

**International Centre for Public Service Management**

**Public Policy and Management Research Group**

## **Research Strategy 2016-2020**



**NOTTINGHAM**  
TRENT UNIVERSITY

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## 1. Introduction.

- 1.1 The Public Management and Governance Research Group is the research group within the International Centre for Public Service Management at Nottingham Business School. Historically it has been one of the smaller of the eight research centres within NBS in recent years. In 2014, it had 5 research active core members, which expanded to 9 during 2015, and 10 in 2016. Although it is due to lose one of its longest serving and most experienced researchers when Professor Harry Barton leaves the university in December 2016, the school is currently advertising for a new Professor to lead the group.
- 1.2 The group's activity has been kept under continual review since Pete Murphy assumed the Leadership in 2012. The group was restructured with its purpose, objectives and targets reviewed in 2013 in order to help facilitate the Business Schools submission for the 2014 Research Excellence Framework, and in particular, to provide one of the 3 impact case studies for the 2014 Business schools' submission. In 2015 it was revised again to help contribute the Business Schools application for accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), and in 2016 to help the Schools application for EQUIS (EFMD Quality Improvement System') accreditation.
- 1.3 After the 2014 REF results in 2014, the group fundamentally reviewed the long-term ambitions and objectives of the group, to start to prepare for the 2020 REF, to reflect contemporary issues in public management, and to embrace the NBS Research Strategy 2014-19.
- 1.4 The 2015 review of the NBS research groups made no proposals for changes to the group other than to allow a change of name to better reflect the group ambitions and avoid confusion with other groups in the school. The 2016 review of research groups confirmed the continuation of the group.
- 1.5 This plan reviews and updates the ambitions and objectives of the group. It reflects the new NTU Research Strategy and the new NBS Research Plan 2016-2020 and takes account of changes in personnel and in the resources and opportunities available to the group.
- 1.6 The current purpose and objectives of the group, together with the performance of the group in 2016 were reviewed and set out in our Annual Report of January 2016, which is published alongside this revised strategy.

## 2. Purpose and Objectives

- 1.7 The **purpose** of the Public Policy and Management Research Group for 2017 is to:
  - Provide a focus for the scholarly activities and a distinctive research identity for public, management and governance research within Nottingham Business School.
  - Provide a catalyst for organisational, staff and curriculum development in public policy, management and service delivery.
  - Generate interest and financial support for research and other scholarly activity in public policy and management.

- Promote, disseminate and support the research of members of the group, their collaborators and associates.
- Facilitate the creation of public value and optimise the social impact and influence of the research and activities of its members.
- Facilitate interdisciplinary collaborations, within Nottingham Business School, across Nottingham Trent University and in the wider academic community interested in the theory and practice of public policy and management.

The latest **objectives** of the group therefore acknowledge and embrace the five primary areas of future focus articulated in the NBS Research Strategy 2016-2020. The current objectives are:-

- To facilitate the creation of public value and optimise the social impact of our research on the teaching, theory and practice of public management inside and outside of NBS.
- To maintain the current applied and operational research focus without inhibiting new initiatives or missing significant opportunities.
- Implement the PPMRG's strategy for the development of research into public policy, administration and management.
- To maintain and develop the external profile of the group and maintain inter-disciplinary and international collaborations with identified individuals and institutions.
- To make an appropriate contribution to meeting the ambitions of the NBS Research Plan and the NBS submission to the 2020 REF.
- To expand research capacity through grant-related activity, consultancy contracts and engagement with funding providers.
- To maintain and develop the external profile of the group and maintain inter-disciplinary and international collaborations with identified individuals and institutions.

### 3. The NTU Research Strategy and the NBS Research Plan.

The NBS Research Plan 2015-2020 was explicitly built around ambitions for the 2020 REF although it does not cover the full range of scholastic or research endeavours extant within the school and individual research groups. The 2016-20 'plan' is an update on progress towards the original plans ambitions with changes to the implementation and action plans for 2016/2017. It does not change the key ambitions or targets, so the implementation targets remain the same as in the 2015 strategy

The previous strategy states that during the period 2015-20 NBS intends to increase the schools 'research power' to a level that will result in a REF 2020 submission of 45+ faculty (FTE) with an average GPA of 3.0+, requiring the submission of 6 impact case studies. To achieve this, in appendix

1, it sets research targets for the school or faculty as a whole, which will be measured and benchmarked against competitor institutions.

As the plan states, this is a very ambitious target. For comparative purposes the 2014 REF submission had 23 (FTE) faculty entered, with an average GPA of 2.5, which were supported by 3 impact case studies.

The key metric targets contained in Appendix 1 of the NBS Research Plan are reproduced below. These represent extremely challenging and ambitious targets against which to set individual research group contributions. The NBS plan also contains areas for new investment approved by the university, in the fifteen months up to June 2016, and this included two Health and Wellbeing Proof-of-Concept awards which attracted internal QR funding.

1. Phil Considine and Pete Murphy were awarded £28,000 to scope and plan the establishment of a Research Hub for Variation in Healthcare (RHVHC) and to contribute to the local NHS transformation debate and process.
2. Will Rossiter and Pete Murphy were also awarded £28,000 to create a ‘Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Combined Authority: Evidence Informed Practice Network’. Although the focus of this work rapidly changed to focus on the new governments’ proposals for an Industrial Strategy, to contribute to the development of Midlands Connect, the Midlands Engine and strategic infrastructure in the region.

At present there are 97 faculty members with research allowances in NBS of which 8 are within the Public Policy and Management Research Group. The average research allowance for members of the group is below the average for faculty as a whole (reflecting the younger profile of new group members), and the group now contains only two members Harry Barton and Pete Murphy who received the maximum research allowance this year.

The plan provides for a significant increase in research grant income and states that in part this will be achieved through specific research targets (identified by asterisks in the table below) which should have been given to individual research professors and their respective groups during the annual PDCR review in 2016.

It would be unreasonable and impractical to directly apply the research plans overall targets for the school to individual research groups. However for illustrative purposes, the proportion of each target that PPMRG would be responsible for achieving (the equivalent of approximately 8% of the NBS research plans targets), is also shown in red on the table below. This gives us some indication of what the group might expect as a starting ‘benchmark’ for its contribution.

Key Metrics	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Increase the number of research engaged faculty to 2/3 through IRR submissions	74 (85)*	89 (97*)	100-120	125-30	125-30	125-130
<b>PPMRG (nominal share)</b>		<b>(7)</b>	<b>(8)</b>	<b>(10)</b>	<b>(10)</b>	<b>(10)</b>
<b>Actual and proposed</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>
Increase the number of						

3/4 star (ABS) publications (in NBS)	47	45-50	50-55	55-60	60	60
<b>PPMRG (nominal share)</b>		<b>(3-4)</b>	<b>(4-5)</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>(5)</b>
<b>Actual and proposed</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Increase the total number of published articles in peer reviewed journals (ABS)	112	100-115	105-120	110-125	115-130	120-13
<b>PPMRG (nominal share)</b>		<b>(8-9)</b>	<b>(9-10)</b>	<b>(9-10)</b>	<b>(9-10)</b>	<b>(10)</b>
<b>Actual and proposed</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>
Increase number of research bids (NBS)	40	50	55	60	65	65
<b>PPMRG nominal share</b>		<b>(4)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>(5)</b>
<b>Actual and proposed</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
No. of successful bids	11	16	18	20	25	25
<b>PPMRG nominal share</b>		<b>(1)</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(2)</b>
<b>Actual and proposed</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
Increase research grant income to £200k (2014-15) and £500K (2018-19)	200K	500K	650K	750K	900K	1M
<b>PPMRG (nominal share)</b>		<b>(40k)</b>	<b>(52k)</b>	<b>(60k)</b>	<b>(72k)</b>	<b>(80k)</b>
<b>Actual and proposed</b>		<b>30k</b>	<b>10k</b>	<b>40k</b>	<b>40k</b>	<b>40k</b>
PGR Completions PhD/Prof Docs, f/t/ p/t. Home/International/DBA/ PhD	16 8	27 9	30 10	30 12	35 15	35 15
<b>PPMRG (nominal share)</b>		<b>(2+1)</b>	<b>(2+1)</b>	<b>(2+1)</b>	<b>(3+1)</b>	<b>(3+1)</b>
<b>Actual and proposed</b>		<b>2+1</b>	<b>2+1</b>	<b>1+2</b>	<b>0+3</b>	<b>2+1</b>
Increase number of case studies to 50 per year (20% in case clearing house)	30	35	40	45	50	50
<b>PPMRG (nominal share)</b>		<b>(30)</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(4)</b>
<b>Actual and proposed</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
To publish textbooks/research monographs	7	10	16	18	20	20
<b>PPMRG (nominal share)</b>		<b>(1)</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(2)</b>
<b>Actual and proposed</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
Proportion (No.) of research active staff (REF standard)	26-30	35-45	40-45	45-50	45-55	45-55
<b>PPMRG (nominal share)</b>		<b>(3)</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(4)</b>
<b>Actual and proposed</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Proportion (No.) of research active staff (developing)	54-70	70-85	85-90	85-90	80-85	75-85
<b>PPMRG (nominal share)</b>		<b>(6-7)</b>	<b>(7)</b>	<b>(7)</b>	<b>(7)</b>	<b>6-7</b>
<b>Actual -100%</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>

Key metric targets to 2015-2020 (NBS Research Plan September 2015 using academic year).

#### 4. The contribution from the Public Policy and Management Group.

The actual targets for the individual groups are likely to be subject to variations across the eight research groups and members of faculty. The targets will be subject to negotiation, and the NBS Research Plan currently includes no hypothecated or direct additional resources for any of the groups. The Business School and the University have indicated that there is likely to be additional research investment forthcoming, through Strategic Investment Funds (SIF) and Quality Research (QR) funding.

In order to contribute to and facilitate this process, the following comments on the various targets and the realistic contribution that the PPMRG could make over the plan period are presented in the order they appear in the table.

**a. Increase the proportion of faculty that is research active.**

The group are already encouraging and promoting research engagement and activity, through the internal research seminar series, through encouragement and involvement of new and early career researchers in ongoing research projects and via support for new seed corn projects. All members of the group are active researchers. Over the last two years we have also encourage active involvement in Special Interest Groups organised around annual research conferences, such as BAM, EGPA and IRSPM. Active participation by the group increased significantly in both 2015 and 2016.

Although Professor Barton retires at the end of the year, recruitment of his replacement is ongoing. We also hope to attract a couple of new research active members in 2017, as a result of planned ongoing recruitment processes. However, this target fundamentally relies on the forthcoming appointment of the advertised Professor of Public Management, success in IRR process, and to a lesser extent, the SIF/QR and seed corn fund applications. For the 2017/18 year, the IRR Working Group have produced a new policy and process that strongly encourages wider participation. As in previous years, more experienced members of the group will provide advice and guidance on the submission of individual IRRs and will support both seed corn and other grant applications and will co-ordinate IRR submissions by individuals across the group. Through these means we expect to be able to increase our contribution as shown in the table above.

**b. Increase the number of 3/4\* journal publications.**

Last year we reported that this target would be extremely challenging due to a number of factors. The low average research allowance for the group; the relatively few 3/4\* journal focussing on public management, the younger and inexperienced profile of new group members, the relatively few publications already in the publishing pipeline and the (known) backlog of articles already waiting to be published by the most prominent public management journals.

Although this remains a very challenging set of targets, in 2016, there were three areas where helpful changes to this scenario happened. The new IRR process approved for 2017/18, and the ongoing recruitment drive should help engage greater numbers of faculty. The backlog of articles waiting for publication has eased (although not eradicated), and the number of submissions in the pipeline have increased from this time last year. Last year we considered that it may be feasible to increase the annual number of 3/4\* journal articles to the level suggested in the plan by 2018/19 and 2019/20, but (other than via external recruitment) it is very unlikely that the interim figures can be achieved. This remains the case

**c. Increase the number of peer review journal publications.**

We do not consider this target will be as challenging for the group as the 3/4 \* target referred to above. We have a number of new group members in the early stages of their research careers that we hope will start to contribute to this target. Although we are losing Professor Barton's contribution, the last three annual reviews of the group's activities, indicate that an annual output of

8-10 peer reviewed articles should be feasible (subject to appropriate support through the IRR and investment process).

We are currently considering a proposal to assume editorial control of a finance and management journal. Some of our major ongoing projects are also in the later stages of fieldwork and data collection. Submissions to journals have therefore started. One key to meeting these ambitions will be to efficiently and effectively turn this research into publishable material.

**d. Increase the number of research bids and the number of successful bids.**

In the light of previous experience, and the increased competition for research funding, in a market where overall resources are reducing and competition is increasing, these are challenging targets – particularly the desire to increase the proportion of successful bids.

The group have been relatively successful in the past at both submitting and winning very small grant bids particularly via locally based research consultancies and professional bodies (CIMA, ACCA etc). Bigger grants have proved more elusive and although both the number and quality of submissions have improved this year (two large bids reached final assessment stage), we are not contributing significant amounts to the schools research grant income. The group have continued to strengthen connections with both national and local bodies as a targeted source of potential research bids in the future.

**e. Increase research grant income**

While research consultancies have been a welcome source of support in recent years, research grant income has been more problematic and the overall school targets look very challenging. The research plan, makes clear that the Professoriate's individual targets and the recent SIF and QR investments in research infrastructure and specific research teams are the primary ways in which these ambitions will be addressed. PPMRG has only Professor Barton in the Professoriate and has to-date been allocated two QR sets of funds, both this year.

The group will continue to submit grant applications, and are committed to doing so, but in reality, with on-going austerity in public finances, are unlikely to attract major contributions to the grant income targets.

**f. Postgraduate completions.**

Within the research plan period, these targets will overwhelmingly be met by students who are already undertaking PhD/DBAs or are about to commence their studies. The group was awarded one of the funded PhD awards for 2016/17. The other contribution that groups can make is in supervisory duties and designing potential projects for potential research students. Each of our research units is committed to putting forward potential PhD projects each year, and a number of members of the group provide supervision and are committed to continue to do so, but these particular targets are examples of targets that should not be disaggregated below school-wide levels.

**g. Increase the number of case studies**

This is an area of research activity that we have not been involved in in recent years. However, the group potentially, should be able to increase its contribution. Some of the groups' current research projects are essentially very practical, applied research and could potentially yield case study material, although we need to consider priorities. We requested support for this activity in each of the last three years but were unsuccessful. Notwithstanding this lack of success, we intend to persevere and to revisit these ambitions if we are able not least as part of the forthcoming IRR process.

#### **h. Textbooks and research monographs**

Because of the long gestation periods and the need for long-term relationships with publishing houses, these are targets that are unsuited to disaggregation to individual research groups; or to realistic monitoring in a short to medium term plan such as this strategy. There are however two books being produced by members off the group which hopefully will be published in 2016/2017, there may then be a gap in 2017/18 before two more currently in gestation come to fruition.

#### **i. Research active staff (REF standard).**

Given the research plans current benchmark average GPA of 3.0+, the age profile of current members of the group, and the current level of publications in the journals pipeline, this will be a challenging target for the PPMRG to contribute to within the current staffing level and resource envelope. However, we have a number of mid-career researchers with the ambition and potential to contribute to the REF, the School and University have indicated that there are still investment opportunities and there are likely to be recruitment opportunities arising in the REF period.

#### **j. Research active staff (developing).**

Unlike the previous target, this is a target where the group are already over-delivering but also one of the targets that we consider we can make a greater contribution, subject to appropriate support. All of our current faculty involved in teaching public management are now research engaged or research active, and, as our 2016 Annual Report shows, we are attracting non-public management specialists from all divisions to collaborate in our research.

#### **k. Research Impact Case Studies.**

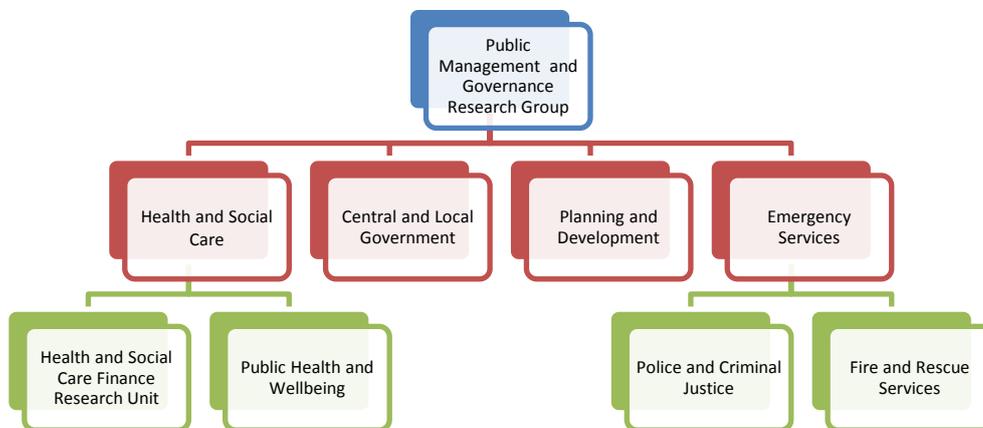
The research plan (and its update) has identified a potential impact case study from the PPMR group for the 2020 REF. As mentioned above, this would be a development of the Fire and Rescue Services Case Study submitted for the REF in 2014. However, with the plans' intention to submit 6 impact case studies to the 2020 REF, the group might reasonably be expected to contribute one or two of these cases. The head of research estimates that in order to submit 6 case studies, the faculty should be developing 9 or 10 potential candidates.

Each of our three research units are keen to impact or influence public policy and practice, and, subject to appropriate support, the group are well placed to continue to develop and shape potential case studies. The group submitted three potential cases to the Pro-VC (Research) progress assessment in October 2016 and helped other groups with a further two. Although no detailed

feedback has been received the group has been asked to continue developing these three cases at this stage. This could therefore be an area that the group can contribute more than a single case study and subject to sufficient ongoing resources, we would expect to have three capable of consideration with, hopefully, two to be submitted.

## 5. The Group Structure, sub-units and key areas of the groups research

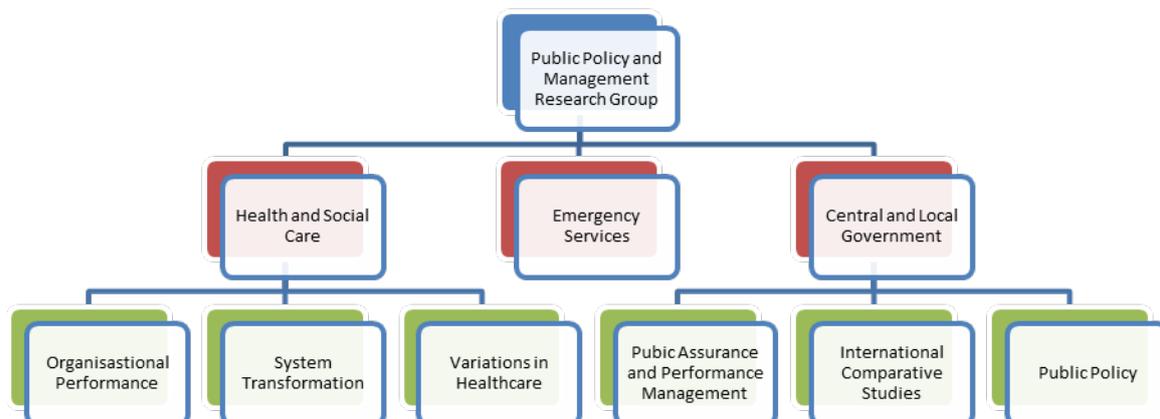
The previous Public Management and Governance Research Group was structured around 4 areas of interest, which were defined as ‘projects’ and/or units and these are detailed below. Each of the four ‘projects’ had their own webpages with links off the PMGRG ‘home’ page. Two of the projects had two complementary but subsidiary work streams and the research activity of each of the four units is still articulated on the groups’ dedicated pages on the NTU Research website.



In 2015, three out of the 4 units (Health, Local Government and Emergency Services) were particularly productive with their multiple outputs recorded on the NTU Institutional Repository (IREP) and brought together in the research groups Annual Report. Activity in the fourth area since 2015 has mainly been undertaken in conjunction with the Economic Strategy Research Bureau (ESRB) within NBS or with other related groups elsewhere in NTU. These groups have generally taking the lead responsibility for the projects.

Similarly, at the start of this year, for reasons explained in the Annual Report, and following the departure of Professor Malcolm Prowle, we amalgamated the two overlapping Health and Social Care units into a single team, under the leadership of Dr Don Harradine. Similarly in June 2016, following the allocation of QR funding for the Transforming Healthcare Systems and the Variations in Healthcare, projects two additional work streams have been established under the Health and Social Care project. Phil Considine and Pete Murphy are jointly overseeing both the Transformations Healthcare Systems (assisted by Professor David Buchanan and Simone Jordan) and the Variations in Healthcare centre assisted by Phil Da Silva and Rebecca Larder.

It is proposed to continue to contribute to cross-school or cross-university projects, but not to group these formally into a specific unit.



## 6. The 2016/2017 academic year

### Existing activity/interests to be maintained or developed

In the short term, and in the light of the resource envelope for 2016/17 arising out of the IRR process, the group are fully committed (if anything over-committed) in delivering the outputs and obligations of the following ongoing projects

#### Health and Social Care

The health and social care unit currently have two relatively large on-going research projects, a project that received in-year QR funding in 2016, which has two interconnected work streams and a new exciting project that has recently commenced.

##### a) ASSIST Mansfield

The housing triage and hospital discharge project (ASSIST) is centred on Kings Mill Hospital in Mansfield with Don Harradine and Pete Murphy involved. The second evaluation (full year) was completed earlier this year and a report submitted to the commissioners. One or possibly two academic papers are due to be written arising out of this work

##### b) Generation Y Nottingham

The review of pre-admission decisions of Generation Y members of this 'mostly healthy' cohort within South Nottinghamshire is centred around the Emergency Services and urgent care provision at the Queens Medical Centre in Nottingham was also undertaken by Don and Pete. The second phase was completed and a report delivered to the commissioners this year. One or possibly two academic papers are also due to be written arising out of this work.

##### c) 'Unwarranted variations in healthcare' and 'Transforming healthcare systems'.

QR funding was jointly allocated by NTU to Phil Considine and Pete Murphy for these two projects earlier this year. The projects have delivered on their original objectives and an encouraging concluding symposium was held in December. Although internal and external key stakeholders are keen for the initiatives to continue, this will depend on attracting further central support and resourcing.

d) Engage for Success

Following a successful launch event at NBS in October, Sarah Pass is leading a national research group investigating line managers and employee engagement. There are 15 organisations interested in being a case study for the research (this includes private, public and not-for-profit organisations). There are also have over 30 organisations who would like to be kept informed of the research as part of an action learning set. Field research is due to commence in early 2017.

### **Emergency Services Unit**

Up to the end of 2016 this Unit had two overlapping interests, which have recently (and coincidentally) been brought together in the 2016 Policing and Crime Bill. The Police and Criminal Justice team was under the direction of Professor Harry Barton, the Director of Research at NBS; while the Fire and Rescue Services team was led by Pete Murphy. Both teams are interested in the policy, governance and delivery of individual emergency services and they shared a joint interest in the interoperability of the emergency services and national and local resilience arrangements.

a) Police and Criminal Justice.

Police and Crime Commissioners and Police Panels were established in 2012 and these new arrangements have been one of the most radical changes to the governance of local constabularies for many years. They have been the subject of a number of investigations by the Unit since 2012. In 2015, the government proposed extending PCC powers to oversee local Fire and Rescue Services and it is this change that has been enshrined in the Policing and Crime Bill together with proposals for greater collaboration and integration of the three main emergency services.

Professor Barton and Dr Rupert Matthews continued their investigations into the application of 'Lean' management to public services and the team was strengthened in the second half of 2016 when Russ Glennon joined the team from Loughborough University. Russ is due to complete his PhD early in 2017, after which he will be able to help with on-going projects from all three of the research units, not just the emergency services unit.

b) Fire and Rescue Services

The Fire and Rescue Services research programme formed the basis of one of the three 'Impact Case studies' that was submitted as part of the NBS submission to the 2014REF. A series of commissions from the National Audit Office on public assurance and value for money, as well as changes arising out of the proposals for PCCs and the re-establishment of an Independent Fire Inspectorate are on-going projects that could potentially provide an impact case study for the next REF. In April 2015, together with colleagues from the University of Nottingham, a post-devolution comparative study of the performance management and value for money regimes in Scotland and England was submitted

to the Scottish Government and in 2016, this directly informed the new national framework for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

In addition to these larger projects, there are also been a number of shorter or smaller projects that are ongoing. An NBS seed corn funded project by Tom Spencer, Pete Murphy and Jo Hayden (from Nottinghamshire FRS), to review the 'Statements of Assurance' produced by the Fire and Rescue Services in England was commenced, and evidence has been submitted to the NAO study on the performance of NHS Ambulance Trusts; which is due to report in Spring 2017.

#### **Local and Central Government.**

##### a) International projects

Martin Jones, has ongoing publication commitments arising out of an IRSPM Accounting and Finance SIG project on financial resilience for which they have a CIMA grant award. Bocconi and Newcastle University (Steccolini) are the lead institutions on the project. Martin and Pete (with Joyce Liddle of Aix-Marseilles and Andrew Bowden of Northumbria) are also undertaking the UK survey of a cross-European study on local governments reaction to cost pressures. This is at a relatively early stage and Joyce Liddle is leading this project. Pete also has a commitment to a cross-national comparative study of strategic management based around membership of the EGPA SIG on Strategic Government and Management, which is being led by Paul Joyce.

##### b) Public assurance and a proposed impact case study

Pete has on-going commitments arising out of the project with Laurence Ferry from Durham on the Accountability, Transparency and Public Assurance arrangements across locally delivered public service. Michael Hewitt and Pete also have an on-going project on public scrutiny and the history of the Centre for Public Scrutiny that received seed corn funding support this year. These and related projects formed the basis of the proposed impact case study from this unit submitted to the pro-VC (Research). As such will need support with their development if an impact case study is to be realised for the 2020 REF.

##### c) The emerging Industrial strategy, the Midlands Engine and local economic development

As mentioned in section 3 above, Will Rossiter and Pete Murphy were awarded £28,000 in QR funding for work that has focused on the new governments' proposals for an Industrial Strategy. A contribution to its development was made to the Department of Business Innovation and Skills select committee inquiry, via a contribution to the joint Midlands Connect/Midlands Engine submission. This and other work on other regional and local economic development initiatives, will be continued and may potentially form the basis of an impact case study from ESRB for the REF.

## **7. The medium term 2017/18 and 2018/19.**

##### a) Individual REF submissions

As and when the NBS research plan is finalised, the group will review this plan. At this stage however, we envisage contributing to the individual researchers GPA score by targeting long term to

submit 30% of research active members of the group although this is dependent on the GPA benchmark used and the results of the IRR and strategic investment decisions which are both outside of the groups control. These two years will be crucial to the contribution of our younger, but more experienced, researchers (Martin Jones, Sarah Pass, Rupert Matthews, Michael Hewitt, Phil Considine, Will Rossiter and Russ Glennon), if they are to be part of the 2020 REF submission.

Because of the paucity of Public Management journals in the 3 and 4 \* categories, and the desire to develop less experienced colleagues the group would have preferred a lower benchmark such as the 2.5 used in the 2014 REF, but, whatever GPA level is adopted, it is clear some of the intermediate benchmarks are unlikely to be reached for PPMRG.

#### b) REF impact case studies

This period will also be important in terms of the development of the REF impact case studies. This is an area where the group could potentially make a disproportionate positive contribution which could help counterbalance our contributions in other areas. All three units in the group have been preparing the foundations for case studies. However, their continuous development requires the investment of additional resources in the medium term for this potential to be realised. It is unlikely (and unreasonable to expect) that all three will emerge as viable case studies, but the group would like to be supported in developing all three, in the expectation that at least one and possibly two will be potentially viable case studies.

In addition, we expect to be able to offer advice and assistance to other impact case studies being developed within NBS or NTU. One example mentioned above is a potential case from Will Rossiter and the ESRB, but, because of our knowledge and links with central and local government we may be able to help with other cases centring on the public services.

#### c) Research Environment at NBS

Last year, following the successful conferences and workshops in 2015, the group contributed to the developing 'research environment' by organising two (external) research workshop or SIG meetings or conferences at NBS. We had planned to organise one, but stepped in when another University had difficulty arranging another. This was in addition to on-going active involvement in internal and external research seminars, conferences and networks – such as Alternative Futures and A&F seminar series internally and IRSPM, BAM, EURAM, EGPA externally. We currently have two events planned for 2017. In September, we are hosting the JUC Public Accounts Committee annual conference, while earlier in July we will be hosting a delegation of researchers from Sichuan University in China to an initial research symposium from which we hope to generate mutual collaborations.

In terms of income, the group has historically been able to source small grant funding, and relatively small research consultancy projects but large grants have proved elusive and the groups' potential contribution to these targets needs to be realistic.

The groups contribution to intellectual and/or professional esteem is generally disproportionately positive, even with the impending loss of Professor Barton. All members of the group hold both professional and academic posts in CIPFA, BAM, PAC, CIMA, CfPS etc. and most hold editorial board positions on academic journals. All senior members, mentor less experienced researchers, both in

the group and within NBS. We have also recently been asked to submit a proposal to provide a new editorial team (with Anglia University) for a small journal (Journal of Finance and Management of Public Services) and to oversee the journals' transition to a new publishing house with capacity to provide electronic submission of articles.

## **8. The longer term up REF2020 and to March 2021**

### **a) Individual contributions and impact case studies**

The final period in the run up to REF 2020 is clearly subject to sufficient support in the IRR, SIF and other investment initiatives between 2016 and 2020, but all active core members of PPMRG would expect to be eligible for REF 2020 by the audit deadline, although this is clearly dependent on the GPA benchmark determined.

The group would by this period, hopefully have been supported to develop the potential Impact Case Studies, as this will clearly affect resource allocation and strategy implementation. However, in addition to the potential case studies from within existing projects the group would expect to assist the preparation of other case studies in other parts of NBS and NTU.

### **b) Research Environment**

In terms of enriching the wider NBS Research Environment, in this later phase, the group would expect to intensify the number and involvement of faculty (and our key external collaborators) in the research environment initiatives referred to in section 6 and 7 of this plan. We would use the individual group members' positions on academic and professional bodies and networks (BAM, IRMPS, PAC, EGPA, CIPFA, JFMPS, etc.) as potential springboards or gateways to widen the opportunities to raise the NBS research profile and reputation of NBS

## **9. Endnote**

Historically public management research has made a strong contribution to the outputs and influence of NBS and NTU academically, professionally and in the community. More recently, its prominence, importance and influence has significantly declined within both NBS and NTU because of declining investment and reduced numbers of active researchers and research students. The last two years however, has seen an encouraging upturn in interest and consequent activity.

Public management research has consistently made a disproportionate positive contribution to NBS output (most recently in the 2014 REF and to the recent AACSB accreditation application) and to its influence and esteem in the community. The Vice Chancellors new 'vision' for the university and the prominence that public management projects play in the institutions public profile would clearly be undermined if public management research is not adequately represented in the Business School and in the 2020 REF. This strategy is intended to facilitate the continued contribution from the public management research group.