to say (Interview, teacher, school B, January, 2009). Catering staff in each of the schools expressed surprise that their views on the menus had not been canvassed. Staff at school C found this especially frustrating because they were aware that area meetings about school dinner menus were often held within their building;

> They all come in here for their meetings and to make up these new menus and we dinner women are here. So how come they no ever maybe say, what do you all think?
> (Interview, catering assistant, school C, Nov, 2008)

Catering staff felt removed from the decision-making process. Their views on the policy operation had not been canvassed and it was unimaginable to them that under the existing system anyone 'higher-up' would be interested in any opinions they expressed about their work (Interview, catering staff, schools B and C, 2008,2009). Dinner ladies in Schools B and C expressed the view that their job had been reduced to following a set of rigidly-imposed rules (although it will be demonstrated elsewhere that rule-breaking was common).

In contrast, catering staff in school A said they were confident that the existing 'chain of command' was aware of their views on HfS in general and on particular menus. This view appeared to be based on their individual relationship with their management and on their trust in their manager fairly to represent any concerns to her line-manager. There was, however no evidence that catering staff in school A actually enjoyed any more input or influence than those in schools B and C. Additionally, while school A staff clearly enjoyed a good working relationship with their management and with teaching staff, further questioning elicited very similar views to the other schools' staff about the need for more attention to be paid by decision-makers to their views about HfS. So although they had expressed a comparatively positive view of both HfS and of communication channels, they shared the view of their colleagues at schools B and C that HfS would benefit from listening to feedback from this end-link in the policy delivery chain (Interviews, catering staff, school A, Jan, 2009). There were no formalised feedback opportunities

provided for them. Catering managers were expected to complete feedback forms '*every few months*' but the process was described as having more to do with '*product control*' and reducing waste than with any broader questions about how or why the policy delivery was succeeding or failing (Interviews, catering managers, schools B and C, Jan, 2009).

Feedback channels of communication differed between catering and teaching staff in that the senior teachers all participated in regular evaluations of HfS. However these opportunities for feedback were limited to what was viewed as questions about quality control with no opportunity to expand responses in what the teachers considered would be a productive way.

> It's basically a 'yes' or 'no' system. There are maybe ten questions along the lines of: 'Do you feel this is right for the children?' or, 'Do you feel that is right for the children?' Well the comments that you make are just a yes or no. There is no space for you to actually have your input noted..
> (Interview, deputy head teacher, school C, Nov, 2008)

> There is a standard form to fill in, is the food hot enough? those sort of questions, but it does not seem to make any difference what you say. It does not change.
> (Interview, head teacher, school C, Nov, 2008)

Schools did provide feedback opportunities for parents both in the form of normal parental-school communication channels and in creating 'tasting sessions' where families were provided with the chance to sample menus. Responses were generally poor at schools B and C. Teaching staff there attributed a lack of effective communication with parents about HfS to various causes, many connected to recognised poverty-related issues such as educational limitations and disenfranchisement. One head teacher suggested that the ever-expanding health interventions introduced into schools – she cited teeth-cleaning as a particular example – had disempowered parents and undermined their confidence to the point where they felt unable to challenge the authorities on issues to do with health responsibility (head teacher, school B). It was also suggested that parents of children at the poorer schools were generally less confident about challenging existing

education mores, 'they're that frightened of causing trouble' (Interview, dining hall supervisor, school C, Nov, 2008). Certainly the articulate middle-class majority of parents at school A and a small minority of similar parents at school B had been vocal in their responses to the HfS menus (Interviews, teachers, schools A and B, Jan, 2009). These differences are reviewed in the next section.

Given concerns about job security, the difficulties of persuading employees to speak honestly about what they might see as the short-comings of their employers are obvious. The guaranteed anonymity of this research process did result in some robust criticism of the policy and of employers. It might be difficult for an employer to encourage similarly frank feedback in a formal work forum, whatever the form of communication channel employed.

Internal school communications

There was a marked contrast in the perception of internal communications between adult actors within the schools. The view among those interviewed in schools B and C was that communication was poor. In school A staff expressed confidence in the communication processes. In contrast there was consensus among pupils across the schools that they had all received information from official sources about HfS – albeit in a compartmentalised form. In this context, effective communication included some attempt to encourage parental engagement and support. Attempts to engage parents in HfS had been very successful in school A and failed in school C.

As referred to earlier, the schools were not cohesive units. The opportunity for communication success or failure was increased by the existence of different communities within the school and the subsequent need for different channels of communication both *between* and *within* the two communities, best understood as kitchen-based and non kitchen-based staff. As it happens there was little indication of staff hierarchies impacting upon communication within the non-catering staff, but in Schools B and C there was evidence of communication gaps both between managers and non-managers within the kitchen and of communication conflicts between the

actors on either side of the catering counter. This was especially pronounced within schools B and C where the two distinct strands of actors with separate responsibilities for HfS appeared to operate as separate communities. Whereas relations and consequently communications between kitchen and non-kitchen staff at school A were cordial and productive, the kitchen staff in schools B and C expressed views which indicated their strongest loyalties were to smaller community units, defined by management hierarchy, peer loyalty and job function (Interviews, teaching and catering staff, schools, A, B, and C, 2008, 2009)

The other schools-based communication channels with the potential to demonstrate the way in which poor or successful communication might have policy impacts were the connections between the school staff who were delivering the policy and the pupils who were their target recipients. While teachers appeared to have successfully taught children about the HfS ethos and context in classroom-based theoretical discussions, the relationship between the theory of healthy eating and the new 'healthy' food options on their dinner menus was not always understood by the children (observations, 2008, 2009, focus groups, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009).

It was apparent that there were pre-existing differences in the communication styles of the different schools from the first contact that was made for interview requests. The detail of these contrasting communication approaches centred around each school's relationship with pupils' parents (*see* Appendix B). However this suggests that the additional differences which were observed across the schools in the administration of HfS may reflect a wider communication issue rather than a specific response to HfS policy.

Successful policy communication may to some degree be dependent upon different management styles – some managers are better communicators than others – but it may also depend upon whether individuals are supportive of the policy they are implementing. That support itself may depend upon successful communication. There were evident differences in the perceived relationship between management and catering staff between schools B and C and the school A, but also and perhaps

crucially between the dinner ladies and management *within* schools B and C. It was not obvious whether poor communication was the result of pre-existing management-staff tensions, or whether poor communication about HfS had made relationships worse.

As indicated earlier, catering staff in school A saw their relationship with management in mostly positive terms. Teaching staff shared this view and this less rigid division was reflected in the way in which the education staff were able to negotiate extra or different food for pupils with particular problems. However in schools B and C, while the management view was that there was effective communication with the catering assistants, the catering staff themselves did not agree.

While management spoke of how they all worked as 'a team' and that they took seriously their responsibility 'to pass on the information, to relay it to the girls', the catering assistants' view of their relationship with management was radically different.

> We're told what to do, and we do it.
>
> She's in charge. She knows what she wants.
> We do that what she tells us.
> (Interviews, catering assistants, school C, Nov, 2008)

Further analysis of the interviews suggests that there is a possible explanation for this apparent contradiction in perception of the success of policy communication. It seems possible that managers at schools B and C may indeed pass on as much information as they receive - but that the problem could be that they receive very little information themselves and that the communication gap, if there is one, is elsewhere in the policy chain. The fact that management at schools B and C found official HfS top-down communication limited to twice yearly menu change meetings and feedback forms about product control, indicates that there may have been little information to communicate to staff. While catering staff complained about this lack of communication, management appeared content to accept the status quo (Interview,

catering manager, school C, Nov, 2008). So this apparent contradiction between the manager who reported that she told her team everything and the team which said they were told nothing could be understood in the context of a manager who may herself have been isolated, however acceptingly, from an effective communication channel. The differences of perception between catering staff in school A and schools B and C in this instance may be traced to the manager's individual styles. Observation and interviews revealed that relationships between managers and catering assistants in schools B and C were poor, whereas a good rapport existed between the manager and catering staff at school A.

Schools B and C also suffered from an additional level of 'miscommunication' between teaching staff and catering staff, with particularly poor communication between the catering manager of school C and the head teacher and her deputy, resulting in explicit conflict over the way in which the detail of HfS should be implemented. Interviewees had observed stand-off confrontations between the manager and head teacher when the latter had attempted to introduce some menu flexibility in situations where a child had become distressed and the former had cited the need 'to stick to the rules' for not doing so. Because of the division of HfS implementation responsibility between the catering and education services, the head teacher had no jurisdiction over the catering and the result was a struggle over territorial *and policy* control. The extreme nature of this particular situation may be unusual but it occurred at all only because of the way HfS had been operationalised (Interviews, catering and teaching staff, school C, Nov, 2008). Further evidence of the poor communication relationships between catering and teaching staff was apparent in school B where catering staff were openly critical of the way the teaching staff '*made the pupils eat stuff they didn't want to*' and were sympathetic towards those children who were negative about the food offered. This contrast in attitudes was visibly communicated to the children being served in a manner which was observed to influence the food options selected and could be assumed to influence the pupils' own attitudes toward HfS. In contrast, the catering assistants at school A, where there were no similar expressions of isolation from the policy process, were

aware of the ethos of HfS and broadly supportive of it (Interviews, catering staff, school A, Jan, 2009).

The issues of menu flexibility or rules interpretation will be looked at in more detail in the section on discretion, but effective communication of policy, especially with a clearer definition of hierarchy or areas of responsibility would reduce the potential for conflict of this nature.

Pupils and parents

There were broad contrasts in the extent of parental engagement with HfS, but it was apparent that the degree of effectiveness of communication channels between school and parents on this policy very much reflected broader parental involvement in other aspects of school life. All three schools had made attempts to engage parents with HfS. All of the schools sent menu changes home with the children and had tried to elicit family support to encourage healthy eating by organising tasting sessions. Responses had been very different. Teaching staff had experienced such difficulties in interesting parents at school C in HfS promotions that they had given up organising the taster sessions for new menus and incoming parents because the response had been so negative and take-up negligible. Similar problems had been experienced at school B in the past, but in recent years a combination of changing demographics and strong health promotion had produced more positive results. Some parents had attended and enjoyed taster sessions at a recent health promotion week. There was now some increase in family support for the healthy menus, although one of the effects of first year taster sessions had been that parents now supplied packed lunch on the days when their children did not like the options offered (Interview, head teacher, school B, Jan.2009). At school A, parental engagement and support for healthy eating was such that pro-active parents initiated activities and behaviours to extend the scope of the ethos of HfS. Regular tasting sessions for parents and incoming first year children were well attended, (Interview, teachers, A, Jan, 2009).

These and additional examples of contrasting levels of parental involvement are looked at in more detail in the section on cultural influences on successful policy implementation, but this different range of responses to the introduction of taster sessions does highlight the difficulties of finding a communication/education formula that fits across the board. The inability to communicate effectively with parents at school C had created a situation where parents supported their children's 'right' to refuse food they disliked. The end result was that some parents at schools B and C viewed HfS as an imposition, creating further tension between families and schools where alienation of parents from the education system was already a problem (Interviews, teachers and catering staff, schools B and C, 2008, 2009).

Children at all of the schools demonstrated a good theoretical understanding of the HfS ethos although there were gaps in the application of that knowledge to their own lives, especially in schools B and C. The majority of children had learned about the benefits of healthy eating in school and a large majority of children at school A had additionally learned about being healthy from their own families. Many of the children understood healthy eating in terms of media coverage of promotions by celebrity chefs (Interviews, focus groups, pupils, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009).

Discretion and Flexibility

The shape of a policy may be modified by actors exercising discretion during the implementation process. However, an actor can only impact upon the final form when the policy design has afforded them, either deliberately or accidently, the opportunity to do so. The exploration of the potential influence of individual or community values on policy implementation is therefore redundant if the policy has been designed in such a way as to prohibit any opportunity to influence its shape through discretionary activities. As such, an actor's relationship with a particular policy may become relevant only in correlation to the amount of discretion the actor is allowed.

The evidence from the schools' level indicated a variety of ways in which discretion could influence a policy outcome. There was a distinct difference between the theoretical amount of discretion that was allowed and what happened in practice. There was also a difference between the perception, particularly in the poorer schools, of how constrained actors were by HfS and the reality of how actors' behaviour challenged that constraint. Some actors who were either poorly-informed about, or unsympathetic to, HfS performed actions which impacted negatively upon policy delivery. Their reasons for doing so and their understanding of the consequences of their actions were often complex and contradictory but rarely seen as being deliberate 'sabotage'. Other actors who were broadly sympathetic to the wider aims of HfS policy nevertheless acted in ways which re-shaped delivery because they challenged the effectiveness of the design detail in achieving the policy aims. Much of the rule-breaking seemed to be motivated by a desire to 'help the pupils' rather than undermine the regulations. Other modifications to policy appeared to result from a desire to meet budget targets. Those actors responsible for supervising meal times were often inconsistent in their behaviour which resulted, ultimately, in HfS being delivered in different ways on different days to different children. There was an almost universal consensus that increased menu flexibility would promote a greater uptake of meals and result in less food waste, but not necessarily of the kind of food promoted in the HfS menus.

Behind the counter: management, catering staff and catering assistants

In theory, the amount of discretion available was very limited in terms of food preparation and presentation. The menus were designed in such a way as to prevent any room for manoeuvre within the parameters provided and ensure that every school within this local authority would offer the same options on the same day. Catering staff were supplied with very precise recipes as to food preparation and photographic guidelines as to how each meal should be presented. Each school was expected to offer three specific and different options every day, to include at least one vegetarian and one Halal meal. Each of the three main dishes was to be served

with a specified hot vegetable accompaniment or cold vegetable 'salad', presented as a complete meal. Pupils were to be given the meal in its entirety, with no provision made for individual preferences and with no option of refusing part of the meal selected. Theoretically the only area in which catering managers were able to demonstrate some flexibility was over the proportions of types of meals served. If the designated menu choices offered were to be lasagne, chicken curry and cheese toasties for 100 pupils, then she would decide what proportion of that 100 would be lasagne, curry or toasties. That decision would be based on her knowledge of what the children would be likely to choose, but constrained by the further direction that the proportions must be reasonable. Even if she knew that 100 children would choose lasagne she would not be permitted only to serve the lasagne 'option'.

In practice, the degree of discretion exercised often depended on how much supervision was in place. Although many actors complained about what they saw as strictly enforced rules, the same actors identified ways in which those rules were routinely bent or completely disregarded. Catering staff in particular in schools B and C emphasised how little flexibility they were afforded by the delivery system, then contradicted this view by providing examples of the ways in which the system was subverted (Interviews, catering staff, schools B and C, Jan, 2009).
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One example would be the catering manager who, while recognising that she was 'not allowed to make any changes' as a way of ensuring exact uniformity across the local authority, nonetheless participated in practises that undermined HfS ethos. At both schools B and C, and despite the central direction that only complete meals be available to the children, pupils were given the choice of whether to have the designated accompanying vegetable/salad placed on their meal tray. In recognition of the fact that only a minority of children would choose the whole meal, the catering manager ensured that the numbers of portions of vegetables prepared did not ever correspond to the number of main options prepared (Interviews, catering staff and management, schools B and C, 2008, 2009). Instead of automatically serving the vegetable as specified, children were offered the choice of whether to have an accompanying vegetable. Most declined. During one observation session, out of 120

meals served, only seven children were seen to opt for the additional vegetable (observation, school C, Nov, 2008). The catering assistants said there was nothing unusual about that. During three weeks of lunchtime observation in schools B and C only between 5 per cent and 20 per cent of pupils regularly accepted the offer of a vegetable addition to their meal. The take-up was noticeably less in school C. Management and staff knew that all meals *should* be served with vegetables, but argued that preparing vegetables just to see them thrown away was wasteful.

> Common sense says that if you see the vegetables aren't going well, then why make the vegetables, when they don't take the vegetables?
> (Interview, catering assistant, school C, Nov, 2008)

A similar system to avoid waste was used at School B,

> to keep the children happy. Aye, say for talking's sake I'll be sent 44 portions of steak pie, but I'll maybe be sent only enough veg to do one. They know the veg don't get used.
> (Interview, catering assistant, school B, Jan, 2009)

It was observed that the take-up of vegetables was so low that, even with the reduced proportions made available, most were still thrown away. A particular raw onion-based preparation designated as the 'vegetable' to be served with a curry dish had never been eaten by any child and all the prepared portions were binned (Interviews, catering staff and observation, schools B and C, 2008, 2009). The employment of discretion in this way can be identified as conscious 'rule-breaking' activity, because the food preparation and serving behaviour was modified if management staff from outside the school were likely to visit.

> But if our bosses came in and we gave a curry without that being on it, we would get into trouble.
> (Interview, catering assistant, school B, Jan, 2009)

Apart from the obvious confusion the inconsistency may have caused pupils, this type of rule-bending may flag-up discretionary issues elsewhere in the policy chain. If money is saved by reducing the number of vegetable portions prepared, then do

checks and balances elsewhere in the system register that saving? If so, that suggests complicity in the rule-bending at higher management level. Certainly there are indications that higher management provided tacit approval for other ways in which there was deviation from the prescribed implementation. For example, a catering manager was expected to use 'common sense' to deal with situations when circumstances made the production of designated meals impossible. The specifics were not officially discussed but this kind of flexibility was not only expected, but sometimes essential. After holidays, when habitually, food would only be delivered on the same day as children returned to the school, it would be impossible to prepare the menus as specified. On those days immediately post-holiday, there would be no food prepared unless the manager exercised discretion in doing so (Interview, catering manager, school C, Nov, 2008).

What makes this operation of discretion especially relevant, especially with regard to the removal or reduction of the vegetable option, is the way in which this flexible interpretation of the implementation directions contrasts with other management behaviours. This same manager spoke about the importance of doing things 'by the book' and was a rigid enforcer of other rules to the point where conflict was created. Teaching and catering staff cited occasions when teaching staff had asked for menu concessions to help with a child's particular problem and had been refused. Several staff told the same story about a senior teacher being refused a request for coleslaw to replace the onion salad designated as the accompaniment to the menu choice of baked potato. The rules applied to everyone, she had been told. Yet none of the other school staff found her decision to remove the vegetable portions from the menus as anything other than a manifestation of 'common sense'. This catering manager's discretionary use of her authority effectively re-shaped the menu of all the children under her jurisdiction.

Something which might help to partly explain this contradiction was an indication that despite the operationalisation plan that meals should be presented according to the central design, area supervisory staff themselves demonstrated some inconsistency when they came across breaches of regulations during school visits.

Some managers 'turned a blind eye' if children were seen to refuse a vegetable. Others insisted that the catering staff conformed to the formal meal plan design. Rather than provoke conflict with management, staff stuck to the rules in the presence of any supervisory staff:

> If we had to take that on ourselves, and then got seen, then
> we would get into trouble. It's not worth the risk.
> (catering staff at school C, discussing visits from area
> managers, interview, Nov, 2008)

The decision of many catering staff to use their own discretion when implementing HfS was often motivated by frustration, especially in schools B and C. There was a consensus that it was upsetting when small children cried over the menu choices and that it made it difficult for staff to stick to the rules. They talked of feeling 'guilty' about the distress some children showed over the options offered. If a child refused everything that was left, they would sometimes ask the manager for permission to make a sandwich from the cooked meats or cheese already in the fridge but they were not officially allowed to make that decision themselves (Interview, catering staff, schools B and C, 2008, 2009). However if the catering assistants in schools B and C were not being closely supervised they broke the rules and justified doing so on the grounds that the rules had been made by those who did not 'understand children' (Interview, catering assistant, school B, Jan, 2009). This expressed lack of sympathy for the inflexibility of HfS was responsible for several more examples of deliberate modification of HfS policy delivery. A 'no second helpings' rule was blamed on 'meanness' and the fact that recommended meal portions were supposed to be the same size whether the meal was being given to a slender five year old or an adult-sized 11 year old was unilaterally condemned (Interviews, teaching, catering staff, pupils, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009). When it was pointed out that both these rules had been observed being broken, it was admitted that serving second helpings was normal practice and that larger pupils were routinely given more food when there were no supervisors around (Interview, catering staff, school B, Jan, 2009). Even the designated lay-out of the food with its instructions in a pictorial guide as to how the food should be distributed on each tray was not conformed to as a matter of course. Some children did not like different foods touching each other:

> like beans on toast, we're told beans have to go on the toast,
> but if you've got a wean greeting, you put the beans on one
> side.
> (Interview, catering assistant, school B, Jan, 2009)

It was evident that these discretionary behaviours were not viewed as acts of rebellion as much as acts of common sense and clearly illustrated the lack of engagement of these actors with the policy they were expected to implement.

The situation at school A was different. While equally restricted in terms of food options offered and in the uniformity of portion size, and while admitting to some frustrations, there was no suggestion or evidence that actors employed similar tactics to their peers in schools B and C to affect the policy delivery. Observation bore that out. Every child was given the chosen main option complete with designated vegetable and the view was that 'they have got to get what it says on the menu, so that's what we do' (Interview, catering assistant, school A, Jan, 2009).

The staff at school A further displayed more autonomy in terms of making decisions about preparing non-menu food if a child was in difficulties. This kind of deviation from the designated menu was described, as were the rule-breaking activities in schools B and C, as 'common-sense'. However, unlike the recognised rule-breaking in schools B and C, these activities were not viewed as activities that needed to be carried out covertly. School A's catering staff did not appear to be any more or less closely supervised than those in schools B and C. Nor were they less sympathetic in manner to those children who did not want the options offered. However, while they too were critical of some of the menu detail and had suggested ways of improving menu uptake, they were far more broadly supportive of the ethos of HfS (Interviews, catering assistants, teachers, observation, school A, Jan, 2009). Catering and teaching staff had reached a consensus. An extra 'off-menu' sandwich might be produced discreetly so as to avoid a chain reaction of similar requests but it was not the kind of rule-breaking activity which was required to be hidden from management or teaching staff. The head teacher who praised her catering staff's cooperation in modifying food to help when difficulties arose was aware that they were 'probably

not supposed to do that' (Interview, head teacher, school A, Jan.2009). Generally teaching staff were unsure about how much discretion catering staff were officially allowed to employ.

In front of the counter: teaching staff and supervision

The rigid design of the menus prepared and presented by catering staff made any discretionary modification comparatively easy to identify. With teaching staff and other supervisory staff, their own HfS roles within dining halls had been so poorly defined, as noted earlier, that their interpretation of what their job remit entailed seemed to be almost entirely open to individual adaptation. Education staff organised the timings of lunch and decided whether it would be staggered for different classes and how many sittings there might be, but the amount of time allowed was dictated by the curriculum and length of the school day. The flexibility of supervisory/teaching staff in interpreting their own HfS roles most often depended upon practical constraints such as time-tables and staffing numbers. However, despite the absence of clearly defined roles within the dining room, education staff at all schools interpreted their HfS roles in similar ways. They all talked about the difference between how school meals would be organised in an ideal world and the reality of trying to impose order on dozens of hungry and impatient children. Supervision of mealtimes in most schools depended solely upon education staff. At the selected schools only the most senior staff (head teacher and deputy) carried out dining hall supervision. In School A, a few teachers (no more than two or three each day) ate school dinners with the children in the dining room. None did so in Schools B and C except for 'social dining' sessions[21]. Some teachers in all schools collected a meal tray and ate it elsewhere.

The teachers' primary role in the dining rooms was maintaining order (Interviews, teachers, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009). Only the physical space in school C was adequate to deal comfortably with the numbers of children. In the others there were

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21 Each term, each class has one day where pupils dine formally at a table with china and metal cutlery instead of the usual plastic trays. The sessions are designed to encourage social skills and improve table manners.

difficulties caused by lack of space and low ceilings which exacerbated the noise level making it very difficult for an adult to be heard. The children's behaviour was generally good and a similar processing system was in place in each school. The child collected a food tray, took a seat, and when they were finished eating took the tray to a stacking centre. Teachers did not generally engage with catering staff except at school A, where the head teacher intervened if she thought a child had not been given an adequate portion or had 'missed a salad' (observation, interviews, teachers, schools, A, B and C, 2008, 2009). Whether or not the trays were checked to see if 'enough' food had been eaten seemed to depend upon chance, rather than design (observation, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009). All the teachers said that encouraging the children to eat well was part of their remit, but that in practise it was difficult to enforce the level of supervision needed. The inconsistency of this system, which resulted from staff shortages and time constraints, was recognised and regretted by the actors involved. In theory, the food left on each child's plate in each school should have been approved before the child was allowed to leave (Interviews, teaching staff, schools, A, B and C, 2008, 2009). However, with more than 100 children and often just one member of supervisory staff, the reality was that many children waited for a teacher's attention to be distracted so that a full food tray could be dispensed of without any challenge.

In school A, older children had been appointed as lunchtime monitors, 'buddies', whose duties were to support the teaching staff in supervision. One monitor was expected to man the stacking area at all times but, again, determined pupils would wait until the monitor was distracted and then sneak past. The monitors were not always comfortable carrying out their duties, 'Some of the little P1s are stood there with tears and you feel bad. You wouldn't eat some of it yourself,' (Interview, pupil, school A, Jan, 2009)

Teaching staff at all three schools expressed strong views about the limitations of their role. One described it as 'fire-fighting' (Interview, teacher, school A, Jan, 2009).

> It's just crowd control, if I am going to be really honest. I do occasionally go round and chat to folk, things like that, but really it's just about keeping the flow of kids coming at a manageable pace.
>
> (Interview, teacher, school B, Jan 2009)

However from observation it was clear that even those teachers whose perception was that they only succeeded in 'crowd control' did far more. They were helping the 'packed lunch children' to open sandwiches and unscrew lids, cutting up food for smaller children and constantly trying to encourage pupils to eat a little more. In terms of persuading individual children to eat, the teachers were often successful, but there was rarely time for the kind of one-on-one focus necessary to encourage a particularly reluctant child. One little boy sat motionless in front of a tray of food despite frequent verbal encouragement from passing staff. It was only when the dinner hall supervisor found time to sit down and cut his food into tiny portions that he began to eat (observation, school C, Nov, 2008).

All of the teaching staff supported the HfS ethos of encouraging children to eat more healthily, but were frustrated that they could not operate more discretion over the way in which that could be interpreted either in terms of school dinner menus or for 'tuck shops'. A Government HfS directive had ended the sale of low fat, low salt crisps in one school, because the bags were the wrong weight. The school was unable to source the smaller bags required because of the costs involved (Interview, teacher, school B, Nov, 2008).

At school C and unusually, there was a specific member of staff who had been employed by education services for 20 years as a dining hall supervisor to work alongside the teaching staff. In a school where there was a clear division between catering and teaching staff, this staff member had seen several regime changes on both sides of the counter and appeared to be on friendly terms with both. As she had never been given any job description, either prior to or since the introduction of HfS, and had received no formal work-based information or training about HfS, she operated her own discretion as to how her role should be enacted. Her personal interest in the benefits of healthy diets meant that she was informed and strongly

supportive of the ethos of HfS. Her formal duties were to supervise waiting lines and plate-clearing but she additionally interpreted her job remit as encouraging healthy eating. Her long experience and her overview of HfS from both sides of the counter provided her with an unusual perspective. She thought it 'just stupid' that no-one who worked in school C and who knew the children was officially allowed to make even minor decisions about the food. As she saw it, everything had to be filtered through the chain of command back-up to local authority level with no recognition or credit given to the skills or experience of those who worked at the point of delivery.

Although the evidence suggested that rules were routinely bent, if not broken, she said that most catering staff were too scared about losing their jobs to do anything they could 'get caught at'. She had seen two different, post-HfS head teachers try to effect change, but to no avail:

> The heads are not even allowed in the kitchen. I've seen them argue about one child or another that can't eat something and ask for something different and unless H [the catering manager] says so, there's nothing they can do. They're head of school but not the dinner hall in the school.
>
> (Interview, Nov, 2008)

Pupils

Pupils were able to operate the ultimate discretion in effecting the outcome of policy delivery by deciding whether or not to eat the HfS menus. However, the degree to which school-dinner pupils were able to select which parts of menus to consume or reject depended itself upon the discretion employed by those adults who presented and supervised school lunch. Children were generally discouraged, and sometimes forbidden, from leaving school premises as a way of encouraging them to eat a school meal. Some opted out of school meals by bringing a packed lunch or (rarely) going home to eat. Some talked about suffering from food allergies which appeared to have little basis in science (Interviews, teachers and pupils, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009).

Although the staff who supervised lunch had acknowledged that it was impossible to assess realistically what every child had eaten, pupils, especially the youngest ones, believed that their eating habits were closely surveyed (Interviews, pupils, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009). In response to the perception that they were being closely monitored, the children employed a variety of deceptions and ruses in order to avoid eating food they disliked. In school C there did seem to be least waste in terms of food cleared from the stacked trays (observation, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009). This was the school where children seemed to be most closely observed because of the presence of a dinner hall supervisor (not present in schools B and A) and also the school where fewest portions of vegetables (other than potatoes) were placed on the food trays. Small children appeared to struggle with finishing large portions and many children, particularly boys, were anxious not to 'waste time eating' when they could be outside in the playground. One boy spent less than eight minutes in the dining room during which time he had selected his food, collected his tray and eaten most of his given meal. (observations at schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009). Only one school organised weekly 'social lunches'[22] , but observation of those confirmed other research (Cooper, 2008) which had found that children served with the same meals at a 'social lunch' were more likely to eat them and report that they had enjoyed the experience than children eating the same food in a normal school dining hall.

Culture and Values

Identifying the values of actors in this policy process is key to understanding whether values conflict is impacting upon implementation success.

To identify the food culture and values of these actors, it was necessary to look further than, for example, their familiarity with the menu contents as prescribed in HfS. What did the actors understand by healthy eating? Was it something they did themselves? Something they aspired to? Did the actors themselves eat the HfS menus? Were the menus similar to food at home? Food in western culture is about

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22 ibid, p.143

more than the ingredients of a meal. It is also about the factors which influence the different perceptions of food at one extreme as fuel and at the other as a complex basis of a social and civilising interaction. An attempt to understand food culture and values through eating habits must examine not just *what* is eaten, but how and where and why. The relationship between social class and food behaviours is central to understanding the values and culture conflicts which occurred. Crucially, in terms of understanding values-impact on delivery, there must also be an exploration of the degree to which actors within different communities within the schools shared a collective cultural identity and whether the existence of such a cultural identity might influence that community's orientation towards HfS.

This research has identified different and conflicting cultural and values-based communities within the schools whose cultural-influenced behaviours impacted upon policy implementation. As we will see, value conflicts and communities correspond with the social class composition of the schools. Conflicts between the food values underpinning HfS and those of policy deliverers and recipients were much more pronounced in the disadvantaged schools B and C than in the predominantly middle class school A. Catering staff who, for a variety of values and culture-based reasons, did not endorse the HfS menus re-shaped the policy delivery to suit their own agendas. Pupils who appeared to understand healthy eating in theory found the meals on offer so very different from those to which they were accustomed, either opted not to eat them at all or chose to eat them so selectively as to negate their health value.

Although the majority of actors understood that many children would not necessarily freely choose to eat 'healthy' food, children were less likely to be encouraged to eat healthy food by delivery actors who shared the poorer pupils' own taste and food preference for non-HfS food. Beliefs and values also caused conflict where actors supported HfS as a policy concept but were not supportive of the details of its operationalisation. This was especially true when actors felt that HfS implementation

failed to acknowledge the full circumstances and needs of the communities in which they worked.

> When you know that a child is going home to sleep on mattresses on the floor with no glass in the window, are you going to say – oh you have to eat that apple? And when you know the school dinner they have on Friday may be their last hot meal until Monday, then the arguments about whether they are getting their 'Five a Day'[23] seem less relevant.
> (Interview, head teacher, school C, Nov, 2008)

Behind the counter: management, catering staff and catering assistants

All of the catering staff were women and most of them mothers whose children were no longer at school. Their shared experience, therefore, of food and children was domestic as well as professional. All of the catering staff, except the manager of school C, lived within their school's catchment area. As a result, many of them had relationships with, and knowledge of, the children they served which extended beyond the school gates. They and the children were for the most part from the same community, which in terms of understanding the groups' loyalties, did suggest their strongest allegiance might be to that community rather than to their employer. In schools B and C this meant that the catering staff and the majority of their pupils were from the same social class. This allegiance had been partly demonstrated earlier by the rule-breaking behaviour. While the catering manager had cited common-sense as her reason for not preparing vegetables portions, at least some of the catering staff's rule-breaking in schools B and C seemed to be based on a desire to please the children (Interviews, catering staff, schools B and C, 2008, 2009). There may also have been an element of challenging an authority perceived of as 'out of touch' but that only served to confirm the staff's perception of itself as a community separate to, and different from, the authority which 'imposed' the rules and which placed no value on their experience (*see* p. 127). In group interviews with the catering staff at

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23 A reference to an ongoing national government campaign which promotes the consumption of a minimum of five portions of fruit and vegetables daily.

schools B and C, there was a consensus that HfS had been designed by people who failed to understand the eating habits of 'their kids' in the way that they themselves did. The catering staff's understanding of local food behaviours was based on their relationships with the parents of the children within their shared social class (Interviews, catering staff, teaching staff, schools A and B, Jan, 2009). Eating unhealthily was about more than just not having the money although one catering assistant said it annoyed her when 'health experts' were comparing the benefits of making a healthy pot of soup with a McDonalds Happy Meal and failed to take account of the time involved or the cost of the electricity or gas used to cook it (Interview, catering assistant, school B, Jan, 2009). They had all seen children's eating habits change depending on their family circumstances[24].

> We don't need to be social workers, but we can tell with pupils that we have had in here with awfie backgrounds and how their lives have changed by going to different people, and you can see how they progress with their food and we will not mention any names. But you see how it's progressed from no eating anything with certain parents and going to somebody [25] that has encouraged them to eat and they do eat now. So their background makes a big difference.
> (Interview, catering assistant, school C, Nov, 2008)

The catering staff at school A, with its majority of middle class children did not identify with the parents of most of their pupils in the same way that their colleagues in schools B and C had. Nor did they exhibit the same hostility to the diet changes prescribed by HfS. Pupils at school A were served with and ate the vegetable accompaniments. School A catering staff did not talk in terms of different social class but described the children at their school as 'better off' financially than in other city schools. They spoke of the parental support that HfS had attracted and suggested it was the family attitude, not incomes, that made the difference.

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[24] The recognised instability of some pupils' home-lives meant that the transference of children to live with other family members or with foster parents occurred frequently enough for it not to be thought of as particularly unusual
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It comes from home, I think that's from their parents, maybe cooking healthily at home, they want them to continue that throughout the day, and not to think they are eating healthy at home and yet be worried what they are getting at dinner school. So they are wanting that health and they are telling their children if they have that choice, then take it. They are promoting that.

(Interview, catering assistant, school A, Nov, 2009)

The experience of catering staff in schools B and C was that some children would rather go without than eat unfamiliar food and this was borne out by observation. Children who chose a white bread salad sandwich as the best of the three options removed the contents and ate only the bread. Pupils persuaded to try an unfamiliar meal option ate a mouthful and then pushed the food around the tray waiting for an opportunity to empty the tray without being monitored (observations, schools, B and C, 2008, 2009). The recognised links between poverty, class and health were acknowledged by the catering staff who expressed concern that it was those children who most needed a 'good lunch' who were most alienated by the HfS menus, a further indication of the policy's failure to fulfil its social justice remit.

Despite the fact that some delivery actors, especially the catering staff at the two poorer schools, appeared to be out of sympathy with parts or all of HfS, it would be wrong to assume that those same actors opposed the concept of healthy eating generally or of the need for children to be encouraged to eat more healthily. Each and every actor acknowledged that if the health of Scotland's children was to be improved then there was a need for diet change. The cultural values conflicts were to be found in their interpretation of what kind of diet qualified as healthy and on the most effective method of ensuring that a healthy menu was presented and, most crucially, *eaten,* by those children who most would benefit (Interview,catering staff, school B and C, 2008, 2009).

Whereas catering staff at the better-off school positively enjoyed eating from the menu, 'Nine times out of ten, like every day there is something on that we would go for' (Interviews, catering assistant,, school A, Jan, 2009), the staff at schools B and C actively disliked most of the food they prepared and served and consequently were

entirely sympathetic to the children in their care who rejected the menu offered. The meals offered were not what they would eat at home. The catering manager at school C who defended the quality and variety of the HfS menu, nonetheless said it was 'not really my kind of food' and not the kind she would prepare and cook at home (Interview, Nov, 2008).

However, what at first sight could be interpreted as a wholesale rejection of the HfS menu and ethos was revealed on closer analysis, to be a much more subtle and thoughtful critique of the food they served. The foods on the menu may not always have been what catering staff would have chosen to eat, but concerns were focused on the failure of the HfS menu to feed the children in their care. The most frequent complaint was about the blandness of food served. The ban on any salt and the minimal use of sugar was seen as extreme. The use of herbs or yoghurt in mashed potatoes as healthy alternatives was unpopular. They were not convinced that the salt-free and sugarless menus on offer were any healthier than the traditional mince and stews they had enjoyed as children. They accepted that many children now preferred the more contemporary food offered by HfS menus, 'pastas, rices, pizzas, snacky things' but not prepared in the way prescribed without salt or sugar.

> They're taking it to extremes, they have took everything away.
> .
> Aye, they have took the taste out of everything.
>
> They have took all the flavour, I think.
> (Interviews, catering staff, schools B and C, 2008, 2009)

There was a widely-held view that healthy versions of familiar 'fast food' meals should replace the more exotic 'fusion' foods, such as quorn risotto (Interviews, catering staff, teachers and pupils, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009). This sympathy towards those pupils who disliked the HfS menu either because of its 'blandness' or 'unfamiliarity' manifested itself in several ways which impacted upon the policy delivery, by influencing pupil choice. In schools B, catering staff were openly critical of the way the teaching staff 'made the pupils eat stuff they didn't want to' and sympathetic towards those children who were negative about the food offered.

This contrast in attitudes was visibly communicated to the children being served in a manner which impacted upon the pupil's own attitudes to HfS to the point where it was an observed factor in pupil decisions about which options would be selected (Observations, interviews, teachers, schools B and C, 2008, 2009).

A discussion on the compulsory inclusion of a daily halal[26] and vegetarian option provided further insight into cultural attitudes which directly influenced the menu choices of pupils. The catering staff at schools B and C criticised the halal meal both as a 'minority thing' which reduced the choice for the majority and as a waste. No-one, they said, not even the Muslim pupils, ate the food that met the halal criteria (Interviews, 2008, 2009)

One observed incident was a catering assistant's reponse to a non-muslim pupil selecting a halal choice. She persuaded the pupil to choose a different meal by saying; 'that's a halal bolognaise, you don't want that' and using similar phrases to warn the child against its 'unsuitability' (observation, school B, Jan, 2009). Similar incidents were observed in both schools B and C and on each occasion the pupil would opt for a difference menu choice. One child said she had a packed lunch every day because 'it's mostly halal dinners that you get and my mum says it doesn't taste right' (Interview, pupils, aged 10, school C, Nov 2008). Even Muslim children at these schools were seen to hesitate over the halal meal, some asking questions of unenthusiastic staff and then opting for an alternative choice instead (observation, school B, Jan, 2009). The proportions of Muslim to non-Muslim children were comparable across the schools but the expressed views of the catering staff were very different. Catering staff in schools B and C said that they would never eat the halal option themselves. Staff in school A, where Muslim and non-Muslim children were seen to choose the halal option, all ate the halal meals and did not attempt to

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26 In Arabic, the word halal means permitted or lawful. Halal foods are foods that are allowed under Islamic dietary guidelines. The Qu'ran states that Muslims should not eat pork or pork by-products, animals not slaughtered properly or not slaughtered in the name of Allah, blood and blood by-products, carnivorous animals, birds of prey and land animals without external ears. The prohibited foods are called haram, -forbidden. Because of the ban on blood and blood products Halal meat must be butchered with the jugular vein cut to allow the blood to drain.

differentiate between halal and non-halal meals as they served them. (Observation, interviews, schools A, B, C, 2008, 2009).

As well as the provision of a halal option, the menus also offered a vegetarian option. About 20 per cent of children at the wealthier school were estimated to be vegetarians as opposed to none in school C and about four per cent in school B. During interviews, catering staff only voiced negative attitudes about specific vegetarian dishes (quorn risotto), but teaching staff at school B had seen catering assistants discouraging pupils from the vegetarian options:

> You'll see something like meatballs and say, that looks quite nice , and they go, but its tofu and the child goes, what's that?, you know , so I mean they try and put you off. They say that's a vegetarian option, you wouldn't like that, so they do that kind of thing, of just passing on their own prejudices.
> (Interview, teacher, school B, Nov, 2008)

The impact of catering staff values on policy delivery varied according to the specific menus and to how much supervision individual staff members were subjected to at different times. It also varied according to the staff's own views on HfS. At school A where there was parental support for HfS, catering staff seemed for the most part pleased to promote their menus positively. At schools B and C where pupils and their parents did not share the food values promoted by HfS, catering staff undermined its delivery. Although it seemed that individual catering assistants demonstrated loyalty to those they understood to be their peers or part of their community, above that of any loyalty to their employer, the motivation for the modification of HfS delivery may not have been that simple. Staff knew that some of their activities were rule-breaking in terms of the delivery of the policy detail. It was less clear, however, whether other behaviour such as demonstrating their own food preferences should be seen in the same light. For the most part, the catering staff were only aware of policy intent in the broadest terms and a better communication of policy context might have resulted in a less negative perception of HfS. As it was, their lack of understanding of, or sympathy with, HfS aims or values and their strong community identification with the children they served, was able to affect the final form of its realisation. Values disjuncture negatively impacted upon delivery.

In front of the counter: teaching staff and supervision

Like the catering staff, the dinner hall supervisor at school C lived close to her workplace and strongly identified herself as being part of a local community, where she had witnessed and experienced extreme disadvantage[27]. Although sympathetic to the HfS ethos in terms of promoting healthy eating, her view was that it had failed to recognise or address the particular problems of her community, and the reality of the lives of the children in her area whose only exposure to what she described as 'proper food' was at school.

> Lots of the houses they never get any messages [shopping] at all. It's just go to the chippy, get a bag of chips. There's no food in the house. That's how they live.
>
> (Interview, Nov, 2008)

Her experience living and working in the area over 20 years had taught her that some children came from homes where even the most basic foods were unfamiliar. There were children who had never seen pineapples or kiwi fruit before, but there were additionally children who were unable to recognise boiled or mashed potatoes. Children arrived at the school never previously having sat down to a meal to be eaten with a knife and fork, on a plate, served at a table, (Interview; teachers, schools B. and C, dining hall supervisor, school C, 2008, 2009). By removing anything from the menu which was familiar, the children were not persuaded to try these healthy

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27 In the course of the interviews she gave detailed descriptions of the poverty she encountered and her relationship with the children of the poorest families. Thus: 'There's waifs and strays that you want to take them home and wash them and feed them up, and you know that the biggest majority of the parents is using or selling drugs. You say, oh no I don't want to know, but you do. If you live round here, its part and parcel of life, which I think is terrible to say that. A lot of them is really poor' and ''There's ones that never go to the dentist and they come to you with sore mouths and you see their black teeth and there's no-one that will take them to the dentist.. That is an absolute tragedy, but that is what you have to contend with. That is what happens here. There are some you don't want to say after Christmas, how was it?, what did Santa bring?, because you know they don't get anything. That breaks your heart, when you know weans have not got anything. I have never known anything other than quite a lot of poverty here' (dining hall supervisor, school C, Nov, 2008).

options but instead went without until breakfast club the following day (Interviews, teachers, schools B and C, dining hall supervisor, school C, 2008, 2009).

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> That [school dinner] would be their only chance of a proper meal… it would just be sweeties, a biscuit, maybe chips, no other proper food from their home. They really need it,   the pupils in this area, it's the only meal they get and if they don't like what the government is saying they are supposed to eat, they are not going to have a meal the whole day.
> (Interview, dining hall supervisor, school C, Nov,2008)

> You know it's [school dinner] going to be the only thing they are going to get and they are so strict with these rules that if they don't like it, you know they are not going to eat it. You feel worse for those kids because you know they are not going to get anything.
> (Interview, head teacher, school C, Nov, 2008)

The number of children identified as severely disadvantaged in this way varied; 'a couple', at school A, and four or five families of children at school C, but there were additionally other children suffering from nutritionally inadequate diets. A child suffering from extreme hunger was rare, but there were other disadvantaged children who might be fed 'empty calories' at home. In the past, most children were hungry by lunchtime, but it was now commonplace for even poor families to provide sufficient 'playtime snacks' in the form of biscuits, sweets and crisps to prevent children ever experiencing real hunger (Interviews, teachers, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009). One head teacher identified this as a cultural shift which had coincided with the introduction of HfS (Interview, Jan, 2009).

Teachers argued that the reasons for the poor diet were more complex than ignorance or low incomes. Some of the family homes they knew didn't have an oven or a table. Children had never used cutlery or plates or eaten a meal on a chair at a table before starting school. For some children school remained the only place where they were expected to do so (Interviews, teachers, schools B and C, 2008, 2009). One head teacher suggested that the cultural gap between the children's family lives and the school's expectations could be compared to an adult visiting a restaurant in a foreign

country. The children did not understand what passed for normal dining behaviour in more advantaged homes and were frightened of the food they were being offered.

> It's like when I go to a Chinese restaurant, if I don't recognise anything, I try to play it safe and take what I always have, but if there was nothing there I knew, then maybe I'd not try anything.
> (Interview, head teacher, school C. Nov, 2008)

Teachers in school C suggested that their continued exposure to the food behaviours of their pupils had altered their concepts of what they perceived as normal or acceptable eating patterns. After initially stating that overall they thought children enjoyed the HfS menus, they realised they had become so accustomed to the fact that no-one ate vegetables that they had forgotten that vegetables and salads were theoretically a vital component of the HfS menu and certainly of healthy meals in general (Interviews, teachers, school C, Nov, 2008).

Like most of the catering staff, all the teachers ate different types of food at home from the meals provided by the HfS menus. However the differences themselves indicated a cultural divide between the education and catering staff, with teaching staff criticisms focusing on 'boiled to a pulp' vegetables, the limited variety of salads and above all on the way the food was presented. The serving trays of heavy duty plastic with divided compartments for different foods provoked extreme responses.

> Vile, absolutely vile.
>
> I think it's so degrading. It's horrible.
>
> I hate it, it just freaks me out!
>
> (Interviews, teachers at schools, A, B and C, 2008, 2009)

The head teacher who was most positive about the general quality of the food, nevertheless would rarely eat it herself because it was 'too carbohydrate heavy', appropriate for the children, she said, but not for her 'kind of diet' (Interview. teacher, school A, Jan, 2009). Others were less enthusiastic. One teacher who

described herself as 'really interested in food and health' was frustrated at what she saw as a lost opportunity.

> You have a captive audience, you have a chance to actually
> influence them, but in reality because of the quality of the
> food, I don't think it is having that effect.
>
> (Interview, Jan, 2009)

Another indicator of the different cultural communities within the schools became apparent when staff were asked about the general health of the pupils. While catering staff and the head teacher at school A thought their pupils were mostly healthy, the teaching and catering staff in the poorer schools had different perceptions of the same children. The catering staff, who identified strongly with the children in their own community, saw the children as generally healthy. The teaching staff, who, while sympathetic to the children in their care, were not from the same social class, did not identify with them in the same 'community-based' way and saw their general health as very poor. 'Terribly unhealthy shockingly unhealthy' (Interview, head teacher, school C, Nov, 2008). The children were 'pasty', 'very skinny' or 'beginning to get overweight'. The children looked deceptively fit in school but hidden poor muscle tone and weight problems were revealed at the swimming pool or gym (Interview, teacher, school B, Nov, 2008).

Teachers and the dinner hall supervisor expressed a similar frustration at what they perceived as the failure of HfS policy-makers to make allowances for children whose relationship with food was different from what might be viewed as normal. There were practical matters[28] which could be addressed with more effective communication but the issue of delivering the HfS policy in a way which education staff felt met the needs of all their pupils was far more complex. Even without the policy-shaping being employed by some of the delivery actors, the most disadvantaged children were not benefiting from HfS because the operationalisation of the policy failed to acknowledged or address their particular needs.

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28 The bananas provided were too large for a small child to hold and finish in one sitting. Small hands holding sandwiches with grated rather than sliced cheese resulted in more cheese on the floor or table than in their mouths (dinner hall supervisor, School C).

Pupils and parents

Given the kind of lifestyle choices most primary school children might make if they were to be left to their own devices, it is not significant in terms of HfS policy success that only a few children enthusiastically supported the menus offered at school dinners. Children from all three schools expressed very similar views. Many children thought the food was alright. A few children were very critical, a few very enthusiastic[29]. However, what is significant in terms of indicating cultural gaps between the different social classes were the reasons that the different communities provided for not liking the HfS menus. These are generalisations extrapolated from focus groups. Nevertheless the difference between the views expressed by the two demographically different schools communities was extreme and demonstrated a clear divide in the criticisms offered by the pupils interviewed at the better-off school A and the two poorer schools B and C.

The children in schools B and C rarely ate vegetables at home, did not like vegetables generally and did not like the vegetables offered as part of their school dinners. The children in school A regularly ate vegetables at home, generally liked vegetables and salad and complained about the school dinner vegetables because they considered them to be overcooked.

Poor children complained about their unfamiliarity with some of the foods offered, and not necessarily those less traditional meals which might be anticipated as being potentially problematic. For example, during one interview a nine-year old boy described in detail a vegetable he liked which needed to be cut open and then the inside could be eaten. He was surprised when his friend told him he had been eating a baked potato (Interview, pupils in year 5, school C, Nov, 2008).

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29 One child who was very positive about school dinners said she had to have them because when she 'had a packed lunch every day all my teeth were starting to fall out' (pupil, aged 9, School C).

School A children complained that although they were familiar with many of the meals described on the menus, the food as served bore little resemblance to the versions they were given at home. One child suggested replacing 'boring haddock' with salmon. The pasta was too soft, and the salads were unimaginative, vegetables were soggy. These pupils also complained about the atmosphere and, as had the teaching staff, criticised the use of serving trays rather than plates. They did not like the way the food was presented, 'dripping off the sides', and all served at once (Interviews, pupils, school A, Jan, 2009).

The differences in the children's relationship with food extended beyond the make-up or quality of the meals served. Almost without exception the children from school A were accustomed to their families employing sanctions or rewards to encourage them to finish a meal or to eat food they disliked. Parents told them to eat just a few more spoonfuls, reminded them of starving children elsewhere or warned that they would not be allowed to eat anything else (Interviews, Jan, 2009).

With a few exceptions the large majority of children from the more disadvantaged schools were allowed to leave unwanted food without any repercussions. Unwanted food was given to pets, and the children usually supplied with an alternative food if they were still hungry. It was the exception to eat as a family at a table. Only about half the children's homes had a table for eating from at all and in one group of six, none of the children had a dining or kitchen table in their homes. Children ate alone in their rooms with the television or computer. They ate meals on sofas and trays and folding tables in front of the television alone or with siblings or their mothers (Interviews, 2008, 2009).

At school A most of the children ate at a table with other family members most of the time. Some were allowed a weekly treat where they ate together in front of the television. One child was allowed a weekly treat where the family ate together on armchairs but not with the television on (Interviews, Jan, 2009).

At schools B and C almost all the children commonly ate some kind of takeaway food at least twice a week. Three children had a bag of chips every night for their tea. One child who had previously eaten chips for her tea every night no longer did so because her grandmother had taught her mother how to make a pasta sauce two weeks earlier. The child was delighted that she had since had pasta and sauce each night instead of chips (Interviews, 2008,2009).

A few pupils at school A enjoyed a 'weekly treat' of a Chinese takeaway, a family meal which meant their 'mother had a night off', but takeaway food was the exception and was eaten as a meal rather than in the form of a portion of chips, a chip roll, or a sausage in batter which were the staples in schools B and C. One child said she had tried takeaway food but would not do so again because 'you can taste the salt and grease'. Another said she was not allowed takeaways but for a treat would 'pop into Marks and Spencer's and collect favourites (Interviews, Jan, 2009).

During the interviews it was apparent that some children shaped their answers as they spoke in response to the reactions of their peers. This was most noticeable when a boy at school A had begun by saying how much he liked McDonalds and then seemed to sense disapproval and re-shaped his comments. There were children interviewed in schools B and C who did eat vegetables and healthy family meals and there were children in school A whose 'food lifestyles' had more in common with the poorer children but in both cases they were the exception among the children interviewed. The children in these different school communities lived within a few miles of each other within the same city but their experience of food culture and values was widely different depending on their social class, so different that they might have been living in a different country.

Another indication of the different food cultures at the different schools was highlighted by the head teacher at school A when she spoke about difficulties she had encountered in the wake of the free school meals trial[30] in which her school had

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30 Schools in selected areas in Scotland provided free meals to all their younger pupils over a one year trial period.

participated. It had become apparent that, after the trial had ended, some parents who had previously paid for dinners were refusing to do so. Every Thursday, the same children would be sent to school without lunch money. When the head teacher investigated, concerned that these families were in financial difficulties, she discovered that this refusal was part of a concerted protest to make a political point about their belief in the need for universal free dinners.

> I had never heard of anything like it. We were feeding the children and asking for the money, which we didn't get. It was a political thing, not impoverished families. They were sending the children without money and they just expected them to be fed. Interesting, in moving food from the health and wellbeing arena into the political, but outrageous and irresponsible.
> (Interview, head teacher school A, Jan, 2009)

One other tangible difference in the relationships between parents and HfS in the different schools was that in schools B and C there were fewer children whose parents paid money for school dinners. For ethical reasons, interviews did not attempt to distinguish between the payment methods of individual children but head teachers had supplied general data for each school. There was no evidence about the potential influence of free school meals (FSM) on parental involvement, but it could be argued that parents at school A who entered into a daily contract with the school by handing over dinner money have a different relationship with the food being offered to their children than the majority of parents in schools B and C who do not perhaps feel ownership of the meals in the same way.

The extent and form of parental involvement in the implementation of HfS identified a wide cultural gap between the better off and most disadvantaged schools. Teachers at schools B and C who had attempted to persuade children to clear their plates or eat their vegetables had all at times experienced complaints from parents who objected to their intervention. The parents had argued that their children, sometimes described as sensitive or 'allergic' or 'fussy eaters', should not be made to eat anything they disliked. (Interviews, teachers, schools B and C, 2008, 2009). At the wealthier school, parental intervention had come in the form of a campaign to make

the choices *more* healthy, insisting that chocolate and strawberry flavoured milk, orange juice and low fat, low salt crisps were removed as snack options and replaced with plain milk or water (Interviews, teachers, school A, Jan, 2009).

The evidence suggests that these children's home experience of food behaviours had influenced their attitude towards the school dinners delivered as part of HfS. The cultures and values which shaped their understanding of what constitutes healthy eating had impacted on their decisions about what they chose to eat and also about *how* the food is eaten – whether they were expected to clear their plates, eat vegetables, sit at tables, use cutlery and so on. The children from school A may not have been overwhelmingly enthusiastic about HfS meals but the menus were recognisable to them and the context in which it was being served had some familiarity. They were used to being served vegetables and to being expected to eat what was on their plate. Their complaints focused on the *standard* of the meals when compared to the food they eat within their families. For some of the children from the poorer schools, the whole experience of school dinners was fraught with unfamiliar experiences. The food content itself was not easily recognised and even the way in which it was served was not what they were used to at home. The difference in their cultural experience of food had affected their response to the menus provided by HfS.

The effectiveness of HfS delivery had been further shaped by the way in which the food values promoted by HfS had been perceived by the actors at the point of delivery. The values harmony between catering assistants and pupils at the poorer schools had impacted negatively at that point of delivery. In the case of the poorer schools, the pupils' own reservations about the menu choices were being reinforced by delivery actors who were sympathetic to them because of their community identification. At school A where there existed a much greater degree of cohesion among the internal school communities in terms of sympathy with the ethos of HfS, delivery actors were able to reinforce the pupils' own cultural acceptance and more successfully implement the policy delivery

Evaluating Successful Delivery

Successful delivery of HfS at this end-point in the implementation process can be evaluated in several connected ways. As has been discussed, in its broadest terms, HfS was designed as part of a wider policy which aimed to produce long-term and wide-spread changes in the eating habits of Scotland's children as a way of both improving health within the general population and of redressing the current health inequalities which exist between the most disadvantaged and the rest of society. Was it doing so? Ongoing government-funded research is continuously collating data on school meal take-up through-out Scotland. The most recent figures (Scottish Government, 2009) indicated that, apart from a slight increase during the P1-P3 free school meal trial [31], the overall take-up of school meals in Scottish schools since 2000 had stayed at below 50 per cent [32], with a five per cent drop over all since 2003. There had been a slight rise in primary school numbers, but the number of secondary school pupils taking school dinners is on a downward curve (Scottish Government, 2009).

Leaving the broader aims of HfS to one side, there were narrower and more easily defined indicators of successful implementation at the schools' delivery point where the research in this chapter has been based. Did the menu as prepared and presented meet the criteria designed in general terms by the Scottish government and in specific detail as designed by the local authority? Was the menu as prepared and presented sufficiently appealing to pupils to be selected by them? And, most crucially, were the meals being eaten?

The menus designed by the local authority were done so in absolute accordance with the nutritional guidelines laid down by the Scottish Government. Furthermore, the evidence is that the menu designed by the local authority was adhered to at schools' level in such a way as to ensure that, apart from the previously identified immediate

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31 Free school meals were provided to all pupils in P1-P3 across five local authorities. Details at http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/08/29114033/0
32 School Meals in Scotland, 2009, A National Statistics Publication for Scotland, full tables available at: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/stats/bulletins/0000737

post-holiday dinners, the same menu was available on the same day to every pupil in each and every state school within the authority.

However, the food in each school could not be the same. Food preparation may be defined as an art or a science, but common sense suggests that the quality of the meals depends on the individual skill, taste and standards of those who prepare the food. Vegetables came over or under-cooked, even not completely defrosted, pasta was 'too soggy', some fish had bones, and so on (Observations, interviews, pupils, teachers, schools A, B and C, 2008, 2009). Food which was cooked and delivered from a central base and then re-heated was not comparable to the food in its original form. These may be matters of taste preferences which cannot be resolved in a food preparation undertaking of this scale. However, the nutritional content of food is affected by cooking methods, so the differing qualities of food would result in different nutritional content being delivered in different schools.

The delivery of uniformly nutritional meals, while being affected by differing food quality, had been further and more seriously compromised by the way in which the food was presented. In two of the schools, the essential role played by vegetables in the menu's design had been largely ignored. The designated allocation of a portion of vegetables with each daily option was not being delivered to the very large majority of pupils at those schools (observation, interviews, catering staff, teachers, schools B and C, 2008, 2009). The delivery of the food to the children was also being shaped by the way in which it was being verbally presented to pupils, with catering staff promoting and encouraging their own prejudices in the way in which the meal options were being offered. Portion sizes were not consistent with local authority directives and pupils were sometimes offered second helpings of food, again in contravention of the menu design (observation, interviews, teachers, catering staff, schools B and C, 2008, 2009).

Were the menus appealing to the pupils? Did they eat meals? Although the number of meals prepared by the catering staff for pupils and the number of pupils taking some kind of school dinner were a matter of record, it has been shown that the

content of those meals did not necessarily conform either to the government's nutritional content directives or to the local authority menu design. In the schools where the pupils were given the option of refusing the designated vegetable, the vast majority did so (observation, schools B and C, 2008, 2009). The designed menu did not appeal to its 'target recipients'. In those circumstances, even those pupils who ate every scrap of the school dinner, as delivered, were not eating a meal which conformed to the policy guidelines.

With research of this nature, it cannot be demonstrated that there was a direct causal connection between a particular cultural identity or social class and a particular response to HfS. However, the evidence suggests that where actors and communities understood and were most sympathetic to and culturally aligned with the values promoted by HfS, delivery was more likely to be successful (school A). Where actors and communities already shared similar behaviours to those encouraged by HfS, delivery was more likely to succeed (school A). Where behaviours and food habits embodied in the HfS ethos were not shared by actors, delivery was less likely to be successful (schools B and C). HfS was more likely to be delivered as prescribed where parental support was greatest. HfS was more likely to be delivered as prescribed where actors recognised the HfS menus as similar to the food which they eat at home (school A). Delivery problems were greatest where values disjuncture between policy designers and policy recipients was at its most extreme.

Conclusion

On the basis of this schools-level research, several discreet issues have been identified which have negatively affected implementation in these specific environments. It has also been shown that there were tangible differences between delivery in the two poorest schools and in the more affluent school.

Communication channels which should have provided top-down opportunities to explain and contextualise the policy and to allow for feedback were generally regarded as ineffective. In terms of policy-recognition, although almost everyone at

schools' level was aware that the new menu of school dinners were part of 'official steps' being taken to improve children's health, the majority of other actors had obtained their understanding of HfS through media outlets. The exceptions were pupils, most of whom, had learned about the wider policy context in the classroom. While the specifics of the menu and detail of content and presentation had been clearly communicated to actors involved in the process, there was little evidence of top-down effort to engage actors in the wider policy context or of attempts made to bring them on board as part of an implementation team. The existing channels for feedback were regarded as being ineffective in enabling actors to convey any useful impressions or opinions.

Communication within the schools was poor. While the existence of clear and separate communities within the schools was not in itself a barrier to cohesive delivery, it was seen that successful communication within and between those communities relied upon the skills of the individuals involved. Where that communication was poor, it contributed to antagonism between the different communities which in turn impacted negatively upon HfS delivery.

The discretion allowed actors engaged in policy delivery was theoretically limited but in practice inconsistently enforced. There was a clear distinction between actions which was formally allowed for in the policy design and what happened in practice. In the poorer schools rules were routinely challenged and broken, sometimes discreetly and sometimes more overtly, but always in a way which reduced the successful delivery of HfS to the target children. A common reason for acknowledged rule-breaking - the lack of understanding of, or sympathy for policy concept and menu constraints – could perhaps have been ameliorated by better communication.

Attitudes towards HfS were influenced both by the degree to which different communities identified themselves culturally with HfS ethos or, in some cases, acknowledged that conflicting food cultures could make HfS delivery problematic – even when they were themselves wholly sympathetic to HfS aims. Delivery was

more successful when the majority of actors shared food cultures and less successful where there was cultural disharmony. It is worth repeating that the uptake of vegetables, other than potatoes, was so minimal in the most deprived school that the catering manager made the decision to prepare only enough vegetable portions to cover the needs of those children who requested vegetables, so as 'not to waste food'. Of 120 meals served in one lunchtime in the poorest school, only seven pupils requested their designated HfS vegetable portion.

There is no evidence from this data about the influence of HfS on wider food behaviours or specifically on redressing health inequalities, but some inferences may be drawn. The schools had provided most children with a good understanding of what constituted healthy food behaviour, but there was little evidence that this knowledge was being translated into practical choices about wider diet. Given that the home-based diet of most primary school children is constrained by their family's choices, there would be little opportunity available for pupils to choose their own diets. In those areas where there was poor delivery and consumption of healthier food at lunchtime, opportunities for exerting a wider influence on general food behaviour would be limited to classroom education.

In terms of health inequalities, those children whose food behaviours were most different from those promoted by HfS were overwhelmingly from the most disadvantaged families. This research suggests that for a variety of reasons, these children may also be those who were least likely to be presented with the healthy options promoted by HfS. This data base is too small to extrapolate these findings across a larger area but the indication here was that a greater effort was needed to engage implementation actors with HfS at this schools level in a way which would encourage them to promote, rather than subvert, its ambitions.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine the role of cultural values in the policy process - and the way in which conflicting cultural values among the stakeholders affect that process. It also sought to understand what other factors might interact with those values and mitigate or exacerbate that influence. Its focus of attention has been on the delivery of Hungry for Success - a policy which sought to provide a healthy school lunch for Scotland's children and at the same time address the issue of social justice, which formed a cornerstone of the policy's original conceptualization.

Theories about food behaviours and class, discussed in Chapter 1, suggested that cultural values disjuncture might be most prevalent and most damaging where policy delivery was to the most disadvantaged. Those communities were least likely to share the cultural assumptions of policy designers and were, furthermore, least likely to have those cultural differences acknowledged and accommodated within policy design. The overarching hypothesis of this study was that values discord in the policy process could undermine the effectiveness of the programme, and that values conflict would be strongest at the points of delivery where policy recipients were furthest removed from the cultural norms subscribed to by the policy elite. To test the hypothesis, the research adopted a case study method, gathering extensive empirical research in order to establish the dynamics and nature of individual and collective cultural values and how they might impact upon HfS delivery. The results of the research demonstrate the importance of values in the policy process and provide substantial support for the hypothesis.

How successful was HfS delivery?

Looked at from a broad perspective, HfS succeeded in providing the opportunity for most pupils in most schools to eat a nutritious meal every school day. However, the

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provision of any given meal does not necessarily imply its consumption. The number of pupils in Scotland given school dinners since 2000 has stayed at just less than 50 per cent, with a five per cent drop over all since 2003 (Scottish Government, 2009). Those who do eat the meal provided are eating more healthily than they were before HfS.

From the perspective of social justice which formed the cornerstone of the policy's original conception, however, the policy has been much less successful. In order for the social justice criteria of HfS to have been fulfilled, children across the demographic spectrum would have had to enjoy equal benefits. Social justice promotes ways in which inequalities might be reduced, but there was no evidence that HfS had helped to redress inequalities between the most disadvantaged children and their more advantaged contemporaries. A policy aimed at the general population which failed to take account of potential values-conflicts within disadvantaged sub-groups, could be evaluated as succeeding on a macro level. But the policy's failure to engage the most disadvantaged suggests failure at a crucial micro level. HfS could be shown to have widened the discrepancy between groups of recipients. The policy may, in fact, have increased inequality by seeking to provide healthy meals for everyone, but delivering them least successfully to those who were most in need.

The empirical comparison of delivery in three demographically contrasting schools showed that those children in the poorest schools were least likely to be eating the complete HfS menu. Moreover, the more disadvantaged the children, the less likely they were to be eating a meal which conformed to the HfS nutritional guidelines. Although the menu may have been prepared in line with HfS regulations, the designated vegetable portion was not even included in the majority of meals presented to pupils in the poorest school. When it was included, it was rarely eaten. Where the cultural disjuncture between the poorest recipients and the values promoted by HfS was at its greatest, HfS delivery was least effective.

Within the two poorer schools, cultural values conflict was found to exist between the teaching staff and the community of catering staff and pupils. In school A where

middle class pupils came from communities which were supportive of the HfS objectives, the catering staff and teaching staff presented the HfS menus to pupils in a supportive and encouraging manner.   In schools B and C there was a clear divide between catering staff on the one hand and teaching staff on the other with the latter viewed by catering staff as part of the establishment responsible for the *imposition* of HfS.   In those schools, and particularly in the most disadvantaged school C, the catering staff were often as antagonistic towards HfS as the pupils. In schools B and C it appeared that at times the catering staff were conspiring with the pupils to subvert delivery. In those poorer schools where catering staff and pupils came from within the same community the HfS menu and ethos were regarded as alien by those whose food behaviours were based on the cultural values of a different social class. The catering staff's own reservations about the HfS menu were vocalised to the children, who were seen to be actively discouraged from trying those meals with which they were least familiar. HfS was regarded as an imposition and there appeared to be collusion, albeit unacknowledged, between pupils and catering staff to undermine its delivery.

Values conflict in the policy process was compounded by the de facto discretion allowed to street level actors at the point of delivery.

The amount of discretion allowed to catering staff was theoretically limited, but in practice catering staff were able to use their discretion substantially to affect delivery. When street level actors shared the assumptive world of the policy recipients and were, like the recipients, unsympathetic to the policy ethos, the actors challenged and undermined rules in an effort to negate the impact of HfS on pupils they knew to be unhappy with the new menus. It could be inferred from this that street level actors who had been successfully engaged in the policy ethos could use discretion to enhance delivery. But that would have required more effective communication processes than those identified by this study. The evidence was that communication within the schools was poor and got worse where it was needed most.   While communication to the pupils within the classroom had been effective and while the majority of the actors working within the schools also knew about HfS,

their knowledge about its ethos and broad objectives was largely derived from the media. The specifics about nutritional content and food presentation had been efficiently conveyed to all relevant actors, but the wider aims of HfS had not been officially communicated. As a result teachers and catering workers in the different schools interpreted the changes brought by HfS according to their cultural values perspective. There was little evidence of top-down efforts made to bring staff on board or feel part of an implementation team. The opportunities provided for feedback through staff meetings were considered to be worthless by participants at schools B and C. The perception was that no attention would be paid to feedback which failed to fit with the Government's agenda. There was a widely held view among Glasgow stakeholders that any challenges or criticisms of the Government programme from them would be ignored.

In short, schools level staff had not been brought on board in terms of positive policy promotion; the provision of channels for feedback about these difficulties was inadequate and street level bureaucrats had been allowed the discretion to act upon their own negative views about HfS in a way which damaged delivery.

The research has mapped these failures of HfS back to decisions taken earlier in the policy process. Values conflicts between the self-labelled 'practitioners' and 'experts' led to a failure to reach a consensus on how that agenda might best be fulfilled. The majority (expert) decision was to focus on economic redistribution rather than to respond to the recognized cultural differences of the poorest. Although efforts were made to recognize and accommodate the obvious cultural values differences of different ethnicities and religion, the cultural differences associated with social class – although – and this is a key point - at least as different from the mainstream as any ethnicity or religion – were not afforded the same attention. The majority view of the policy-makers was that differences in cultural values between those of mainstream society and the most disadvantaged were either not sufficiently different to warrant special allowances, or different in a way that meant the act of recognition could in some way be construed as patronising. On reflection it may be that while these policy experts felt confident in dismissing the food behaviours of the

poor as simply 'wrong', political diplomacy dictated that other cultural differences be recognized as simply different. Even those policy actors who accepted that poor people might demonstrate different food behaviour, seemed to have no real understanding of just *how* different those behaviours might be. Furthermore even those involved in policy implementation in Glasgow who did have experience of these different attitudes, and indeed expressed some sympathy with them, saw them as behaviours related to poverty, rather than the manifestation of cultural differences. The 'assumptive worlds' of the policy actors and the poorest recipients were in the most literal sense worlds apart.

These potential areas of values conflict could have been uncovered if the policy makers had used some of the elements of backward mapping methods to anticipate what might happen at the point of delivery. In particular a less hasty approach to piloting menus among the most deprived would have uncovered the difficulties of delivery where the cultural values conflict was greatest. Backward mapping also requires that policy design begins with an understanding and acknowledgement of *all* the policy recipients. Policy designers who sought to redress health inequalities in the name of social justice, in addition to the principal objective of improving school meals, should perhaps have ensured that the policy would be of benefit to those most in need.

Right from the start, it was apparent that it was political pressure that set the timetable for policy development. Political considerations defined the timetable for policy implementation, accelerated its initiation and curtailed the time available for research and debate. Party political pressure had come from two distinct directions: a need to thwart an increasingly popular campaign for universal free meals; and the new Government's need to take action on a subject which had been important enough to merit inclusion in the first day of business of the first Scottish Parliament for three hundred years. The haste with which HfS was put together meant that the opportunity to pilot specific menus at diverse points of delivery was not available. The time constraints reduced the possibility of trial runs widespread enough to uncover the potential delivery problems which have been identified in this study.

Without the kind of evidence to the contrary which could have been supplied by those wider pilots, the majority of members of the expert panel felt able to overrule minority concerns that the imposition of a standardised menu without timing or content flexibility could cause difficulties.

The decision not to make allowances for differences in food behaviours based on social class highlighted strong cultural values conflict between Glasgow and the Government. The conflict echoed the 'practitioners' versus 'experts' argument which had been lost at policy design level. While Glasgow warned that there could be delivery difficulties to those children whose food behaviours were most removed from the HfS ethos, their views were resisted by the policy-makers in the Scottish government and their advisors. When councillors and Cordia staff reported the difficulties experienced in delivery to those children whose social class cultural values did not conform to the mainstream, they were advised that there could be no exceptions to the Government aim of raising the bar for all of Scotland's children. The Government's fixed agenda of standardizing content and timing across Scotland was to be implemented. Glasgow's challenge was based on delivery difficulties already encountered within the city's large number of poor communities, but the conflict between Government and Glasgow had additional class- culture based origins. While experts and professionals in government self-identified as middle-class, the Cordia employees and implementation actors at Glasgow Council expressed strong cultural empathy with disadvantaged families. Every interviewee at local authority level (apart from one local councillor) mentioned their working class origins and stated that while their own food behaviour now rarely reflected that heritage, they were sympathetic to the difficulties of adjustment to new food being experienced by those children of the poorest families.

The effects of values conflict on policy delivery could have been mitigated with a policy design deploying a more considered use of discretion allocation. If local authorities had been allowed any discretion on the question of nutritional standards and implementation timing, HfS delivery might have been more sensitive to the values of the disadvantaged children. The decision by Glasgow to standardize its

menus across the city brought economic and health and safety benefits, but was primarily motivated by concerns that all schools should meet the HfS requirements. The effect of this additional menu restriction was to remove any possibility that local catering staff could create some meals more acceptable to the culture of local recipients, even if the menu had still to conform to the Government-imposed constraints on nutritional content and timing.

Value conflict could have been further mitigated by effective communication and feedback systems. The research showed that communication across and throughout the policy chain was inadequate. The policy design recognised the importance of effective training and education in HfS ethos for all implementation actors, the need for structured opportunities for feedback and for proper monitoring procedures, However, while nutritional guidelines and time table were set firmly by the Government, political considerations meant that local authorities were given discretion in terms of implementation processes. In practise this meant that actors at schools level were not brought on board in terms of understanding HfS, there was poor provision of defined and structured channels for feedback and the monitoring systems were ineffective in identifying the particular delivery problems observed during the case studies in the poorer schools. The monitoring system developed by the policy makers depended upon self-evaluation at a local level and relied nationally on the limited capabilities of HMIE inspections. While the evaluation process was able to report on the number of healthy meals *being served* and provided an occasional snapshot of the situation in individual schools, there was no process which could show how many healthy meals were *being eaten* and very little data which could be used to indicate any socio-economic differences in delivery. Those working at local authority level, especially those in most regular contact with the schools agreed that the available statistics about meals uptake could not accurately reflect consumption levels.

Effective communication, both in the form of dissemination of information and the establishment of monitoring and evaluation processes could have ameliorated potential conflict – and thus contributed to a more successful implementation.

However it is possible that the sheer scale of the cultural disjuncture between the policy makers and those poorest children would have made it difficult for the former to even conceptualise the kind of challenge HfS menus would present to the latter.

It is worth repeating, therefore, that while the policy did succeed in its overarching aim of improving the lunchtime diet of a majority of schoolchildren, it failed to address the 'micro' issue of the health inequities which underpinned its original social justice platform. It may even have widened the diet discrepancies between recipient groups.

Contributions to the Literature and Lessons Learned

The thesis provides a unique empirical study of one of Scotland's flagship policies, and in doing so makes key contributions to the policy process literature, in terms of both the study's analytical perspective and in the research methodology employed.

It has expanded understanding of the ways in which values and value conflicts impact on policy performance and contributes to a theoretical understanding of the role of values in the policy process. This study further demonstrates first the worth of backward mapping as an effective tool for analysis and research and secondly the benefits which resulted from the uncommon inclusion of policy recipients as part of the policy process.
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The structure of the thesis as presented has followed the conventional path of implementation studies, beginning with the policy origins and mapping the policy progress through to the point of delivery. However the conduct of the research itself was designed to conform to the tenets of backward mapping theory as outlined in Chapter 2. The virtues of backward mapping both as an analytical perspective and research methodology have been demonstrated in several ways.

First, it provided empirical reinforcement of explanations derived from theory. Backward mapping suggests it is essential to understand the issue or problem which

requires policy intervention; there should be a 'statement of the specific behaviour at the lowest level of the implementation process that generates the need for a policy' (Elmore, 1979:604). In this study it was decided that the 'lowest level' was the children who were the targeted recipients of HfS. The eloquence and richness of their contributions, combined with observational data, enabled the early identification of the ways in which HfS was failing to deliver. Having observed the delivery problems arising in the poorer schools, the research at local authority and government level focused on identifying the characteristics of these prior stages of the policy process that would help to explain the evident malfunctions in policy delivery. This practical application of theory contributed critical value to the empirical evidence amassed.

Second, the use of backward mapping enabled each level of research (schools, local authority and government) to contribute to the next. The insights gained from observation and interviews with catering and teaching staff informed the content and questions of subsequent interviews with politicians and officers at local authority level, and, in turn, those Glasgow-based interviews contributed to the content and direction of conversations with policy elites and politicians in the Scottish Government and Parliament. One particular benefit of backward mapping was the way in which material could be presented to elite interviewees for comment as substantive experience of the target group rather than as hypothesis. It also provided insightful material into the realities of delivery which allowed the interviewer to challenge with some authority the accuracy of some interviewee assertions.

As mentioned, the particular utility of backward mapping encouraged the inclusion of the policy recipients as part of the policy process. The traditional understanding of the policy process, whether that be in hierarchical terms or as a more linear process, tends to make a distinction between the point of delivery and the recipients. Conventionally, for research purposes, policy analysis defines the policy process as ending at the point of delivery. Expanding research at the point of delivery to include recipients allowed for analysis of the relationship between the deliverer and the recipient from each of their perspectives and consequently provided an enhanced understanding of the impact of that interaction on policy success. The inclusion of

school children in the analysis provided insights and an understanding of delivery problems which could not have been provided if the research had begun (or ended) with the catering assistants. One example of this would be the way in which the study showed that the shared culture-values of catering assistants and children in the two poorer schools helped shape HfS delivery in those school communities.

The role of the catering assistants in shaping delivery also adds to the literature on street level bureaucrats. The findings have affirmed the importance of street level workers and challenged doubts cast by Hill (2003) and Winter (2006) bout street bureaucrats' impact on delivery and the factors which may influence their behaviour. The symbiotic relationship between theories about backward mapping and street level bureaucrats has been recognised elsewhere. This study's development of assumptive world theory and its use in this research has shown another useful symbiosis of theories. The research design with its acknowledged debts to backward mapping, assumptive world theory and the street level actors approach, allowed for the identification of cultural values within a framework where cultural values conflict and their impact on policy implementation could be recognised. The thesis has shown how backward mapping from the assumptive world of the actors at the point of delivery *and* recipients can contribute to understanding the role that values play in the policy chain. In a broader sense it also demonstrates the potential limitations of curtailing research at the point of delivery. A greater understanding of the behaviour and influences of street level workers on policy has been gained by extending the research to examine the interaction *between* the policy recipients and front line deliverers.

Young's assumptive world theory as discussed in Chapter 1 contributed greatly to the research direction, by implicitly suggesting that a policy actor's cultural and values perception of the world can influence not only their own interpretation of policy but crucially their perception of what another actor's assumptive world might be. In this study, the assumptions by the policy elite about the cultural values of some policy recipients highlighted the potential of this kind of values disjuncture to impact negatively on policy delivery. As discussed, other theorists have developed Young's

work in useful and informative ways, but very little empirical research has explored values and their influence from the very beginning of a policy inception to the point of delivery and beyond to the values of the policy recipients themselves. This study has begun to fill that gap by analysing in detail every stage of one particular policy process. In doing so it has revealed the importance of acknowledging and making allowances for cultural values differences which may otherwise damage policy delivery in crucial areas. As stated in Chapter 1, Thacher and Rein suggest (2004) that the less explicit values found in administrative reports etc are sometimes neglected in policy analysis by the focus on values derived from grand moral and political philosophy. This study suggests there may be an even greater neglect of the importance of the cultural-values mores – and their potential for influencing delivery - held by implementation actors and recipients.

This study also contributes to an understanding of the other many pressures which shape policy design and delivery and the perennial policy studies issue of the difference between theory and practice. In doing so it supports the literature which has highlighted the importance of communication and discretion in the policy process. While the policy designers placed considerable value on the need to provide opportunities for widespread communication, feedback and evaluation/monitoring systems, in reality, few of their recommendations were acted upon. The thesis demonstrates the way in which the relative influence of actors at the different stages of design, implementation and delivery can be shaped by the effectiveness of communication and by the amount of discretion formally allocated or appropriate.

The study furthermore provides evidence of the impact of discrete political pressures on policy making. Party political challenges and the need for a new government to be seen to take action influenced the policy timing, which in turn may have limited the opportunity for wider piloting and anticipation of potential implementation problems.

If the policy had only been concerned with an improved distribution of healthy meals across Scotland then the problems of communication and discretion identified in the

disadvantaged Glasgow schools could be dismissed as unfortunate, but not crucial. However, the social justice element of the policy demanded that these processes be subjected to close scrutiny within the poorer schools. The food behaviours of the poor were recognised as different from those of the mainstream, but there was no acknowledgement within the policy that those behaviours stemmed from cultural values. At a time when the western world is struggling to come to terms with growing numbers of obese children and adults, there is increasing academic debate about the most effective methods of addressing this issue. The evidence presented about the influence of cultural values on food behaviours – and its impact on policy delivery - is a valuable contribution to the current debate on this subject in the policy, sociology and psychology literature. Questions should perhaps be asked about why the cultural values of a particular social class were not accorded the same treatment as other groups with special needs resulting from their cultural differences. It would be interesting to see if a similar 'blindspot' about this particular kind of cultural difference is evident in other policy design. Research in this area could be useful to policy makers but could also add considerable value to the recognition versus redistribution debate within the field of social justice theory and

In terms of research into healthy eating, but also in terms of broader policy, and especially of that policy which seeks to change other behaviours, there is scope for further investigation into the benefits of a greater recognition of the contribution that policy recipients make to policy success. Even without this study's particular focus on the influence of values-culture, the selective inclusion of recipients as part of the process of other policy studies could add depth and richness to analysis.

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Appendix A: Interviews

Scottish Government Level

Civil servant A, (9th October, 2008, 15th July, 2009) Edinburgh

Civil servant B (21st July, 2009) Edinburgh

Civil Servant C (21st July, 2009) Glasgow

Civil servant D (14th September, 2009) Edinburgh

Panel member A, (9th September, 2009) Glasgow

Panel member B, (21st September 2009) Glasgow

Panel member C, (1st October, 2009) Glasgow

Panel member D, (8th October, 2009) , Edinburgh

Panel member E, (8th October, 2009), by telephone

Panel member F, (14th October, 2009) Stirling

MSP (Member of Scottish Parliament) (6th October, 2009) Glasgow

MSP B, (8th October, 2009)   Edinburgh

MSP C, (26th October, 2009) Glasgow

MSP D, (4th November, 2009) Edinburgh

MSP E, (10th, November, 2009) by telephone

MSP F, (10th, November, 2009) by telephone

Professor Susan Deacon, (28th October, 2009) Musselburgh

Gillian Kynoch (11th February 11th, 2010) Glasgow

Local Authority Level

Councillor A, (4th September, 2009) Glasgow

Councillor B, (1st October, 2009) Glasgow   RS

Councillor C, (1st Octobert, 2009) Glasgow

Councillor D, (13th October, 2009) Glasgow

Councillor E, (30th October 30th, 2009) Glasgow

Council officer A, (4th September, 2009) Glasgow

Council officer B, (8thSeptember 2009) by telephone

Cordia manager A, (8th September, 2009) Glasgow,

   (and by telephone October 13th and 15th)

Cordia manager B, (1st October, 2009) Glasgow

Cordia manager C, (6th October, 2009) Glasgow

Cordia manager D, (16th October, 2009) Glasgow

Cordia worker A, (23rd October, 2009) Glasgow, by telephone

Cordia worker B, (27th October, 2009) Glasgow

Schools Level

School A.

Focus Groups A1, A2, A3, (27th, January, 2009)

Focus Groups A4, A5, A6, (29th January, 2009)

Pupils attending lunch-time drop-in session, (29th January, 2009)

Head teacher (26th January, 30th January, 2009)

Deputy head teacher (26th January, 2009)

Catering assistants (28th, 30th January, 2009)

Catering manager (27th January, 2009)

Observations, lunchtimes, (daily, week of January 26th - 30th)

School B

Focus groups, B1, B2, B3, B4, (12th January, 2009)

Focus groups, B5, B6, B7, (January 13th, 2009)

Head teacher, (12th November, 2008)

Head teacher and deputy head teacher (14th January, 2009)

Catering assistants, (12th November, 2008, 14th January, 2009)

Catering manager, (12th January, 2009)

Observations 1, lunchtimes (daily, week of November 3rd – 7th, 2008)

Observations 2, lunchtimes (daily, week of January 12th - 16th, 2009)

School C

Focus groups C1, C2, (18th November, 2008)

Focus groups, C3, C4, C5, (2nd December, 2008)

Focus groups C6, C7, (3rd December, 2008)

Head teacher and deputy head teacher (17th November, 2008)

Dining Hall Supervisor (27th November, 2008)

Catering Assistants (26th November, 2008)

Catering manager (24th November, 2008)

Observations lunchtimes (daily, week of November 24th – 28th, 2008)

Additional interview:

Warren, J. (2004) Jenny Warren, Government-appointed National Breastfeeding Advisor in Scotland. Interview conducted in the course of earlier research into the implementation of health policy among disadvantaged groups in Scotland.

Appendix B: Schools

School A served a relatively prosperous area in the west end of Glasgow. The proportion of pupils who were entitled to free school meals was 7.9 per cent, below the Scottish national average of 17.5 per cent and only a quarter of the Glasgow average of 32.5 per cent. Other indicators of the school's comparatively affluent and popular status are the number of placing requests. About half of the school's pupils lived outside the designated catchment area and attended as a result of successful parental placing requests. The school's attendance figures were in line with the national average. The school was housed in a large Victorian building, which had been refurbished and had a modern extension added. The school had an active parent council, which drew on wide support from parents.

School B served an area in the east end of Glasgow, which had experienced a process of gentrification over the previous ten years. The school had previously had a poor reputation, but had improved over several years to the point when, for the first time ever, it had received more parental placing requests from outside its catchment area, than it had from parents within its catchment area requesting places in schools elsewhere . It had recently moved from a dilapidated Victorian building to more modern premises. A small number of middle class families had moved into the area, some of whose children attended the primary school, but the majority of pupils were from disadvantaged backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who were entitled to free school meals was well above the national average at 37.5% and five per cent higher than the Glasgow average. Pupils' attendance was in line with the national average. The school had a small parent council, which depended upon a limited pool of parents for support.

School C served an area of extreme poverty in the east end of the city. It had moved from its original Victorian building to a modern, purpose-built school seven years

previously, but because of its poor reputation, had consistently remained undersubscribed. Attendance figures for the school were below the national average. More than half the children at the school, 56.6 per cent, more than three times higher than the national average, were eligible for free school meals. There was no parent council at the school at the time of the research, nor could school staff remember there having been one.

Additional information

A further indication of the cultural differences between the schools may be seen in their different responses to their invitations to take part in the research for this study and the way in which those responses provide an insight into the each school's relationship with the parent body.

School A requested that the researcher first meet with the parents council and explain the nature of the study before letter requests were sent to all parents. When parents had agreed to allow the research to take place ,the researcher was then requested to give a general talk on the research topic and objectives to all of the pupils at the school assembly before the research was allowed to begin.

School B forwarded letters to parents offering them the opportunity to remove their child from the research process and informed the parent council that the study would be taking place.

The head teacher at School C took the decision to allow full access without any parent consultation. She said the history of parental responses to school communications was too poor to warrant further attempts to engage parents in anydecision-making processes which she considered to be non-essential.

Appendix C: Members of Expert Panel

Michael O'Neill	Director of Education, North Lanarkshire Council, and the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland. **(chair)**

Annie Anderson	Professor of Food Choice, University of Dundee
Fergus Chambers	Director of Direct and Care Services, Glasgow City Council
Michael Clapham	Lecturer in Nutrition, Queen Margaret University College
Bronwen Cohen	Chief Executive, Children in Scotland
Bill Gray	Scottish Consumer Council
Donna Heaney	Scottish Consumer Council
Grace Irvine	Chair, Association of Service Solutions Scotland
Roo Kharbanda	CoSLA
Gillian Kynoch	Scottish Food and Health Co-ordinator
Joseph Leiper	Headteacher, Aberdeen
Hugh MacKintosh	Director, Barnardo's Scotland
MaureenMcGarrity	Headteacher, Inverclyde
Monica Merson	Health Education Board for Scotland
Pamela Reid	Food Standards Agency Scotland
Marjory Robertson	HM Inspectorate of Education
Nancy Wilson	Principal Teacher of Home Economics, North Lanarkshire
Ian Young	Health Education Board for Scotland

Scottish Executive Officials:

Maureen Bruce	Health Department
Hazel Dewart	Education Department
Joan Fraser	Education Department
Kathryn Lynch	Social Inclusion, Development Department
Clodagh Memery	Social Inclusion, Development Department
Lorraine Wilson	Education Department
Moira Wilson	Education Department
Fabian Zuleeg	Education Department