Embedding user-centred design in policymaking at the UK Ministry of Justice

Jeffrey Allen

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Jeffrey Allen
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Across the world, businesses and governments have increasingly been applying user-centred design methods to improve their efforts to deliver services that generate value for people.

In recent years, however, governments have also begun to experiment with applying user-centred design methods to policymaking, the process that sets the conditions that determine what services the public will have access to.

This thesis explores how one public sector institution has begun to apply user-centred design methods to policymaking and how it might further embed user-centred design methods and mindsets into policymaking, to increase public value.

This thesis first considers theories around value creation — particularly as they relate to the public sector — and then examines how user-centred design has been applied to government institutions, especially through the lens of digital transformation of service delivery. It then applies a participatory action research approach to test out several methods to embed design techniques more widely into the policymaking process and establish user-centred design mindsets within the policymaking profession of the UK Ministry of Justice.

A new Open Policymaking Framework is presented to explain how policymaking teams would function if user-centred design was systematically applied to their work. The thesis concludes with a series of recommendations for the User-Centred Policy Design team at the Ministry of Justice, including a Theory of Change and Roadmap of activities for the team to further embed user-centred design within policymaking. Suggestions are also made for further research in the domain.

While the participatory action research conducted in this thesis relates specifically to the needs and context of the User-Centred Policy Design team at the UK Ministry of Justice, the issues considered will be relevant to many other entities that address inter-related challenges within complex and ever-changing environments, including government institutions and many private and voluntary sector organisations in the United Kingdom and around the world.

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1 Introduction

Around the world, governments have begun to experiment with the application of user-centred design, aiming to increase the value of the services they deliver to the public. Businesses have long been aware that they can increase the value they produce with and for customers by focusing on the needs of the people who use their services, co-creating value together with those users, and continuously gathering feedback from users and iterating their services as a result (Lusch and Vargo 2014; Stickdorn, Lawrence, Hormess and Schneider 2018, 15). But governments have also begun to apply those same techniques to their processes to create value for and with the public (Whicher, Swiatek and Cawood 2013). While it has been established that the quality and efficiency of the delivery of public services can be improved by applying user-centred design techniques like user-focused research and service co-creation and iteration based on feedback (Strokosch and Osborne 2018; Mureddu and Osimo 2019), these same techniques have rarely been applied to the processes that governments use to shape the wider ecosystem of services the public experiences. The shape of this wider ecosystem, which includes governmental and non-profit and for-profit service providers, is largely determined by government officials often referred to as policymakers, who wield the power of government in various ways to influence and shape society.

The process of designing and implementing government policies is not the same as the process of designing and implementing government services. While governments have developed some expertise in applying user-centred design techniques to the development of services, Design Council (2013, 75) notes that those experiences will not necessarily translate directly to policymaking. This is because the process of developing policy is different from the process of developing a service — it is a complex process driven by perceived political imperatives as much as by measurable benefits to a user. The directives of ministers don't always match the evidence about the needs and behaviours of many people who use public services, but ministers — not policymakers or designers — must make the final decisions about policy questions that affect society because they are the ones directly elected by and responsible to the public. Policymakers merely collect evidence and advise. Designers are another step removed — they advise the advisors.

To work effectively in this realm, designers will need to spend time learning from policymakers and understanding their needs, motivations, and behaviours. Policymakers, for their part, will want to see that the user-centred design methods designers espouse will lead to better results, which can be difficult to measure in the highly complex domain of government policymaking.

This thesis attempts to follow the advice of Design Council (2013) that designers must spend time learning about the policymaking process so they can effectively influence it, using a participatory action research approach to analyse how design teams at the UK Ministry of Justice have worked directly with policymakers in recent years to learn about their needs, while testing out several methods to embed design techniques more widely into the policymaking process and establish design mindsets within the policymaking profession. The participatory action research approach was selected because it enabled me to produce knowledge together with the groups being studied, thus ensuring that the results of the study would be relevant to and used by those at its heart. The views presented in this thesis, however, are the author's alone, not those of the Ministry of Justice.

1.1   Purpose, aim, and research questions of the thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to explore opportunities to apply user-centred design methods to government policymaking to increase public value. While this thesis explores previous and current activities of the UK Ministry of Justice, it should also have relevance to other entities that address many inter-related challenges within complex and ever-changing environments. This would include government institutions and many private and voluntary sector organisations in the UK and around the world.

The aim of this thesis is to develop frameworks and a roadmap of future activities that the User-Centred Policy Design (UCPD) team within the UK Ministry of Justice can follow in order to improve its efforts to apply user-centred design methods to policymaking.

In exploring the opportunities to apply user-centred design to the policymaking process, this thesis considers several related research questions. Firstly, it's critical to understand how the Ministry of Justice operates: what is its mission, how is it structured and what is the current context in which it operates? Second, it's important to understand user-centred design: what are the methods that practitioners use to apply it, and how are they derived from service-dominant logic and public service logic? Third, how has user-centred design been applied in order to digitally transform other government institutions, particularly in the United Kingdom? And fourth, how might the Ministry of Justice's User-Centred Policy Design team apply the lessons of digital transformation and change management to embed user-centred design methods into the ministry's policymaking work?

The first three research questions are addressed in the contextual and theoretical section of the thesis (Chapters 2-4), while the fourth question is addressed primarily in the practical section of the thesis (Chapters 6-7).

Table 1: Research questions for this thesis

Research questions	Discussion chapter
1. What is the mission of the UK Ministry of Justice, how is it structured and what is the current context in which it operates?	2
2. What are the methods practitioners use to apply user-centred design and how are they derived from service-dominant logic and public service logic?	3
3. How has user-centred design been applied in order to digitally transform other government institutions, particularly in the United Kingdom?	4
4. How might the Ministry of Justice's User-Centred Policy Design team apply the lessons of digital transformation and change management to embed user-centred design methods into the ministry's policymaking work?	6-7

1.2   Key terms

It's important to clarify what's meant by a few terms that will be used in this thesis.

The term "user-centred design" is used throughout to refer to the practice of applying service-dominant logic to help customers or users to achieve their goals, emphasising the central role of the customer or user of a service as a key stakeholder as well as a co-producer of value along with the service provider and other stakeholders (Bettencourt, Lusch and Vargo 2014, 47).

When the acronym "UCPD" or the term "the team" is used, it refers to the User-Centred Policy Design team at the UK Ministry of Justice, within which I was embedded throughout the course of this work.

The term "the department" is used throughout to refer to the UK Ministry of Justice.

The term "digital transformation" is used to refer to the process of changing the entire way an organisation functions in order to effectively apply the culture, practices, business models and technologies of the internet era to respond to people's raised expectations, as explained in Greenway, Terrett, Bracken and Loosemore (2018, x). The process of digital transformation is described in depth by Greenway et al. (2018) and plays an important role in this thesis as it is related closely to user-centred design. While the concept of "transformation" is fairly straightforward — the process of changing something from one state to another — the concept

of "digital" is often misunderstood as referring to the technologies we use. But that is in fact only one aspect of what is meant by the term, note Greenway et al. (2018, x), specifying that working in digital ways requires shifts in organisational culture, practices, and business models as well. "Digital" should therefore not be understood as referring to a particular function of an organisation, but rather to a new way of running organisations. This is what is meant by "digital transformation".

2 The UK Ministry of Justice and government styles of intervention

This section explains how the UK Ministry of Justice is structured and what its role and objectives are as a governmental institution. It also explores how government attempts to intervene to influence the lives of the public it exists to serve, with a particular focus on the government policymaking process.

2.1 The UK Ministry of Justice

The UK Ministry of Justice works with the judiciary and more than two dozen independent agencies known as arms-length bodies to deliver prison, probation and youth custody services; administer criminal, civil and family courts; and support victims, children, families and vulnerable adults (Ministry of Justice 2019b). It is a major UK government department that was formed in 2007, when the parts of the Home Office responsible for criminal justice were combined with the existing Department for Constitutional Affairs (National Audit Office 2010).

The Ministry of Justice's vision is to deliver a world-class justice system that works for everyone in society (Ministry of Justice 2019a, 2). The Ministry of Justice cites eight objectives in its strategic plan for 2019-2022, which include ensuring people can access justice in a way that best meets their needs; supporting a flourishing legal services sector; providing a transparent and efficient court system; ensuring that prisons are decent, safe and productive places to live and work; protecting the public from harm caused by offenders; reducing rates of reoffending and improving life chances for offenders; providing excellent functional services; and supporting the delivery of Brexit (Ministry of Justice 2019b).

The Ministry of Justice's services are delivered in large part by its staff working in courts, prisons and probation, the Legal Aid Agency and other public bodies, and its core department. As of March 2017, the Ministry of Justice had 68,652 staff, with over 44,000 working in prisons and probation, 15,000 managing the courts, and approximately 4,000 in its core department. (National Audit Office 2017, 39.)

The Ministry of Justice's policymaking profession makes up a little more than 10 percent of its core department staff, with approximately 550 staff identifying as policymakers as of 2019. The head of the Ministry of Justice's policymaking profession describes policymaking as the art of deciding what to do, noting that it involves communication, planning, analysis, and delivery, but also problem solving and creativity. (Smith 2019.)

The Ministry of Justice's Digital and Technology function sits within the core department as well. It constitutes approximately 900 staff, with a goal to make the justice system simpler and quicker while saving the public money (Ministry of Justice n.d.a). It supports the rest of the ministry's functions in implementing the aspects of the Civil Service Reform Plan that call on government departments to become "Digital by Default" (HM Government 2012, 8). This includes not only making the government's digital services simpler, clearer, and faster, but also improving policymaking, making the process of policymaking more transparent to the public, and involving more people in the design of policies (Cabinet Office 2015). The Ministry of Justice's Digital and Technology function aims to support this work by building digital capability within the Ministry of Justice, in particular by embedding the following five core principles throughout the department: put user needs ahead of process; start small and improve from there; make the most of digital tools; manage risk, don't be blocked by it; and feel empowered to innovate (Ministry of Justice n.d.b).

Among the staff of the Ministry of Justice's Digital and Technology function is a small team of approximately 20 people, called the User-Centred Policy Design (UCPD) team, which exists to help policy and operational teams to be more user-focused, test ideas early and make greater use of digital and design methods to tackle complex problems (Ministry of Justice 2019d).

In its totality, the Ministry of Justice is a very large and complex organisation. The overall makeup of the Ministry of Justice and the relationship between teams and departments is laid out in Figure 1.
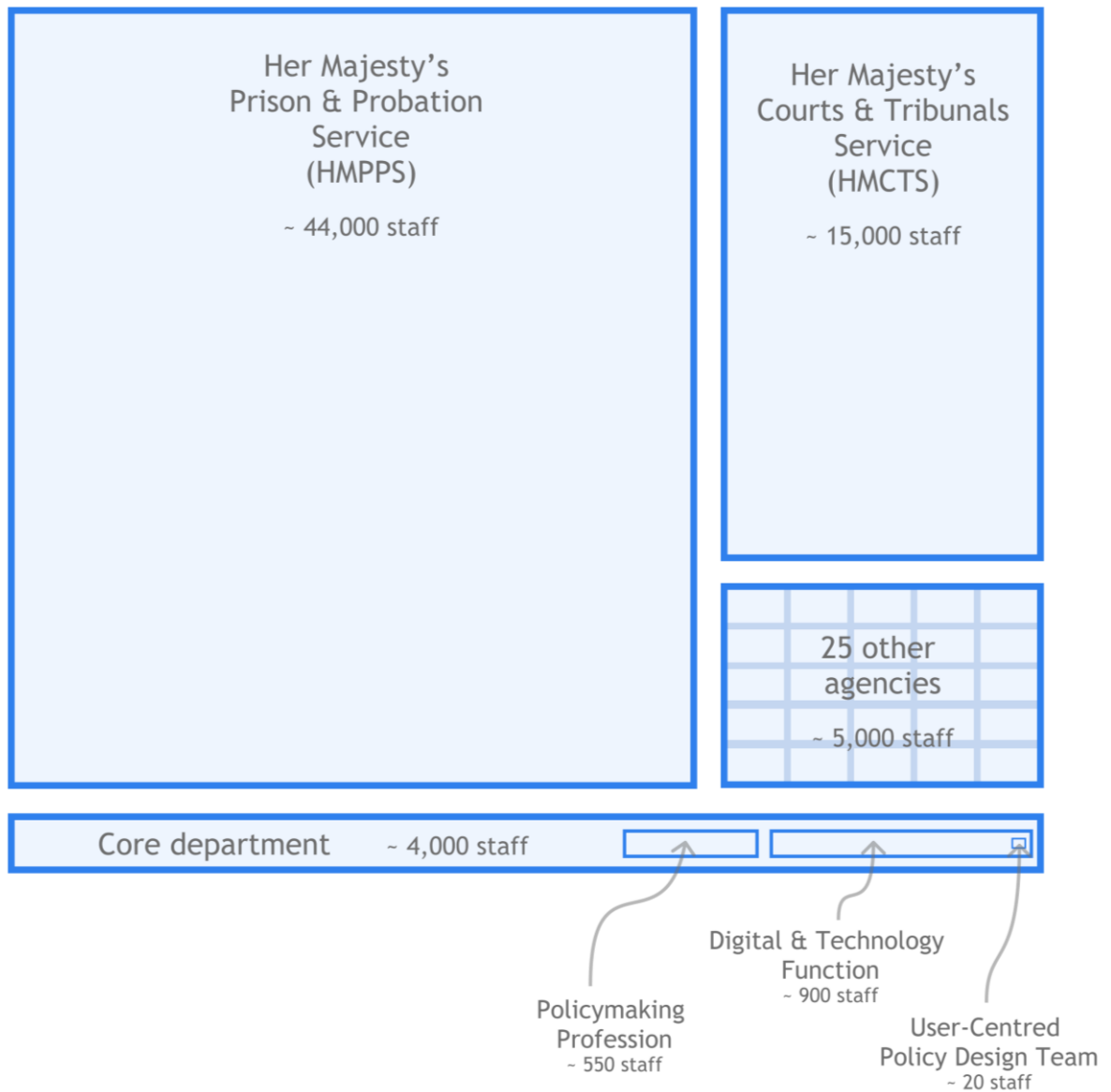
Figure 1: The organisational structure of the Ministry of Justice and several of its relevant agencies and business areas. (Adapted from National Audit Office 2017, 39; Ministry of Justice n.d.b.; Smith 2019)

The current state of the UK justice system

The major elements of the justice system include the nation's 43 police forces, the courts, and the prisons and probation system that supervise those convicted of crimes. While the police forces are overseen by the Home Office, the Ministry of Justice is responsible for overseeing the courts and prison and probation services (National Audit Office 2018, 4). Appendix 1 shows how different government bodies are responsible for managing the various aspects of a person's journey through the criminal justice system.

Since 2010, the Ministry of Justice has experienced significant budget reductions, with spending reducing by 13% from £8.6 billion in 2011-12 to £7.5 billion in 2016-17. The Ministry also reduced its workforce by 25% during that same period. (National Audit Office 2017, 13.)

According to National Audit Office (2017, 20-21), there are 386 court and tribunal buildings in England and Wales and tribunal buildings in Scotland, and 146 courts were closed between 2010 and 2015. In most regions of the country, a case takes more than 18 months to be completed, from the day an offense is committed. Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) is undergoing a £1 billion transformation programme that is expected, by 2022, to deliver a court system that is more modern and more adaptable to people's changing needs, including through the installation of WiFi in courts, the use of video links to save time and improve experiences for victims and witnesses, the digitisation of some legal services, and making tribunals digital by default. The programme is also expected to save government £226 million per year, once it's complete. (National Audit Office 2017, 22.)

National Audit Office (2018, 10-11) says that the prison and probation services are both facing significant pressures. In the four years from 2012-13 to 2016-17, the number of prisons rated as being of concern or serious concern increased from 12% to 42%. While incidents of self-harm in prisons were relatively steady at around 23,000-24,000 in March 2012, 2013, and 2014, they have since risen steadily to almost twice that number in March 2018. Over the same time, assaults on staff followed a similar progression, nearly tripling from 3,157 in March 2012 to 9,003 in March 2018.

The UK's probation services, which supervise people convicted of offenses when they are not in custody, has also failed to meet many of its targets in recent years. In 2015, the Ministry of Justice launched a significant reform to the way it manages offenders on probation, dividing up responsibility for its services between Community Rehabilitation Companies, which would manage offenders who are deemed to pose a low or medium risk of harm to the community, and the National Probation Service (NPS), which would manage offenders who were thought to pose higher risks. By early 2019, this programme was determined to have been largely unsuccessful, according to National Audit Office (2019, 8-10), with Community Rehabilitation Companies having met only 53% of their quarterly contractual targets by September 2018, and

only 14% of audits being rated as green (passing) or even amber (neutral) between February 2017 and October 2018. While the number of reoffenders has reduced, the average number of reoffences they commit has increased significantly. The National Audit Office (2019, 10) believes that the Ministry of Justice designed and implemented the probation system reforms too quickly and without sufficient testing. As a result, the Ministry of Justice is currently reconsidering its probation strategy, including replacing the Community Rehabilitation Company contracts with new arrangements.

The UK Ministry of Justice's Single Departmental Plan (2019-2022)

Against that backdrop of declining effectiveness in many key areas of the court, prisons, and probation systems, and significant funding reductions in recent years, the Ministry of Justice revised its strategic plan, known as the Single Departmental Plan, in 2019 (Ministry of Justice 2019b). While it is still possible that key areas of the plan may be revised in the coming months as political developments drive changes in overall priorities, the main elements of the plan are nonetheless instructive and provide a framework within which we can understand the most significant aspects of the UK's justice system in 2019 and plans for the near future.

Among the many specific initiatives set out in Ministry of Justice (2019b) in order to meet the eight objectives noted above, the department also commits to integrating new ways of working into its processes, which it hopes will enable its staff to develop solutions that are responsive to the needs of people who use the justice system while remaining aligned to the objectives of the institution. The same section of the document also says the department will lead the digital transformation of services for its more-than 1 million users and support the delivery of a digital justice system that enables people to logically and efficiently complete the tasks they need to do to get the outcomes they seek.

These are very important statements, as they commit the department to exploring and applying user-centred design methods to carry out the process of digitally transforming the justice system.

The structure of the UK Ministry of Justice

As a government department, the Ministry of Justice has both a political and an administrative structure. On the political side, the Secretary of State for Justice is the most senior minister responsible for leading the government's justice policy and is supported by four junior ministers with portfolios that cover prisons, probation, the court system and the various other aspects of the justice system. They are elected representatives in parliament and thus are directly responsible to the British public for the decisions they make about government policy.

Northern Bridge University Consortium (n.d.) explains that, while overall policy directions are set by the political leaders in power at any given time, civil servants in the department conduct much of the detailed consideration and analysis that drives those decisions because they are independent of the government, politically neutral, and tend to have greater expertise in the issue areas. The civil servants advise the ministers on particular policy decisions and oversee the implementation of those policies.

The staff of the Ministry of Justice are divided into five groups. The Policy, Communications and Analysis Group (PCAG) is responsible for advising ministers on justice policy, as well as ensuring high-quality data and analysis are available and the communications functions of the department are effective. Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is responsible for implementing the government's prisons and probation policies. Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) is responsible for implementing the government's courts and tribunals policies. The Chief Financial Officer Group is responsible for finance, commercial and contract management, digital and technology, project delivery, risk and assurance, as well as oversight and sponsorship of some justice-related agencies. The Chief People Officer Group is responsible for workforce planning and policy and organisational design and development, among other issues.

Figure 2 visualises key elements of the organisation's structure, noting in yellow the User-Centred Policy Design team's chain of responsibility and influence throughout the organisation.
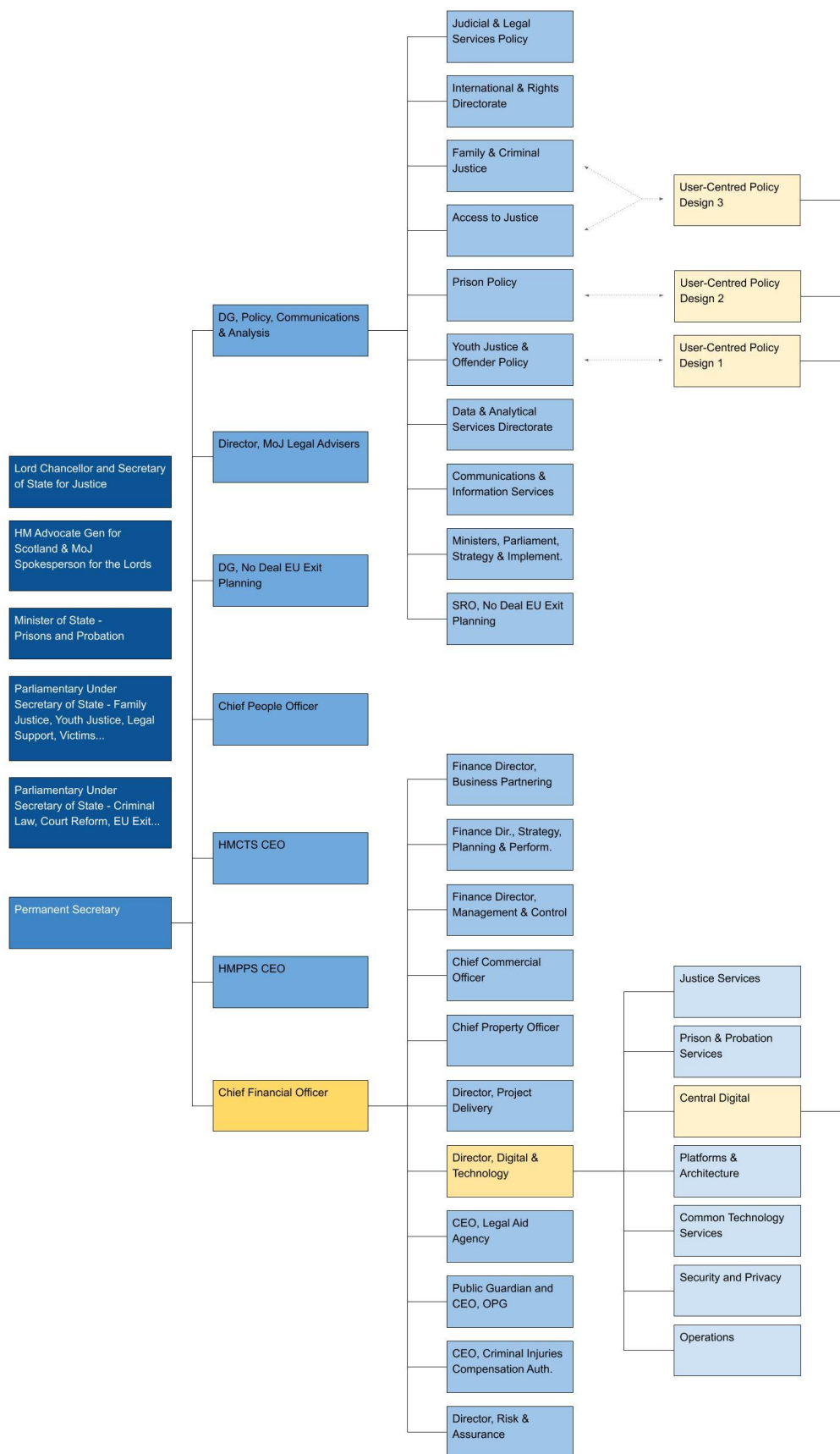
Figure 2: Ministry of Justice Organisation Chart

While the policy profession is relatively small, consisting of only about 550 staff, they are extremely influential, as they set the direction for the Ministry of Justice's overall workforce of approximately 68,000 people. The User-Centred Policy Design Teams sit within the Central Digital function and are responsible to the Director of Digital and Technology, but support teams in the Policy, Communications, and Analysis Group to achieve their policymaking objectives, as shown in Figure 2.

2.2   Government styles of intervention

This section explores the range of approaches government takes to influence the lives of the people it serves, noting in particular the various types of problems government must confront and the differing styles of intervention needed to most effectively tackle each one. A particular consideration is given to the policymaker's role within the process.

The UK government's policy-delivery cycle

According to Kimbell (2015, 11), the role of the policymaker is to collect evidence, summarise it for ministers, and make recommendations for how to solve issues that confront the public. The policy decisions ministers make after receiving that advice, of course, must then be carried out by operational staff who are responsible for delivering the policy to the public.

The UK government encourages policymakers to carry out a cyclical 6-stage process to determine what actions to take. According to HM Treasury (2018, 9), government institutions set their own specific approaches for developing policy, but they generally incorporate a set of tests to ensure that the policy development and delivery processes are meeting the key objectives of government, and they tend to cover six stages: establishing the rationale for taking action, setting objectives for any action, appraising the situation, monitoring the chosen actions, evaluating the chosen actions, and collecting and responding to feedback about the options. This is known as the ROAMEF Policy Cycle.

Whicher (2018b) proposes a policymaking model that addresses similar decision-making stages to the government's ROAMEF model, but encourages a more iterative, user-focused approach. In her model, policymakers would begin with a user needs analysis, then move on to problem definition, idea generation, testing, implementation, and evaluation. (The government's ROAMEF process and Whicher's alternative formulation are visualised in Appendix 2.)

The UK Department for Education began experimenting with a 5-test model for policymaking in 2013, encouraging policymakers to consider five key questions to help them ensure the policy they develop has the right purpose and is not only evidence-based and deliverable but also creative and radical (Barcoe and White 2013). These questions encourage policymakers to ask

themselves if they are clear on what the Government wants to achieve, what the Government's role is in this issue, whether the advice they are providing is based on the latest expert thinking, whether they have explored the most radical and creative ideas available (including doing nothing), and whether the preferred approach can actually be delivered.

The Institute for Government noted in Hallsworth, Parker and Rutter (2011), which was based on interviews with 50 senior civil servants and 20 former ministers as well as a survey of members of the Political Studies Association, that policymaking usually does not happen in such a clear, linear way, progressing neatly from step to step. Kimball (2015, 9) agrees, noting that policymaking is a professional practice that does not have a single clear, repeatable process. Rather, in their work to find solutions to issues that impact the public, policymakers must continuously move between the political, analytical, and practical domains, balancing political objectives, evidence about society, and the challenges of operational staff who must deliver services to the public.

In reality, the stages of policymaking often overlap, explain Hallsworth et al. (2011, 6), as policy problems and solutions become clear at the same time; in some cases plans may have been developed even before relevant policy problems become known to policymakers. The study criticised the current policymaking process for not sufficiently addressing the complex and non-linear nature of policymaking, arguing that more realistic frameworks are needed to ensure policy problems are fully considered and options for responding are properly tested.

The report suggests that government policymaking can benefit from user-centred design approaches that have proven effective in the private sector, helping to ensure that the actions government proposes to address challenges in society are realistic and viable. Businesses, for example, prototype and stress-test products before they trial them on a small scale and eventually release them to society. Similarly, governments should test their policy ideas much more extensively before implementing them widely in society. And critically, the complexity of modern governance means that, even with systematic testing processes, it is unlikely that policies can be designed perfectly, and so operational staff will need to be able to adapt the policy prescriptions to local or changing circumstances. (Hallsworth et al. 2011, 6.)

Rebolledo (2016, 41-42) and Design Council (2013, 75) highlight that the way one would apply user-centred design methods to processes for delivering services is different to how one would apply them to processes for developing policies and allocating resources. Rebolledo (2016) argues that applying user-centred design to the policymaking process can not only help to improve the quality of services the public receives, but it can also increase the public's trust in government and enable governments to deal with complex problems in more holistic ways. Although the research into the exact value of applying design to policymaking is still very preliminary, as Rebolledo (2016, 43) notes, practical evidence is beginning to suggest

that user-centred design can offer a more effective approach to tackling government's problems.

Kimball (2015, 14) notes that while policymaking is a collective process in which the responsible policymaker should be bringing together the evidence provided by experts within and beyond their department, the individual policymaker is often left on their own to work out how to make policy. As one senior civil servant told Kimball (2015, 15), policymakers still convey the image of the "gentleman amateur", implying they are attempting to do their best to provide expert advice, but are not themselves experts in the domain they are asked to advise in. Kimball (2015, 60) also notes, however, that the policymaking profession is undergoing a shift from hierarchical and closed to more networked and open.

The Ministry of Justice's policy profession plan for 2018-19 does indicate that it is indeed attempting to be more networked and open, as it focuses on three key objectives: drawing on knowledge from across and outside of government, producing evidence-based advice, and measuring the profession's success in achieving its goals. The plan encourages policymakers to draw on a range of skills and evidence in their work and promises to provide the tools and information to identify opportunities to make policy in an open way. (Smith 2019.)

Twenty-eight ways government can intervene to solve problems

Siodmok (2017) describes 28 ways in which policymakers can use their power to influence people's actions and behaviours, noting that, in any particular circumstance, determining which course of action will deliver the outcomes needed requires great skill and judgement. Siodmok argues that the 28 styles of government intervention can be considered in seven groups of four, as shown in Table 2, with the interventions near the top showing how government can influence without intervening too directly and those toward the bottom showing how government can be much more directly involved in influencing people and their lives. Earlier-stage interventions appear to the left of the table, later-stage interventions to the right. Examples are given, where useful for clarity, in parentheses.

Table 2: 28 styles of government intervention (adapted from Siodmok 2017)

Govern-ment as a…	Early-stage intervention	Framing, piloting and market forming	Scaling, main-streaming and market building	Acting in mature markets and pol-icy ecosystems
Steward	Championing (by building a case for change and alliances for action)	Convening others (to draw together expertise)	Connecting networks (to come to-gether to co-cre-ate change)	Co-producing (steering various actors to deliver outcomes)
Leader	Setting the agenda (by providing thought leadership)	Setting strategy and skills plan-ning	Educating and informing	Collaborating (providing platforms for the public to use)
Customer	Catalysing (iden-tifying key oppor-tunities with stra-tegic value	Setting standards	Purchasing (through public procurement)	Consumer protec-tion (protecting rights, upholding standards)
Provider	Innovating (creat-ing trials in real-world settings)	Reforming (har-nessing political will for change)	Providing services (directly or indirectly)	Influencing choices (through nudge tactics)
Funder	Adopting early (exploring oppor-tunities with stra-tegic value)	Incentivising (directing finance to stimulate new thinking)	Subsidising	Providing platforms (to scale up proven ideas)
Regulator	Encouraging voluntary codes (to self-regulate)	Creating govern-ance structures (to support condi-tions for change)	Building the regu-latory environ-ment (to promote policy outcomes)	Ensuring compli-ance (by support-ing enforcement of regulations)
Legislator	Publishing green papers (proposals for discussion)	Publishing white papers (proposals for legislation)	Primary and secondary legislation	Amending rules and orders (sup-plementing laws)

While government can clearly act as a service provider (directly or indirectly) to ensure the public can use services to derive value, Siodmok (2017) notes that there are myriad other ways in which policymakers can wield the powers of government to influence society, creating (or destroying) value for and with the public.

Government problems are mostly 'wicked' problems

It is important to recognise that most of the problems governments face today are what Rittel and Webber (1973) call "wicked problems". These are fundamentally different in nature from the problems of mathematics, science, and engineering, which are definable and separable and generally have solutions that can be discovered, they note. The problems government faces tend to be ill-defined, and they rely upon judgement for resolution, explain Rittel and Webber (1973, 160). Importantly, they use the word resolution instead of solution, because, they argue, social problems can never be definitively solved, they can only be reduced or solved temporarily, and then re-addressed and re-solved over and over again as their components re-emerge in different forms.

With most governmental problems, note Rittel and Webber (1973, 161), there is no way to definitively state the problem along with all the information needed to understand and solve it. If there was, then surely we would just need enough subject matter experts and the problem would be solved. Additionally, they note, the solutions proposed for most governmental problems cannot be considered true or false but rather only better or worse than other solutions, or, more likely, good enough (or not good enough) with respect to the resources available at the moment (Rittel and Webber 1973, 162). Critically, there's no definitive objective test that can determine how good a solution is to most governmental problems, because any solution will generate endlessly perpetuating "waves of consequences" over a virtually limitless period of time (Rittel and Webber 1973, 163). There is also no complete set of potential solutions that can be tried for most governmental problems — the potential set of solutions for reducing street crime, they note, is limitless, ranging from giving away free things to all would-be criminals, to shooting all criminals (Rittel and Webber 1973, 164).

In chess, for example, it can usually be determined which move is most likely to lead closer to a victory. In engineering, it can be determined which building material will provide the warmest home in the surrounding climate. Those outcomes can be weighed against costs and decisions clearly made. By contrast, however, there's no clear answer of how best to educate our children, or reduce crime, or rehabilitate someone who has committed a crime so that they won't commit more crimes in the future. In cases like these, neither problems nor solution sets are definable, the number of potential solutions is limitless, and both the problems and types of solutions available are constantly changing as the ecosystem within which the problems exist evolves. Therefore, the determination of which actions to take depends on the

judgement of the decision makers and the trust established between the decision makers and the public who rely on those decision makers to give their best effort to solve the problems. (Rittel and Webber 1973, 164.) Modern society has dealt with this difficulty by relying on a combination of subject matter experts — policymakers — and decision makers making judgements about how to address problems, along with the public expressing their preferences — through representative democracy — to correct the courses that have been set to address those problems.

As Ritter and Webber (1973) explain, we cannot find right or wrong answers to most of society's problems, we can only seek to guide society in one direction or another, and then assess whether people are generally happy or unhappy with the changes. The best way to solve problems — or improve the situation — in such spaces of uncertainty or when it's unclear what mechanisms are best to add value to the situation, explain Potts and Kastelle (2010, 129), is to experiment, arguing that policy experiments should be embedded in the standard practices of governments just as they are embedded in the standard practices of scientists.

Snowden and Boone (2007) also argue that decision making in a complex domain — where right answers can't be divined no matter how many experts are available, as the situation is in constant flux — requires an approach to management that is rooted in experimentation. Snowden and Boone applied the principles of complexity science to government and industry to develop the Cynefin framework of management, which helps managers determine the best way to solve the problems they're faced with, depending on the complexity of the environment in which their challenges are situated (see Appendix 3).

In situations that are more clearly ordered and knowable, leaders can make decisions by gathering information (what they call "sensing"), categorising or analysing what they discover, and then responding. But, according to Snowden and Boone (2007), complex situations are ones which are much more disorderly and unknowable — in many cases leaders don't even know what it is that they don't have knowledge about. Most organisational decisions, they argue, fall into this category because a major shift in the environment can introduce unpredictability and flux at any time, and often does. In this field, we can only understand why things happened when we look back at them after the fact. As events are playing out, however, if the leader conducts experiments, instructive patterns often emerge. Leaders acting in complex situations should patiently allow the path forward to reveal itself, they argue, rather than attempting to impose a course of action. They need to probe first, then sense what happens as a result, and then respond.

This has critical implications for how policymakers and leaders within government should carry out their work. Snowden and Boone (2007) warn leaders against attempting to impose a traditional command-and-control style of management to address complex problems, while

recognising that there is a common temptation by managers to demand business plans with defined outcomes and high levels of certainty. These leaders may find it difficult to accept some levels of failure, they note, even though this is a necessary by-product of the process of learning through experimentation. But by attempting to exert control over the activities of the organisation, leaders will eliminate the opportunity for informative patterns to emerge. Leaders who try to impose order in these situations are likely to fail to meet their organisational objectives, they note, recommending instead that leaders create the conditions for experimentation, allow patterns to emerge, and focus their efforts on determining which approaches are the most likely to lead toward the desired outcomes.

The Ministry of Justice's User-Centred Policy Design (UCPD) Team has adapted this perspective to encourage policymakers to adopt user-centred design. The UCPD team argues in Ministry of Justice (2019f) that, when challenges are situated in domains that are more complex and more unknown to the decision maker, exploratory user-centred design approaches are more effective than traditional approaches that prioritise pre-defined processes.

Professor John Thackara (This is HCD 2018a) cites the Nobel-prize-winning chemist Ilya Prigogine, who's often referred to as the father of complexity science, in encouraging designers to seek what Thackara calls "small islands of coherence" when dealing with large, complex systems. To illustrate this, Thackara explains his experience trying to drive change at the Royal College of Art in London. Upon assuming a leadership role in the institution, Thackara issued a series of directives to staff about how to act in more outward-facing and environmentally friendly ways. But, he says, all his dictates were completely ignored. The lesson for Thackara was that when trying to influence a large institution or company, you can't force it to change quickly, but rather you need to set the conditions and then allow the change to happen over time. The best approach to influencing change in a large institution, says Thackara, is to do small projects that make small adjustments to the system. The larger issue eventually will change, he notes, but unfortunately the leader can never know in advance when that larger change will happen. (This is HCD 2018a.)

The advice from Thackara, Prigogine, Snowden and Boone, and Rittel and Webber is instructive, not just for policymakers attempting to influence large complex areas of the justice system, but also to the User-Centred Policy Design team aiming to influence the Ministry of Justice itself to adopt more design-led approaches and mindsets within its policymaking profession. This insight will be built upon in Chapters 3 and 4 to consider why and how user-centred design should be applied to policymaking processes.

3 Understanding value in relation to public services

This section examines the concept of value, and how government aims to provide as much value as possible to the public, focusing particularly on theories of service-dominant logic, new public management, and public service logic.

3.1 How is value created?

Bettencourt, Lusch and Vargo (2014, 44) explain that value is created by a business when it helps customers to accomplish a goal or resolve a problem. They argue that successful companies use service-dominant logic rather than goods-dominant logic, combined with a perspective that focuses on the objectives their customers want to achieve, which the authors call the customers' jobs-to-be-done. In other words, successful companies focus not on how to sell more of the goods they're already producing, but rather on how to help customers achieve their goals by offering a useful service for customers to engage with.

According to Bettencourt et al. (2014, 51), when an entity applies its resources — usually knowledge and skills — for the benefit of another or itself, it is providing a service. An example of direct service provision would be when a financial advisor uses her knowledge to help a customer plan for their retirement. A company that sells a customer a toothbrush is also providing a service, albeit indirectly, by enabling that person to remove food and plaque from their mouth. Importantly, however, the customer must always also participate in the creation of value. Value is not created by the toothbrush manufacturer when the customer purchases the toothbrush, but rather at the moment the customer uses the toothbrush — generally along with toothpaste produced by a different company, and water that might be delivered by a public service provider — to remove food and plaque from their mouth. If a person pays £7.50 for a toothbrush but only uses it once because it hurts their teeth, the toothbrush company has not helped to generate very much actual value for the person. This is what is known as value-in-use, as opposed to value-in-exchange (Lusch and Vargo 2014, 188; Osborne 2018, 227). A company that employs goods-dominant logic, by comparison, would focus its attention primarily on value-in-exchange, which corresponds largely to the price paid for the item or service. That company would believe they were generating £7.50 worth of value for their customer — quite a significant amount for a small, disposable item like a toothbrush — while a company focusing its attention on value-in-use would recognise that they didn't ultimately generate any value of note for the customer who only used their item once, didn't achieve their goal, and in fact had to return to the store and pay more money to purchase an alternative item. The company that employs a service-dominant logic and considers value-in-use is therefore more likely to address the real needs of its users, explain Lusch and Vargo (2014, 188).

Extending the analysis even further, Lusch and Vargo (2014, 188-189) and Osborne (2018, 227) point out that the value generated by a service can vary depending on the context in which the service is used. For example, a person purchasing a minivan for their own personal use will derive a certain amount of value from the act of driving the vehicle in addition to the fact that it moves them from point A to point B, perhaps as a result of the comfort they derive from the roomy interior or the security of knowing they have a larger vehicle than most others on the road, should an accident occur. But when that same vehicle is purchased and used by a person with a spouse, four children, and a dog, the value generated during its use would include all the components mentioned above for the single driver as well as a the value of safe, secure, and comfortable movement for each of the other users, plus the ability for each to share experience with their family members and develop familial bonds. When the family picks up their children's friends and drives to a birthday party at an amusement park, value is generated for another family as well, whose children can have an exciting bonding experience with friends and whose parents get to enjoy a relaxing day at home without the children. When they transport a new sofa home from a furniture store they are contributing to the generation of an entirely different kind of value again. An organisation — like the minivan company — that focuses on value-in-context will recognise that the service they provide will impact the value generated for its many users as well as for countless other stakeholders, including, for example, the friends and family of those who use the item as well as other companies whose service offerings are facilitated, like the furniture store and the amusement park company, not to mention all the companies that provide services to help run the amusement park, and their suppliers, and so on. The value generated by the service provided by the minivan company will also be dependent on the resources provided by others, including the user of the minivan and their spouse and children and even the dog, not to mention the owners and operators of the amusement park, the furniture store company, the petrol station, and the list goes on and on. This simple example illustrates how complex it can be to measure the value-in-context of even the simplest service in today's world, or to predict how a service will be integrated with other resources and services to generate value for anyone in society. Service ecosystems, note Lusch and Vargo (2014, 189), are like living organisms — not only are their structures extremely complex containing countless inter-related elements, but they are constantly changing as they learn, evolve, and adapt to changing requirements.

3.2   How does government facilitate the creation of value for the public?

Private sector managers can be said to create value when they take decisions that enable the company to produce a service that sells for a price that is higher than the cost of production, explains Moore (1995, 30). While the price of a service isn't directly related to its value-in-

use or value-in-context, as Lusch and Vargo (2014) note, on a large scale and over a significant amount of time, the price can still be a useful proxy for estimating the overall value generated by a service for the people who use it.

The creation of value in the public sector, however, is harder to quantify, because public sector institutions rarely produce a service that customers will choose to buy or not buy depending on its price. This can make direct cost-benefit comparisons tricky. As Osborne (2018, 226) notes, while customer retention and repeat business is often a critical driver of profitability for private sector firms (and thus a clear expression of value being created for a user), the opposite is often the case for a public sector organisation. For example, repeated visits to the doctor for the same condition indicate a failure to provide value to the patient the first time around. Additionally, unlike in the private sector, public sector organisations have many users who have not willingly chosen to engage with their services — in fact most users of the justice system are only engaging with services because they feel forced to due to negative external factors, like a court summons or a prison sentence. Public sector organisations also often have many more and diverse users of their services than private sector companies would. While a private company might focus on only a segment of the population deemed to be the most likely to derive value from their service offering, a public service organisation will generally have to serve the entire population, and many of their users might have very different or even conflicting objectives. Consider, for example, what the different visions of social care success might be for a vulnerable adult and for their family or carers. (Osborne 2018, 226.)

Moore (1995, 30) and Talbot (2011, 28), however, believe that public sector managers can be said to generate value for the public when their activities produce outcomes that the public approves of through its system of representative government. Just as in the private sector, ultimately it is people who determine whether a public-sector activity has value or not, notes Talbot (2011, 28), specifying that, for public-domain activities, it is the combined preferences of the whole people that decide whether value is being created or destroyed. Moore (1995, 30) believes that the processes of representative democracy offer the best approximation we currently have for a marketplace in which people can collectively decide what they would like to achieve and how to go about doing that. Through the democratic process, the public decides what the objectives of the society should be and how resources should be used to achieve those objectives — therefore driving all the activities that go into the policymaking and policy implementation roles associated with government.

Colfer (2019) explains that public-sector institutions measure value in political terms as well as in mission-focused terms. A team at the Ministry of Justice, for example, where Colfer is the Head of Product Management, could be said to generate more mission value when it enables the department to achieve its mission more completely while hitting its financial targets. It could be said to be generating political value when its activities enable the department to

maintain the public's trust in Government. While this second point — political value — corresponds directly to Moore's formulation of public value rooted in democratic decision-making, the first point adds important nuance to it, noting that government institutions can generate more or less value by achieving their objectives more or less completely and efficiently. Over the long-term, and in situations of perfect information, this achievement would be rewarded or punished by the public at the ballot box, but it can still be very useful to measure mission-based value in the short-term, to understand how public institutions are using the resources allocated to them by the public (usually in the form of taxes).

Osborne (2018, 228) argues, however, that government institutions and other public service organisations do not create value for citizens, they only make public service offerings. The extent to which value is created depends entirely on how a person uses the offering, and that depends largely on the person's individual life experiences before and after the interaction takes place. Osborne (2018, 228-229) notes, for example, that the offering made by a teacher or a doctor only generates value if and when a person decides to make use of the teacher or doctor's services and then follows a course of action after the initial interactions with the service provider. Osborne's (2018, 229) conceptualisation of Public Service Logic, therefore, argues against the conventional belief that public service organisations can perform better by engaging people more in their activities. People are always co-producing value along with public service organisations, he says, and they always have been — that is just a fact of how society functions and how value is produced. Osborne (2018) argues, therefore, that public service organisations should consider the individual member of the public as the starting point of the process of generating value, determining how, as a public service organisation, they can best support those individuals in the process of co-creating value. As Osborne (2018) notes, however, the definition of what constitutes value in this case is still unclear, and under review by scholars.

3.3   UK public service reforms attempt to generate more value for the public

During the decade of the 1980s, many countries made significant changes in the way public services were managed, explains Ferlie (2017), with the United Kingdom pushing what was called New Public Management perhaps farther than any other country. The reforms brought about a series of very significant changes, according to Ferlie (2017), focusing more attention than ever on The 3 Ms: markets, management, and measurement.

An emphasis was placed on privatisation of industries previously run by the government, and the development of quasi-market mechanisms in those industries still managed by government. In the UK, ministries were slimmed down, taking a strategy-setting and oversight role,

while new executive agencies were tasked with implementing most of the functions of government. The hope was that these agencies could be more efficient and productive than ministries traditionally were, as they would get very good at doing the specific things they were tasked with, notes Ferlie (2017). A premium was placed on setting targets and conducting evaluations to hold agencies to account.

The aims of New Public Management were to create more value for money and to ensure greater voice and choice for the users of public services, notes Ferlie (2017), but there have been several criticisms of the approach over the years as well. By shrinking the power of elected local governments at the expense of central government agencies, New Public Management prioritises efficiency over democracy, and moves decision-making power farther from the people. If one agrees with Moore (1995) that democratic events present the best approximation for collective decisions about how public resources are allocated to generate value, it's clear that moving decision-making power farther from the voting public will reduce society's ability to react meaningfully to individual decisions about public spending.

In addition, says Ferlie (2017), New Public Management reduced the creative policymaking capacity of central civil servants, while government also began to take a much more siloed approach to the complex systemic problems it faced, thanks to the focus of power into executive agencies with narrow agency-focused targets. Ferlie (2017) notes that this raised important questions about how to handle complex problems that cross departmental boundaries and require systems-based responses and co-production with the public. As will be discussed later in this chapter, most policymaking challenges fall into this category.

New Public Management reforms were also criticised for focusing on the efficient achievement of short-term results and targets at the expense of creating opportunities for the institutions to learn, creatively solve problems, and innovate, explains Ferlie (2017). As a result, notes Ferlie (2017), more recent reforms have shifted toward leadership styles that are more focused on transforming and empowering others rather than simply facilitating transactions.

Osborne (2018, 225) and Osborne, Radnor, Kinder and Vidal (2015, 1) argue that New Public Management reforms that were intended to make public service organisations more sustainable by focusing on targets and improving their performance actually had the opposite effect. They believe New Public Management approaches encouraged public service organisations to be too internally focused and overly concerned with short-term results, reducing their ability to respond to external change (Osborne et al. 2015, 4). They argue that society has transformed since the 1980s and the process of delivering public services has diversified, and so public service organisations must now recognise that their efficiency and effectiveness are no longer dependent solely on their own actions. Achieving their objectives now requires that

they work very closely with policymakers, other public service organisations, service users, and a range of other stakeholders. (Osborne et al. 2015, 2.)

Building on these critiques of New Public Management and analyses that say value is always a co-creative activity among a large network of individuals and organisations, Osborne et al. (2015, 4) argue that public service organisations should not be focused on hitting targets related to their own performance, but should instead be focused on contributing to the processes that generate value for the public in today's interconnected world by supporting the network of entities whose resources are integrated together by service users to generate value. Key activities of the successful public service organisation should be rooted in the concept of relationship marketing, which entails building trust by creating and maintaining committed interactive exchanges with customers over time. Strong relationship management also takes place at the individual level, argue Osborne et al. (2015, 7), suggesting that staff of public service organisations should be interacting regularly with policymakers, staff of other public service organisations, and service users. Co-production, co-design, and co-creation activities are also critical in order to tap into the knowledge of service users so that existing services can be improved or new services developed, say Osborne et al. (2018, 10).

User-centred design methods can help governments to optimise their processes, unlock and combine various knowledge sources, engage diverse stakeholders in the creation of policies, and explore policy alternatives through cycles of testing and adaptation, explain Van Buuren, Lewis, Peters and Voorberg (2019, 11), noting that user-centred design methods are more commonly applied to public policymaking today in order to increase participation, learning, creativity, and value for the public.

Recognising the need to achieve better outcomes for the public, the UK government commissioned Sir Michael Barber to produce an independent report into the way government spends its money to produce value for the public. Barber's (2017, 4) conclusions are largely in line with the findings of Osborne et al. (2015), establishing that government must focus its effort on promoting and monitoring the achievement of outcomes, especially medium- and longer-term outcomes, that improve the public welfare — not just on counting how money is spent. Barber (2017, 4) also asserts that continuous improvement and disruptive innovation should be embedded in the processes of government departments. The report calls for a change of both processes and culture across the British government to ensure that policymaking and budgeting focus primarily on outcomes related to ordinary people's lives and aspirations (Barber 2017, 4).

Barber (2017, 61) says public value is generated when public money is translated into outcomes that improve people's lives and economic well-being. The head of the UK civil service at the time, Sir Jeremy Heywood (2017), welcomed Barber's recommendations, including the

introduction of a Public Value Framework to emphasise sound planning and citizen engagement as well as longer-term outcomes in deciding how to spend public money.

3.4 What is the role of the Ministry of Justice's policy profession in facilitating the creation of value?

At the UK Ministry of Justice, as noted in Section 2, the 64,000 staff of the 27 executive agencies work directly with members of the public and with other public service organisations to carry out the primary operational activities of the justice system, including the management of courts, prisons and probation services, and providing certain types of support for victims of crime. These are the staff providing the services that people interact with to accomplish their goals and generate value. The 550 policymakers in the ministry's core department set the strategy and determine how those operational activities should be carried out. It is their job to advise ministers on how public money should be spent to best achieve the goals of the Ministry of Justice. (Smith 2019.)

While services are often the most publicly visible aspect of a government intervention, as they are the mechanisms people interact with to achieve their goals, policies can be seen as a higher-order entity, as they are a precursor to services. Policies establish how government is going to tackle the larger set of issues those services sit within, as Rebolledo (2016, 42) and Siodmok (2017) demonstrate. Siodmok's (2017) three levels of design, for example, show how government officials work at various levels, from the micro to the macro, to facilitate people accomplishing their goals. At the micro level are the touchpoints people interact with, at a slightly more complex level are the services and systems that those touchpoints exist within, and at the most complex and wide-ranging level are the policies that facilitate and shape the services and systems. (See Appendix 3.)

Government policymakers determine the government's position or approach to a particular issue, explains Maltby (2017). Or as Bason (2014) explains, public problems are governments' responsibilities to fix, and policies are the approaches governments use to address those problems. Policymakers set the conditions that determine whether a service will be provided to the public in the first place, who will provide it, and how it will be provided. They do this by setting the public agenda, setting standards for businesses and others to follow, establishing laws and regulations and providing public finance, among many other approaches (Siodmok 2017), as noted in Table 1 above.

Ministry of Justice (2015) and Ministry of Justice (2017) set out best practice for how members of the policy profession can support ministers and the rest of the ministry's staff to achieve the institution's objectives. Policymakers should be setting clear objectives, which

are not only aligned to ministers' objectives but also take a strategic long-term view. They should be drawing on a range of evidence and consulting with the public as they craft advice to ministers about government policy. They should be promoting innovative and creative ideas, considering the impact on different groups of people, and involving those who deliver services in the development of new ideas. The UK government's Policy Profession Standards say that skilled policy professionals will consider genuine user needs when developing their policy, understanding how end users will be impacted, and using a range of tools and techniques to gather evidence and test policy solutions (Policy Profession 2019).

4   User-centred design and digital transformation within modern government

This section describes how governments have begun to explore applying user-centred design to maximise the outcomes they can help the public achieve, with a particular focus on how the UK government has undergone a period of digital transformation in recent years. This is particularly important as the following sections will explore efforts to apply the lessons of digital transformation to the process of embedding user-centred design within the policymaking profession of the UK Ministry of Justice.

4.1   Efforts to apply user-centred design within government

Van Buuren et al. (2019, 2) note that governments have been considering how design — the practice of determining how things ought to be and devising ways to achieve those changes — could be applied to issues of public concern since at least 1969, when Herbert Simon first referred to public administration as a design science. But unlike Simon's approach, more recent efforts to consider how design could be applied to government's challenges tend to be user-centred rather than problem-centred, and more open to inquiry and creativity, note Van Buuren et al. (2019, 2).

In the UK, recent efforts to apply user-centred design began with a focus on individual services. The Government Digital Service (GDS) was set up in 2011 to improve how government delivers digital services and communicates with the public online (Howes and Bishop 2018, Transform 2010, 1). One of its first efforts was to launch 25 demonstrator projects that focused on applying user-centred design techniques to improve particular services that impacted millions of UK residents in specific, measurable ways (Beaven 2015). Within two years, 10 percent of the British public had used the new services online, with over 4 million people registering to vote online, 1.5 million people accessing their tax account online, and more than 70,000 drivers viewing their licence information online every month (Beaven 2015, Government Digital Service 2015).

As noted in Sections 2 and 3, however, the process of designing and delivering services to the public, along with many other activities that facilitate the public's ability to achieve their objectives (and thus generate value), is shaped by the government's policymaking process, with policymakers setting the parameters within which networks of actors can engage together to help people achieve their aims through the medium of services. The process of formulating government policies, however, can be very disjointed, with many governmental and non-governmental institutions often pursuing narrow objectives that miss opportunities to serve large parts of the public, or potentially even working against the objectives of other segments of the public. This happens because most governments tend to be organised in silos, each with their own particular focus and little incentive to solve aspects of problems that fall outside their domain (Urban 2018). This can be particularly problematic in times of scarce resources. A government agency with responsibility for housing, for example, might choose to focus its limited resources on people who have never been convicted of a crime, but this can lead to increased homelessness and inability to provide for oneself among those leaving prison, which can result in increased crime and reoffending rates. In a hypothetical case like that, the decisions of the agency responsible for housing would have significant negative impacts on the results of the government agencies responsible for reducing crime and reducing reoffending.

The challenges policymakers face are extremely complex. Policymakers work in a constantly changing environment, amid a large and nebulous network of interested stakeholders in the public, private, and voluntary sectors, while trying to anticipate the behaviours of the fickle and unpredictable public they're aiming to serve. This is why the work they must do lends itself so directly to the approach that Snowden and Boone (2007) lay out for complex contexts, what they call "the domain of emergence" in which leaders must continuously be probing their environment, sensing the current context, and then responding, as discussed in Section 2.2.

In an attempt to respond better to complexity and bridge silos, several governments have begun experimenting with the application of user-centred design to the process of making government policies, applying Snowden and Boone's (2007) process of probing, sensing, and responding, and re-focusing government's attention on the needs of people served by government rather than on the more narrow priorities of individual government departments, as suggested by Osborne (2018, 229).

Perhaps the first policy design unit to be set up within government was in Denmark, when the Danish government set up Mind Lab within the Ministry of Business Affairs in 2002. The team was set up as a group of designers, ethnographers, and public policy specialists who considered how to systematically prototype, test, and scale up public sector policies as well as services. (Design Council 2013, 64-66.) The Finnish government set up Helsinki Design Lab in

2009 in order to support government policymakers to better understand problems they aimed to solve as well as the realities faced in the execution of solutions (Design Council 2013, 62).

The British government set up its own Policy Lab at the heart of Central Government in 2014, aiming to test how user-centred design could improve not only the quality of policy in the Civil Service, but also the speed at which it is developed and delivered (Design Council n.d.). In its first four years of operation, the team worked on more than 40 policy projects with over 6000 UK public servants across 15 government departments (Siodmok 2018).

In 2013, the UK's Design Council collaborated with the Danish Design Centre, Aalto University and Design Wales to analyse the potential for design thinking to contribute to public sector innovation. The research agencies considered not only how design techniques could improve public sector service delivery, but also how design could be applied to policymaking. When policymakers learn about design processes, they are largely enthusiastic, the report said, because the policymakers perceive that design techniques meet their needs. Design techniques help government policymakers to focus on the needs of the people who will be affected by their decisions, communicate more effectively to stakeholders, and join up the various entities involved in analysing, recommending, and implementing policies, noted Design Council (2013, 60).

While there is still little systematic research about the application of user-centred design to the policymaking process, as noted in Rebolledo (2016, 43), initial experiments and the proliferation of policy labs around Europe and beyond, as noted in Fuller and Lochard (2016), indicate that there are certainly ways in which policymakers believe their work can benefit from the application of user-centred design methods.

4.2   What is meant by digital transformation in government

One of the most potent and prominent approaches government has explored in recent years to increase its ability to efficiently deliver public value has come to be known as digital transformation (Greenway, Terrett, Bracken and Loosemore 2018). As noted in Section 1.2, drawing on the work of Greenway et al. (2018), the term digital transformation is used in this thesis to refer to the process of changing the entire way an organisation functions in order to effectively apply the culture, practices, business models and technologies of the internet era to respond to people's raised expectations.

Greenway, Terrett, Bracken, and Loosemore were all part of the team at the UK's Government Digital Service, which was formed in 2011 to enable government to harness those emerging trends — the culture, practices, business models and technologies of the internet

era — to improve the value it offers to the public. By 2010, digital services had become more available, cheaper, and responsive to people's needs, explained Baroness Martha Lane Fox (2010, 1) in a letter to the UK Government's Cabinet Secretary Francis Maude, who commissioned her review of government services online. To take advantage of those societal changes, she noted, government should adopt a service culture that focuses first and foremost on the needs of citizens.

Greenway et al. (2018, 203) have since drawn on the lessons of creating a service culture in the UK Government's digital services to help large international organisations and governments around the world deliver digital transformation in more than 20 countries. When digital transformation is achieved, Greenway et al. (2018, 3-4) argue, important day-to-day processes are made simpler, cheaper, and faster for the public, and services are delivered at lower cost to government. This provides significant improvement in the ability of the state to help the public achieve their goals, and an upsurge in democratic engagement.

Next we will consider the four main elements of digital transformation as defined by Greenway et al (2018, x): applying the culture, practices, business models and technologies of the internet era to respond to people's raised expectations.

As Madden and Walters (2016, 42) explain, embedding service design within an organisation is not just about changing the methods staff apply, it also requires changing mindsets within the institution and cultivating a culture that is more human-centred and creative.

Rogers (2019) describes the principles that teams at the Ministry of Justice should aspire to, to create the best possible conditions to succeed in digital work. These include working in a multidisciplinary way, with a range of professions and expertise represented in the team; focusing the team's effort on a user-centred mission that aligns with the wider strategic goals of the institution; and always acting in concert with the principles of the Agile Manifesto, as described in Moran (2014, 2). This often includes changing an institution's traditional priorities. According to the Agile Manifesto, individuals and interactions should be prioritised over processes and tools; collaborating with customers should be prioritised over establishing contracts to govern relationships; and responding to changes should be prioritised over following a prescribed plan (Moran 2014, 2).

Stickdorn et al. (2018, 21) refer to this as developing a service design mindset within an organisation. They argue that organisations that espouse this mindset will be pragmatic, focusing on co-creating, and will instinctively respond to challenges by suggesting research with users and testing prototypes of ideas. In an organisation with a service design mindset, they say, staff will not consider any project finished until it is being implemented and generating insights that will inform the next iteration of the service being delivered.

What Stickdorn et al. (2018, 21) call a service design mindset is analogous to what Greenway et al. (2018) refer to as an organisation that has undergone digital transformation. Critically, Greenway et al. (2018, 9-10) say, for digital transformation to take root, it is not sufficient to provide new tools and processes. An organisation must fundamentally change the way it works. An organisation that has adopted the culture of the internet era, they say, will have six key facets. It will focus first and foremost on the needs of the people who use its services. It will work in multidisciplinary teams, rather than business-focused specialist units, to solve users' problems. It will test new services with the people who will use them. It will work in transparent and open ways. It will improve services in iterative, incremental ways. And finally, it will build trust among the people who work in the organisation and with the external people who work with them.

Gov.uk Service Manual (n.d.) lays out the processes UK government teams should use to develop digital services (Scott 2014). According to the new model of government digital service design, as Tom Loosemore explains in Code for America (2014), policy formation and service implementation are not considered separate things done by different people in subsequent stages. The classic policy-delivery process was very different, says Loosemore: policy was devised and then operational staff were tasked with implementing that policy. But now the two divisions are expected to work together. Rebolledo (2016, 44) also suggests that the activities of policymaking are increasingly being integrated with the activities of policy implementation.

Greenway et al. (2018, 191-194) argue that government should learn some critical lessons about how to produce value from the companies that have come to dominate the global economy in recent years. The most successful companies in the transport, accommodation, advertising, news, retail, and other sectors often don't own stock or property, Greenway et al. (2018, 193) note, but rather they facilitate the marketplace in which services are provided. Echoing the recommendations of Osborne et al. (2015, 4), Greenway et al. (2018, 193) argue that government could facilitate the production of value by developing platforms that individuals or organisations can engage with to create their own value, as companies like Uber, AirBnB, JustEat, Deliveroo, Facebook, and others have.

4.3 Achieving digital transformation by embedding user-centred design principles in a government institution

Embedding user-centred design in an organisation takes a long time, says Marcus Stickdorn, comparing the process to a marathon rather than a sprint. People cannot be forced to work in this way, they need to be shown the benefits and given the opportunity, adds Stickdorn. This can be done by first identifying the champions of this new way of working, then doing a few

projects, then communicating about the positive impacts of those projects — this will create a natural, organic pull for more people in the organisation to want to adopt these new ways of working, rather than trying to impose this way of working on people. For example, one might include journey maps in reports or internal presentations, or hang them in public areas in order to generate interest in the outputs of service design, because this will initiate opportunities to explain the methods — the ways of working — that enabled the team to arrive at these outputs, explains Stickdorn. (This is HCD 2018b.)

Greenway et al. (2018) recommend a series of steps to achieve the digital transformation of a government institution, which will be considered next, along with advice from Stickdorn et al. (2018) and This is HCD (2018b).

Preparing the ground

The first thing a team must do to begin the journey toward digital transformation is get a mandate from a political leader, establishing an ambitious mission with an attainable initial goal (Greenway et al. 2018, 26). Stickdorn et al. (2018, 455, 457) agree, arguing that a supportive corporate culture will facilitate the transformation of any organisation, and that financial backing and vocal support from higher management can be very important factors in facilitating the introduction of user-centred design methods.

The other critical first element is a strong team who know how to deliver excellent services quickly as well as people who understand the inner workings of the institution and can navigate its power structures, say Greenway et al. (2018, 26, 69-71). The importance of these institutional insiders cannot be overestimated, they say. Stickdorn et al. (2018, 457) agree, noting that it's very important to speak the same language as the managers the team is seeking to convince, focusing on how the digital work the team wants to do will impact the institution's strategic goals. While the team's leaders must understand digital ways of working, they must also have empathy for what has come before in the institution, so they can speak convincingly to non-digitally-minded people about why transformation is needed and what methodological and cultural changes are needed to enable it, say Greenway et al. (2018, 67).

Marc Stickdorn believes that an organisation doesn't need to train all its staff to act like a service designer, but the more everyone works with service design teams, the more they will start to think and work in user-centred-design-led ways, which includes incorporating key practices like user research and prototyping into their work. Ultimately, service design is not just a set of methods but rather a management approach, and it takes years for it to be adopted across an organisation. (This is HCD 2018b; Stickdorn et al. 2018, 467.)

Building credibility

A team can build credibility — and differentiate their new, digital way of working from traditional methods that preceded them — by delivering real value for people outside the organisation, as quickly as possible, explain Greenway et al. (2018, 32). Stickdorn et al. (2018, 456-457) add that it can be useful to start with a mix of projects, including those that are likely to be successful as well as some that might go wrong, but in every case, it's important to set clear expectations in the beginning about what kind of results can be expected, to measure results whenever possible, and to document the process in the form of photos, videos, quotes from participants, and artefacts like journey maps and personas.

To fully embed design approaches within an organisation, people throughout the organisation must be convinced that it is an effective approach for the organisation to better meet its objectives — showing how it has worked for other organisations is not sufficient, explains Stickdorn (This is HCD 2018b), because people will always rightly argue that their organisation has its own unique culture. One must demonstrate that design approaches can be effective not only within their specific organisation, but within the department that needs to adopt the practices. That can be done by starting with what Stickdorn calls "stealth projects" — projects that are not particularly high profile but seem important enough that someone should do them. These initial projects generally won't use user-centred design methods exclusively, but they will adopt some of the methods of a user-centred-design-led organisation, like user research and prototyping, in combination with their existing processes. (This is HCD 2018b.)

It can also be useful at this point to raise awareness across the organisation about these new ways of working by, for example, developing and sharing case studies, publishing articles in newsletters or other traditional communications mechanisms the organisation uses, or getting senior management to share successes during staff events (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 458). This is also a good time to start building up a network of like-minded people across the organisation and growing user-centred design capacity beyond the core team leading the projects, through activities like trainings, workshops, or conference visits (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 459). It can also be helpful to publish the team's design principles — or values, or philosophy — early as well, to demonstrate to others how this new way of working is different from what others have done previously in the institution (Greenway et al. 2018, 29).

Getting a mandate to transform the organisation

Once the team has established its credibility by delivering value for its internal stakeholders and external users, it will need to get a new, expanded mandate, if the digital ways of working it has demonstrated are going to take root and transform the institution, say Greenway et al. (2018, 97). This can be done, they argue, through either "soft" mechanisms, like making

use of important relationships and sharing best practice, or "hard" mechanisms, like establishing spending controls or other rules.

Critically, say Greenway et al. (2018, 99) very few if any organisations have successfully undergone a digital transformation without some form of drive from the core of the organisation. Stickdorn et al. (2018, 456) say that a "middle-top-bottom" approach is needed, arguing that user-centred design will only become sustainably embedded in the organisation if staff want to use the methods, top management support it with sufficient budget, time, people, and personal involvement, and middle managers do the hard work of connecting the needs, expectations and perspectives of staff on the ground and top management.

Critically, change leaders must engage with and encourage the so-called backstage people in the organisation — those who work in IT, finance, legal, and human resources, for example — to buy into user-centred-design ways of working, as these are the people who really drive change, according to Stickdorn (This is HCD 2018b).

In large institutions, other departments will follow the directives of a central team only once they recognise that team as the expert in its domain — a publicly expressed mandate from central leadership can help ensure other departments recognise the leadership of a digital team in setting the organisation's working culture and practices, say Greenway et al. (2018, 99). This legitimacy and expanded mandate are critical to quell disagreements that will inevitably arise once the digital transformation team starts to be recognised throughout the organisation.

Codifying digital ways of working throughout the organisation

Finally, once the team has established credibility and acquired an expanded mandate, it can codify the changes in working practices that digital transformation requires by writing a digital strategy and standards for how the organisation will function. The digital strategy will help build support for the new ways of working, and is most likely to be accepted if the team starts by gaining assent from those who are already enthusiastic about digital transformation, and follows existing procedures to get approval for the document — this will ensure the strategy has the force of legitimacy when it is used in the future to justify significant changes to working practices, note Greenway et al. (2018, 123).

An approved digital strategy can then be used to get agreement for revising the organisation's working practices within what Greenway et al. (2018, 158) call a "service standard". This set of rules for how to work in the digital era, they say, will not only show people how to do their jobs more effectively, but will also give them confidence to abandon existing rules that are actively blocking people from effectively achieving the outcomes they seek.

Stickdorn et al. (2018, 470) recommend incorporating user-centred design methods into as many corporate activities as possible, like, for example, demonstrating prototypes instead of making presentations, or by co-creating meeting documentation instead of relying on one person to take notes and circulate minutes of meetings. Working in this way, they say, will slowly but surely stop people from seeing user-centred design as something different done by specialists but rather as an everyday way of working for everyone in the organisation.

4.4   Barriers and enablers of transformation

The Institute for Government noted in Howes and Bishop (2018) that as of July 2018, the UK government had approved almost £38 billion for digital transformation programmes, including a £1.65 billion programme at Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service and a £13.5 billion programme to consolidate much of the benefits system into the new Universal Credit programme. But most of these programmes, note Howes and Bishop (2018, 8), are focused too much on individual technology-focused programmes in one part of a department rather than promoting incremental change in how the organisation operates its services.

Howes and Bishop (2018) also argue that not enough attention is focused on reforming the underlying organisational structures and ways of working that determine how the organisation designs and delivers services of value to the public — the sorts of changes advocated by Greenway et al. (2018) and Stickdorn et al. (2018). According to Howes and Bishop (2018, 6-7), achieving digital transformation involves much more than new technology or automating current processes, it requires different management culture and new skills, organisational structures, and ways of working. Too frequently, government change programmes focus on new technology rather than the wholesale transformation of what an organisation does, how it operates and its culture, note Howes and Bishop (2018, 7).

Transformation also requires a different form of leadership, note Howes and Bishop (2018, 10), echoing Stickdorn et al (2018, 467-470). While infrastructure programmes require strong project management skills, transformation efforts need leaders who promote cultural change and are skilled in organisational design and communications. Those leaders will be comfortable with higher levels of uncertainty and encourage their teams to manage risk by continuously testing and learning and supporting them when projects don't achieve the hoped-for outcomes. (Howes and Bishop 2018, 10.)

Another obstacle to digital transformation has been the lack of knowledge and experience with digital ways of working within government institutions. These skills were initially brought in through consulting contracts with digital agencies and consultancies, but while that ap-

proach might have enabled government institutions to deliver some important digital services, it rarely created the long-term change in culture and working practices that digital transformation requires. In Code for America (2014, 2:40), Tom Loosemore argues that the digital transformation of government agencies must ultimately be initiated and carried out by people working for those agencies, not by outside consultants brought in to instigate change.

In his seminal article explaining why transformation efforts fail, Harvard professor John Kotter (1995) identifies 8 key lessons for managers aiming to initiate and deliver a large change within an organisation. These include establishing the urgency for change, creating a strong coalition of change leaders, establishing and communicating the vision for the change clearly and repeatedly, removing critical blockers of the change (including people), delivering value quickly, and embedding the change in the organisation's culture, which often takes years.

To effectively initiate a change process and manage it to completion, explain Kotter and Schlesinger (2008), managers must understand why change needs to happen and how quickly it must take place, who has the most accurate information about what changes are needed, and what kind of resistance they can expect and from whom. With that information, they can then identify a change strategy, which will generally involve a range of different approaches — from educating others to involving and providing support for others, to negotiating or even coercing others to go along with the change. Finally, they must monitor and adapt the change strategy and tactics throughout the process, as unexpected events will inevitably occur, no matter how thorough one's initial analysis might have been.

Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) emphasise six approaches to anticipate and deal with resistance to change. Education and communication can be particularly effective strategies when key people lack information to understand why the change is necessary or how it will help, but it can take a long time. Involving others in the design and implementation of the change can be useful when key people have considerable power to resist the change, but it can also take a long time, and it can open up the process to go in many different directions that the change initiators might not have desired. When people are having trouble adjusting to the changes, providing emotional support and training can be an effective strategy, but it can also take a long time and be expensive. The quicker approaches include negotiating with key people, co-opting critical people onto the side of the change initiator, and coercing people to accept the change, but all of these can have negative consequences for the long-term health of the organisation. (Kotter and Schlesinger 2008.)

4.5 Summary of how digital transformation enables government to generate more public value

When we combine the perspectives of Bettencourt et al. (2014) with Lusch and Vargo (2014), Moore (1995), Osborne et al. (2015), and Colfer (2019) we can see that value is generated for the public when people engage with government institutions to integrate their resources to accomplish the people's goals, as shown in Figure 3. The people's resources can be provided in the form of money, like when they pay taxes to support a police force and prison system that promote public safety, or in their own time and effort, as when they fill out a form to get a driver's license or open a business.
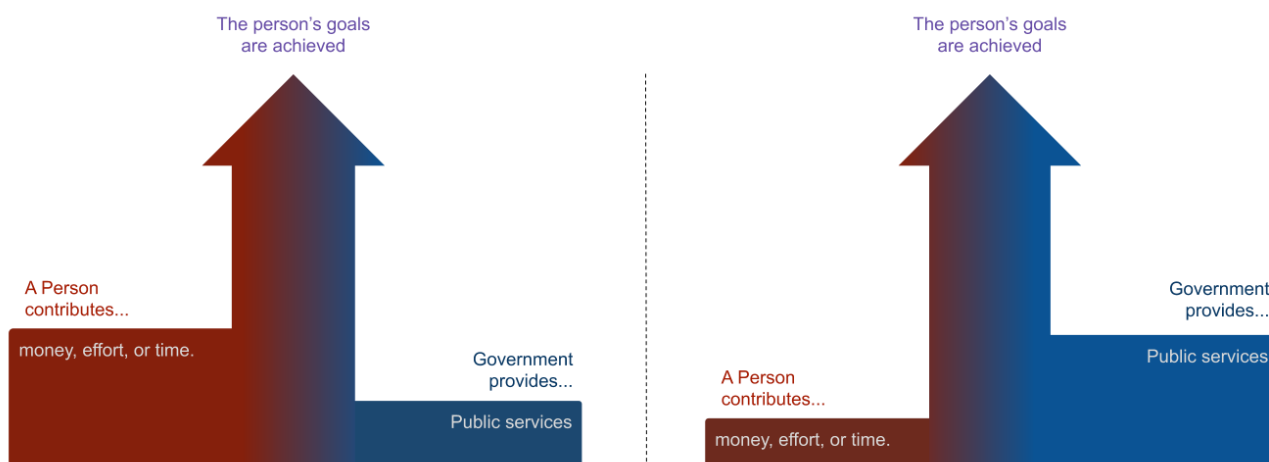
Figure 3: Understanding how people and government institutions integrate resources to produce value, in the form of the achievement of people's goals

When people have to contribute more of their money, effort (including physical and mental strain) or time to achieve their goals, the government's public services must be contributing less to the achievement of people's goals, and thus to the generation of value for the public. In this case, the government can be said to be generating less public value.

When people can contribute less of their money, effort (including physical and mental strain) or time to achieve their goals, the government's public services must be contributing more to the achievement of people's goals, and thus to the generation of value for the public. In this case the government can be said to be generating more public value.

While this could mean the government is providing more public services — like opening new free childcare centres closer to my home, which allows me to spend less time taking my child to the centre each day — that isn't the only way government can increase its contribution to the achievement of people's goals. That could happen by, for example, making it easier for me to find out about free childcare options in my neighbourhood, which might make the difference between me using the existing services every day, or never at all. Increasing the

quantity of services, quality of services, efficiency of services, accessibility of services, discoverability of services — these are all ways government can increase its contribution to the accomplishment of people's goals.

Government therefore generates more public value when people can achieve their goals while contributing less in money (taxes), time, or effort — that is to say when public services are simpler to engage with and run more efficiently. These are precisely the aims of digital transformation of the government institutions that provide public services, as described by Greenway et al. (2018), Stickdorn et al. (2018), Howes and Bishop (2018), and Tom Loosemore in Code for America (2014).

While many efforts have been made — and much has been written about — efforts to apply digital transformation to the public services government runs, this thesis explores how digital transformation might be applied farther "upstream", to the government policymaking processes that determine the shape of the ecosystem of services the public engage with to achieve their goals, as described in Kimball (2015), Siodmok (2017), Rittel and Webber (1973) and Whicher (2018a), among others.

This is because, while service designers and implementers tend to work more in what Snowden and Boone (2007) would call complicated environments and on what Rittel and Webber (1973) might call tame problems, policymakers tend to work on more complex challenges (Snowden and Boone 2007) or wicked problems (Rittel and Webber 1973) — trying to anticipate the behaviours of the fickle and unpredictable public they're aiming to serve while harnessing the energies and activities of large, nebulous, and ever-changing networks of interested stakeholders in the public, private, and voluntary sectors.

If we apply Snowden and Boone's (2007) Cynefin framework for managing complexity to solve problems as well as Rittel and Webber's (1973) analysis of tame and wicked problems to Siodmok's (2017) understanding of the levels of design and complexity in government, we can see the critical importance of applying user-centred design to the policymaking process. This is because the policymaking process largely takes place in the domain of complex contexts and wicked problems, which require a leader to continuously probe, sense, and respond in order to improve the situation, as shown in Figure 4. Probing, sensing, responding — this is what a user-centred designer does.
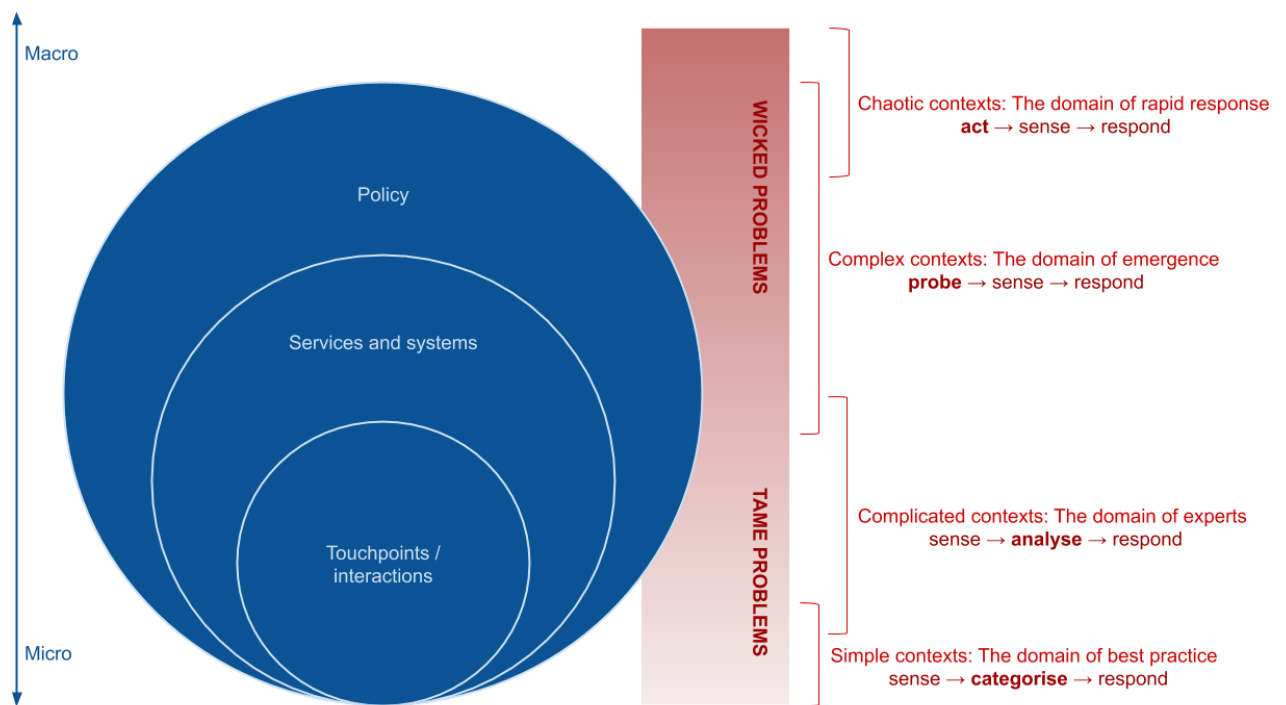
Figure 4: A framework for understanding how to respond to problems of differing levels of complexity in government

If we agree therefore that applying user-centred design approaches to the policymaking process of a government institution should increase the public value that institution generates, the question remains: how might we apply user-centred design to policymaking. Greenway et al. (2018) are world-leading experts in applying user-centred design to the service delivery aspect of public institutions, having developed a process that applies service-design methods as described by Lusch and Vargo (2014), Bettencourt et al. (2014), and Stickdorn et al. (2018) among others to government processes, and applied aspects of it and achieving successful outcomes in the United Kingdom and many other countries. This thesis therefore explores how the User-Centred Policy Design team might follow the approach of the scholars and practitioners — with particular attention to the recommendations of Greenway et al. (2018) and Stickdorn et al. (2018) — to embed user-centred design into the policymaking process of the UK Ministry of Justice, focusing particularly on four of Kotter and Schlesinger (2008)'s six approaches to managing change: education and communication, involving others in the design and implementation of the change, providing training and emotional support to accept and implement the change, and negotiating with key people to instigate and promote the change.

5   Research approach: participatory action research

I have chosen a participatory action research method to structure the activities and ensure a meaningful learning process would take place, which could be applied both to my own practice and to the User-Centred Policy Design team in which I was working. The following sections describe how the method works, why I chose it, how it was carried out, and who was involved.

5.1   Cyclical research and development process

The goal of participatory action research, as Kemmis and McTaggert (2005, 277) explain, is to enable the researcher to develop and evolve their own practice, through continuous cycles of planning, acting, and reflecting. It is a research approach that aims to produce knowledge that is directly relevant to those involved in producing the knowledge (Pant 2014, 583). Participation is the core principle of participatory action research, explains Pant (2014, 584), noting that participants should be engaged in all aspects of the research, from design to dissemination. This appealed to me in this instance because the research I would be doing should not only help me develop my own practice, as a user-centred designer, but it should help the User-Centred Policy Design team to evolve its own work. I would be embedded with the team during the period of the research and beyond, and I wanted the team to use the results of the research to adapt its own practices during and after the study period — the team would be both subject and owner of the research.

While the participatory action research process is often shown as a linear spiral of activities taking place in sequence, say Kemmis and McTaggert (2005, 278), the reality is less "neat", they note, as stages can overlap and plans can quickly become obsolete as the researcher learns. The process is likely to be much more fluid and responsive than it appears in diagrammatic form, and the measure of success is whether the researcher has a strong sense that their understanding of their practice, the situations in which they practice, and their practice itself have all evolved as a result of their learnings.

This flexible, learning-and-adapting approach seemed to fit my objectives and expectations for this work, as I wanted the research to be as action-led as possible, benefitting from testing methods for embedding user-centred design as early and often as possible, but I was also very new to the organisation, and so I knew that I would need to learn a lot about the context I was working in and re-plan activities regularly as a result. So while the action plan (shown below in Figure 5) appears as two neat cycles of research and design activities, the reality involved much more adapting on the fly, taking advantage of opportunities as they arose and adapting my plans as my own learning grew.

As Madden and Walters (2016, 40) explain, action research introduces a new set of methods and tools to an organisation and analyses the effects of this fresh approach on the organisation. Introducing user-centred design to an organisation can be a long process with many stages, they note. This was a critical point for me. I expected the process to be long, and for learnings to accumulate slowly over time. This is why I decided to begin the process with one long cycle of action research, providing sufficient time for me to begin to learn how the organisation functioned before proposing and undertaking activities more oriented towards co-creation, prototyping and testing. The second cycle would then have a quicker cadence, with activities happening more rapidly in succession.

As Coghlan and Gaya (2014, 283) note, action research projects are situation specific, and do not aim to create universal knowledge, but it is still important to extrapolate specific learnings to more general contexts. Applying user-centred design to government policymaking is still a relatively new practice, but interest in the approach is growing around the world. So while I wanted to undertake a research approach that would allow me to focus on the particularities of the specific team (UCPD) and group (the Ministry of Justice policy and analysis group) I was aiming to influence, I was also hoping to uncover insights that could be applied more widely to government departments throughout the UK and elsewhere.

I chose Participatory Action Research because it provided an approach that would enable me to develop my own practice, positively influence the mission of the UCPD team and the wider Ministry of Justice, and develop learnings that could be applied to other government departments as well. Additionally, it's an approach that recognises the role of the researcher and their colleagues as participants in the change they are studying. As a service designer on the UCPD team, there was no avoiding the fact that I would be involved in the change I was going to research, and the participatory action research approach explicitly acknowledges that. As the research study focused on how a team could continue to drive change over the long term, I thought it was important as well to involve that team as much as possible in the research process, conducting activities together with them and regularly reflecting together with them about the impact of those changes. Participatory Action Research allows for that.

As I was just beginning my work at a new institution which I had very little background knowledge of, I chose to do the work over two extended cycles of activity and reflection, with the first focusing more on learning the context of the organisation and its constituent parts, while testing a few ideas, and the second focused more on testing ideas for change.

Many different methods can be used as part of a participatory action research project. I chose to use Design Thinking methods within the Participatory Action Research framework, as Design Thinking offers techniques to iteratively build knowledge and act on that knowledge, and it has been used to inform and shape responses to complex business processes (Groeger and

Schweitzer 2014, 2). The Design Thinking process is often visualised as two consecutive diamonds, representing activities that happen within the problem space — the first diamond, often referred to as "Discover" and "Define" — and the solution space — the second diamond, often referred to as "Develop" and "Deliver". Each phase is represented as a diamond because the activities within it are designed to stimulate divergent thinking (a broad range of concepts within the problem or solution space) and convergent thinking (a focus on particular aspects of the problem or solution space). I therefore chose methods related to the processes of "Discover and Define" and "Develop and Deliver", which suited my need to root myself in the context of the Ministry of Justice and develop a deep understanding and empathy for the policymakers we would be working with, while also practically testing and learning from real-world attempts to embed user-centred design within the policymaking process.

The discover and define methods I chose included desk research (literature review); conducting semi-structured interviews; organising informal discussion groups; attending organised events and conferences; embedding myself within teams carrying out the work (autoethnography); analysing the results of focus groups; conducting a survey; and drafting personas.

The develop and deliver activities I chose included co-designing a vision, principles for action, provocative communications materials, a maturity model, a consulting offer, and a value proposition; prototyping, testing, and adapting awareness and training activities; conducting advocacy with senior leaders; and planning to embed a service designer within a policy team for the first time.

5.2   The design challenge

I began working at the UK Ministry of Justice in February 2018, but had decided even before taking up the position (I was offered the position in October 2017) that I wanted to focus my thesis research on the Ministry's work to improve lives for users of the justice system. The design challenge I began with was: "What opportunities exist to increase public value by applying user-centred design principles throughout the Ministry of Justice so that the benefits of the justice system are experienced more consistently by more people across the UK?"

This developed out of a recognition of the basic problem that the UK Ministry of Justice is not meeting many people's raised expectations in today's digital-by-default world, as well as the opportunity provided by service-dominant logic and user-centred design, which are being harnessed by companies and institutions around the world to enable them to better achieve their objectives.

At first I was embedded within the User-Centred Policy Design (UCPD) team, focusing on exploratory service design projects working with policy teams in the youth justice and victims support policy areas. But as a lead designer, I was soon asked to oversee the designers working on more traditional digital services as well, including, among others, a tool to enable Ministry of Justice staff to respond to and document Freedom of Information requests, and an online service to send money to a prisoner. As a result, I was exposed to many projects and colleagues designing across the spectrum from the micro level to the macro level. While my design colleagues working on digital services were working primarily in the domain of touchpoints, interactions, and, to some extent, services and systems, my colleagues and I on the UCPD team were designing primarily in the domain of policy (see Figure 4).

Realising that the design maturity of the Ministry of Justice's teams working on digital services was more advanced than those teams working on policy challenges, and that there has been much less work — and research — on applying user-centred design to government policymaking processes, I eventually decided to focus my work for this thesis on the policymaking space. As a result, I refined my design challenge as follows: "What opportunities exist to increase public value by applying user-centred design principles to the Ministry of Justice's policymaking process, so that the benefits of the justice system are experienced more consistently by more people across the UK.

After learning a bit more about the context of the problem during the initial discovery and definition stages of the project, I was able to redefine the problem and set a more distinct brief for myself, as follows:

> Problem: As the resources at its disposal continue to be reduced and society becomes ever more complex, the Ministry of Justice needs to be able to do more with less, solve challenges of an extremely complex nature, and react agilely to respond to new and changing problems.
>
> Opportunity: User-centred design has been applied by many institutions for just such purposes. (In large institutions like the Ministry of Justice, this is often referred to as "Digital Transformation".) The Ministry of Justice has begun applying user-centred design not only to improve services but also to explore policy challenges, which set the conditions for the delivery of more effective justice services.
>
> But while Ministry of Justice policymakers seem open to applying user-centred design in their work, they need support and motivation if they are to do so on a regular basis.
>
> Design Challenge: How might we, therefore, further increase public value by strengthening the Ministry of Justice's nascent efforts to apply user-centred design to the policymaking process?

This was, in other words, a meta-design challenge: a design process would be used to explore ways to further embed design processes within the Ministry of Justice.

5.3 The design process

The first research-and-design cycle extended from January 2018 until March 2019. This was a particularly lengthy cycle because much of the early time was spent in research activities exploring the problem space, leaving time for both structured and diffuse learning to take place. The activities for the first cycle are described in Table 2 below.

The second cycle of research and design activities was carried out from March 2019 until October 2019. As I was building on a more substantial foundation of learnings at that point, I was able to carry out more activities more rapidly during the second cycle. The second cycle activities are described in Table 3 below. A timeline of all activities is presented in Figure 5 to provide a holistic view of the entire set of activities carried out during the thesis project.

The more research-oriented activities (those labelled "discover and define") were aimed at helping me build my contextual understanding of five key areas related to the context of the study and the specific needs and opportunities of my key users — policymakers at the Ministry of Justice. My aims with these activities were to better understand concepts of value and public value; better understand public service reform and digital transformation in UK government; better understand how policies and services are created and implemented in UK government; better understand Ministry of Justice structures and culture; and better understand the needs of Ministry of Justice policymakers and opportunities to meet those needs. Figure 5 also shows how the various research activities helped to achieve these learning objectives. For example, while the desk research helped me understand issues of value and public value, public service reform and digital transformation, how policies and services are created and implemented in UK government, and Ministry of Justice structures and culture, the user survey was only focused on helping me understand Ministry of Justice structures and culture as well as the needs of Ministry of Justice policymakers and opportunities to meet those needs.

The develop-and-deliver activities were aimed at testing how the team might make progress towards achieving the major stages of embedding user-centred design, or achieving digital transformation, as described by Greenway et al. (2018) and Stickdorn et al. (2018) and laid out in Section 4. These four key stages are preparing the ground, building credibility, getting a mandate to transform the organisation, and codifying digital ways of working throughout the organisation. Figure 5 also shows how the various develop-and-deliver activities helped us test various approaches to achieving the different stages of digital transformation. For example, while the user-centred design awareness sessions contributed to the stages of preparing the ground, building credibility, and getting a mandate to transform the organisation, the advocacy with senior leaders was more focused on getting a mandate to transform the organisation and codifying digital ways of working throughout the organisation. The activities and methods are listed and described in more detail in Chapter 6.
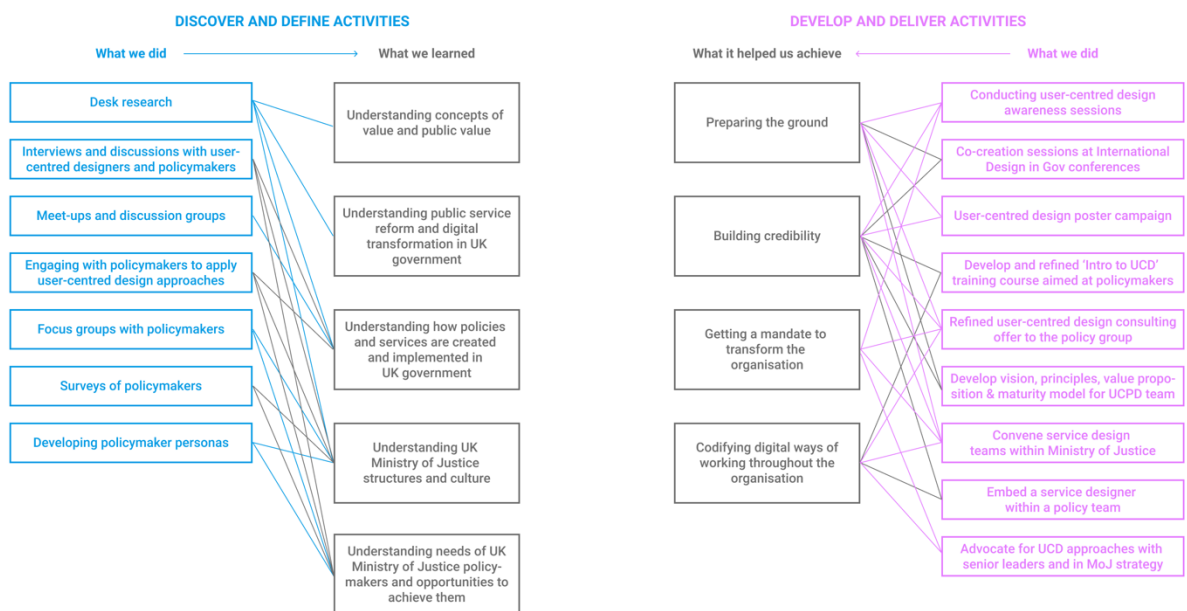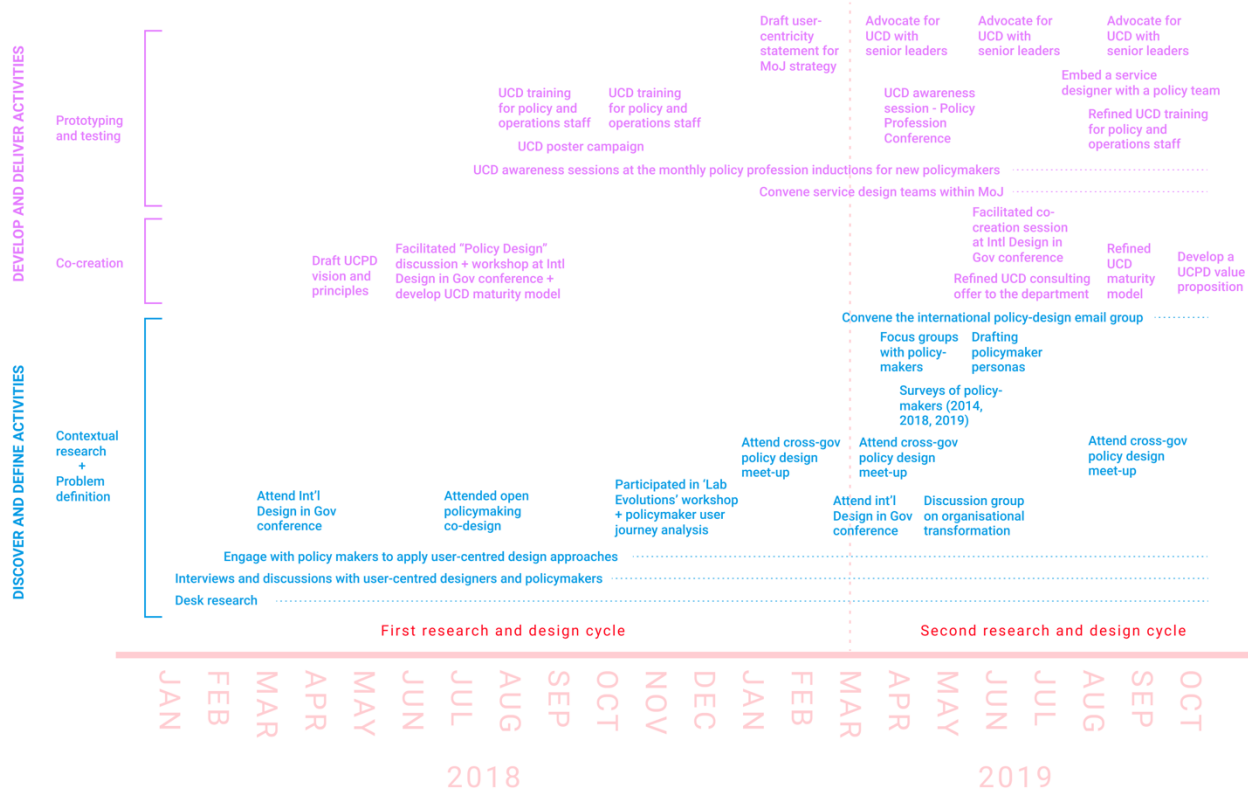
Figure 5: Timeline of research and design activities, and what each activity aimed to achieve

As this was an action research project, I would continuously reflect and re-plan my activities, often in conjunction with members of the UCPD team. Finally, at the end of the process, I developed a series of key conclusions and recommendations, both for the UCPD team and for future study. Those are described in Chapter 7.

5.4   The design team

All good design processes draw on the diverse skills and experiences of a wide range of individuals. Furthermore, as this was a participatory action research project, it was important that I included others in the research and design processes as much as possible. The User-Centred Policy Design team, as the main entity tasked with applying user-centred design to policymaking within the Ministry of Justice, would be the main sponsor of this work. The team agreed early on to work with me to carry out and test the research and development activities, committing to reflecting together and learning throughout the process, and continuing to expand on the recommendations and conclusions that emerge from the research and development work after the thesis project was complete.

The individuals I worked with most closely included Jack Collier (Head of the User-Centred Policy Design team at the UK Ministry of Justice until March 2019); Amanda Smith (Head of the User-Centred Policy Design team at the UK Ministry of Justice beginning May 2019); various members of the User-Centred Policy Design team at the Ministry of Justice who contributed to different parts of the research and idea development and testing; and various policymakers at the Ministry of Justice who contributed to different parts of the research and idea development and testing.

6   Embedding user-centred policy design — activities and insights

The research and design activities of this thesis project were focused on determining how the Ministry of Justice's nascent efforts to apply user-centred design to the policymaking process might be strengthened, in order to increase the value it helps generate with and for the public. The main sponsor of the project was the User-Centred Policy Design team within the Digital and Technology directorate of the Ministry of Justice, as this team's mission is to help policymakers make better use of digital tools and methods. Many of the activities included policymakers as well, including the Open Policymaking Group within the Ministry of Justice's policymaking profession. The following sections describe the activities that were carried out and the insights that emerged from each activity.

6.1 First research-and-design cycle (Jan 2018 – Mar 2019)

The first research and design cycle was focused more on understanding the context of how user-centred design has been applied in government, including to policy work, in the Ministry of Justice and elsewhere, while also beginning to co-create and test some ideas to embed user-centred design more thoroughly within the Ministry of Justice. Being new to the team and the work, the first cycle of learning and testing was balanced slightly more toward general, contextual research than the second cycle would be.

But recognising the value of learning by doing, during this first cycle I also began some co-creation, prototyping and testing of ideas to embed user-centred design approaches in the policymaking process, including facilitating a session at an international conference to explore user-centred design maturity models for government, as well as testing out awareness sessions and a training programme for policymakers. The first research-and-design cycle activities are described in Table 3, below.

Table 3: Activities of the first cycle of research and design

Activity	Aims	Participants	Date(s)	Method(s)
Research and problem-definition activities				
Desk research	Understand wide range of context about policymaking and user-centred design	Myself	Throughout	Collecting relevant materials; note-taking; key theme identification
Semi-structured interviews and informal discussions	Understand policymaking, how user-centred design could apply, and specific experiences from the Ministry of Justice and Policy Lab	Myself; Jack Collier (Head of UCPD); Alice Carter (UCPD Product Manager); Carolina Pizatto (Policy Lab); Vasant Chari (Policy Lab)	25 Jan 2018; 20 Feb 2018; 16 May 2018	Preparing interview guide; note-taking; key theme identification
Engaging with policymakers to apply user-centred design approaches (Youth Justice, Mental Health, and Legal Support projects)	Understand how policymaking is conducted at the Ministry of Justice and how user-centred design could be applied	Myself; UCPD teammates (product managers, user researchers, business analysts, delivery managers); Ministry of Justice policymakers	Feb-Apr 2018: Youth Justice; Mar–Jun 2018: Mental Health; Oct 2018-Mar 2019: Legal Support	Conducting user-centred design activities (research, synthesis, journey mapping, etc.) with policymakers and UCPD teammates; note-taking; reflecting on experiences with UCPD team

Attending cross-government meetups, conferences, and workshops	Understand wide range of context about policymaking and user-centred design	Myself; Dr. Anna Whicher; Dr. Andrea Siodmok; conference and workshop participants from around the world (including Policy Lab UK, N. Ireland Innovation Lab, Canadian Digital Service)	7-9 Mar 2018; 12 July 2018; 17-18 July 2018; 14 Nov 2018; 21 Jan 2019	Note-taking; key theme identification; summaries shared with UCPD team for reflection
Co-creation, prototyping, and testing activities				
Draft vision and principles for the User-Centred Policy Design team	Enable UCPD to clearly communicate its value to policymakers	Myself; Jack Collier (Head of UCPD)	May 2018	Co-create document; share with team for feedback; test with policymakers; adapt
User-centred design awareness sessions for policymakers	Raise user-centred design awareness among policymakers; prepare the ground; establish credibility	Myself; Jack Collier (Head of UCPD); various other UCPD teammates; hundreds of policymakers	Throughout (beginning July 2018)	Develop presentation materials; present to policymakers; solicit feedback; adapt materials
User-centred design poster campaign	Raising awareness among policymakers about key principles of user-centred design	Myself; Carolina Pizatto (UCPD service designer); various policymakers	July – Aug 2018	Design and develop posters; share with policymakers for feedback; reflect with UCPD teammates
User-centred design training programme for policymakers	Influence policymakers to embed user-centred design approaches in their work	Myself; 6 policymakers (first session); 11 policymakers (second session)	22 Aug 2018; 3 Oct 2018	Develop training plan and materials; deliver training; solicit feedback; reflect with UCPD team; adapt plan and materials
Convening service design teams within the Ministry of Justice	Coordinate efforts to raise awareness and build user-centred design capacity across the department	Myself; Jack Collier (Head of UCPD); colleagues from user research, Service User Involvement Group, Implementation Unit	Beginning Jan 2019	Convene actors; group discussions; adapt awareness-raising and capacity-building activities
Draft the user-centricity statement for the Ministry of Justice Single Departmental Plan	Influence departmental strategy to include user-centricity	Myself; Jack Collier (Head of UCPD)	Jan 2019	Co-write document; share with UCPD team for feedback; submit to strategy to inform departmental plan

6.1.1 First cycle — Research and problem-definition activities

The research and problem-definition activities I conducted during the first participatory action research cycle were intended to enable me to understand the context of the problem and the actors working within it, including both policymakers and user-centred design practitioners. The activities conducted included desk research, attending events and participating in workshops related to relevant topics, conducting semi-structured interviews with people working in the fields of user-centred design and policymaking, and embedding myself with a team of user-centred design practitioners working with policymakers to explore an issue area.

Desk research

The desk research I conducted during the first few months of my work with the UCPD team included reading through background documents about the structure and challenges of the Ministry of Justice as well as learning about how some institutions in the UK and elsewhere had made initial efforts to apply user-centred design techniques to policymaking.

This included absorbing a great deal of information about the work of Policy Lab, which was a pioneer in applying user-centred design to policymaking in the UK, through the research report conducted by Lucy Kimball (2015) and reading the Policy Lab blog, including several key articles posted by the founder of Policy Lab, Dr. Andrea Siodmok (2017, 2018). I also read several background reports and articles about policymaking and design by the Institute for Government (Hallsworth and Rutter 2011), the Cabinet Office (2016), and leading practitioners (Maltby 2017), and several presentations about how the UCPD team had been applying user-centred design to policymaking at the Ministry of Justice since 2016. I listened to and read interviews with and speeches by key practitioners in relevant fields (This Is HCD 2018a, This Is HCD 2018b, Code for America 2014), and I consumed journal articles and academic and non-academic texts on issues related to policymaking, design, value, and change management.

While consuming all of this material, I focused my attention on key issues related to the topic of the research, identifying common themes, which would later become the basis for much of the theoretical discussion and frameworks presented in Chapters 2-4, including how value and public value are generated, when user-centred design is a useful method to address challenges, and how change is managed effectively, especially in large institutions.

These documents gave me the foundational understanding I would need to begin my work applying user-centred design approaches to policymaking as part of the UCPD team, and I would come back to many of them throughout my year and a half working on these issues, especially Siodmok (2017), Maltby (2017), and Kimbell (2015).

Semi-structured interviews and informal discussions

I also met with and discussed approaches to policymaking with several key actors in this space to understand their perspectives on what works and what policymakers need. For the semi-structured interviews I developed an interview guide ahead of time, took notes during the discussions, and then reviewed my notes afterwards to identify key themes. The interview guides are shown in Appendix 4.

I met first with Jack Collier (Head of the UCPD team at the Ministry of Justice) and Alice Carter (Product Manager on the UCPD team) on January 25, 2018, several weeks before beginning working with the UCPD team. This semi-structured interview, which lasted approximately one hour, was very helpful to set the context of what the team was trying to achieve by applying user-centred design to the policymaking process, to understand the process they had developed over the previous two years applying user-centred design methods to policymaking challenges, and to help me begin to recognise the complexity of the policymaking process.

On February 20, 2018, I met with Carolina Pizatto, who was working at Policy Lab but would later become a colleague at the Ministry of Justice. During the course of this informal discussion, which lasted approximately an hour and a half, I acted as a beta tester for a video she was producing for Policy Lab about how policymaking happens. This discussion and video feedback session helped me to begin to understand the vast number of different day-to-day activities a policymaker must conduct, from drafting correspondence to citizens and advice to ministers to discussing and negotiating with advocacy groups and other stakeholders in their policy area to meeting with and learning from academics and commissioning research, among many other things.

On May 16, 2018, I met with Vasant Chari, a former policymaker at the UK Home Office and now Head of the UK's Policy Lab. This semi-structured interview lasted approximately an hour. The discussion was very useful to help me understand some of Policy Lab's approaches, including using a range of open policymaking tools to clarify a policy team's needs and expectations before beginning a project, and practicing what we preach by making efforts to understand policymakers' needs and providing information in formats that policymakers are used to, like ministerial submissions.

Attending cross-government meetups, conferences, and workshops

I attended the International Design in Government conferences March 7-9, 2018 in Edinburgh and July 17-18, 2018 in London. At each conference I would take notes in each session, focusing on key areas of interest related to applying user-centred design in government, and particularly in the policymaking process. At the conclusion of each conference I would review the

notes from the various sessions and highlight key themes in a slide deck, which I would then share back to the UCPD team or the wider design community, for further discussion. Summary slide decks are shown in Appendix 5.

The first conference enabled me to learn about key issues related to designing services and working with policymakers in government. For example, I attended a session on cross-government service communities, which helped me begin to understand how government structures can create siloed working patterns and competing aims that frustrate policymakers from achieving their goal of creating an environment that supports all aspects of a person's needs, as Ferlie (2017) points out. I also attended workshops on how the UK tax department is designing its policy, how to design for people's strengths or capabilities, and how to use digital storytelling as a communications tool, among other sessions.

The July 2018 conference enabled me to deepen my understanding as I learned about how government services and policies are being influenced by design-led approaches in Canada, Estonia, Taiwan, and the United States. The American participants shared their experiences developing a Human-Centred Design training manual for use with non-designers across the US government. Four key insights I took away from the conference were: multi-disciplinary teams are the key to doing good design; designers must understand behavioural insights to design well for people; changing colleagues' traditional mindsets is critical, but takes time, and happens in increments; and as designers, we are a very small piece of the overall government workforce — we need to find ways to facilitate others to do more design-driven work, even if that means doing less design work ourselves.

I also co-facilitated a session with colleagues from the Ministry of Justice where we discussed with participants from the UK, Norway, and Australia about the importance of working with policymakers and how to set up a user-centred design policy practice in government, which highlighted some perspectives that I would later discover in Greenway et al. (2018), like showing value to policymakers as quickly as possible, and winning over senior colleagues to get a mandate to spread user-centred design throughout the institution. In this way, I found that the desk research and field research activities were beginning to complement each other very usefully.

During that workshop, the UCPD team also introduced and shared our first version of a maturity model for institutions applying user-centred design methods to policymaking, to get feedback from the global design community in government. I would later iterate on this model during the second research-and-design cycle. The agenda for this workshop is included as Appendix 6.

Figure 6: Discussing with the Chief of Design for the Canadian Digital Service, at the International Design in Government Conference in London (Image credit: Government Digital Service)

I also participated in Policy Lab's review and co-design of its Open Policymaking Toolkit, on July 12, 2018. Research into policymakers' perspectives was shared with participants, and we discussed approaches to applying user-centred design methods to the policymaking process. This session emphasised once again the importance of communicating to policymakers in language and formats they are comfortable with. One of the develop-and-deliver activities we would then test emerged from this co-design session, as the group discussed the potential of a poster campaign focusing policymakers' attention on key aspects of user-centred design like user research and prototyping ideas, drawing on the effective work the Government Digital Service had done using posters to share key design principles widely across government.

Another key workshop I attended during the first cycle of research-and-design work was the Lab Evolutions workshop led by Dr. Anna Whicher, the Head of Design Policy at the PDR applied research centre at Cardiff Metropolitan University, on November 14, 2018. The day-long event explored the various operating models of several organisations applying user-centred design to policymaking in government institutions, including the UK's Policy Lab, the Northern Ireland Innovation Lab, and the UK Department for Work and Pensions' Policy Explorations team, among others. This session was very helpful in establishing a definition for the concept of policy design in plain English, which can be shared with policymakers: "policy design is applied, creative problem-solving engaging users and stakeholders at multiple stages of the policy process." (Whicher 2018c.)

This workshop was also invaluable as it introduced me to the policymaker's user journey. Whicher (2018c) proposed a 10-step policymaker journey to pass from the rationale to the objectives to the appraisal stage of policymaking (the first three steps of the UK government's ROAMEF framework). Generally speaking, these steps can be characterised as follows (and as shown in Figure 7).

In this process, (1) an external event or internal finding triggers a policy team to (2) consider a new idea. (3) The policy team researches the idea and generates and analyses options for dealing with the issue, often in consultation with legal teams about risk and data experts who can provide evidence. (4) Policymakers discuss — often informally — with external stakeholders who they know and trust. (5) The policymaker drafts a submission for the minister that includes broad estimates of cost, benefits, and timescales, and circulates it within the policy team for comment. (6) The submission is shared with the minister for decisions about which approaches to pursue, if any. (7) A formal consultation is held and White Paper published — this should usually happen over approximately three months, to give time for the public to engage with them. (8) The policymaker analyses and synthesises the responses to this open consultation period, proposes a government response and next steps for action on the issue, and submits this to the minister. (9) The policymaker will make further submissions to the minister to provide advice and get a decision on specific aspects of how government will handle the issue. (10) Finally, the policymaker will prepare a business case to get approval for spending to carry out the preferred course of action and any potential alternative options.
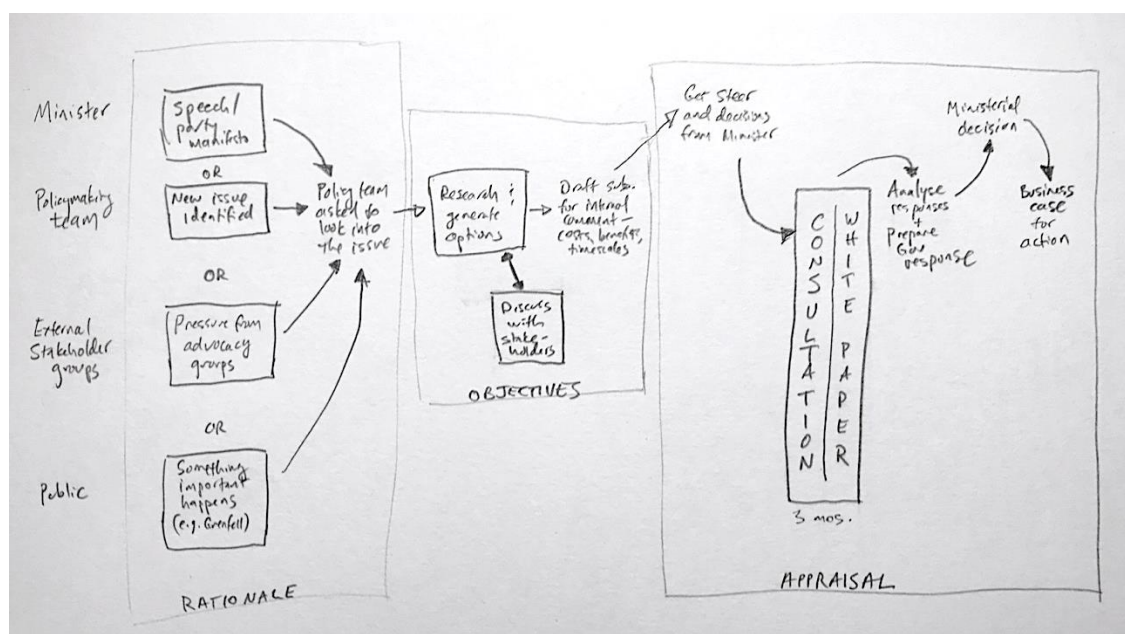

Figure 7: The policymaker's journey from Rationale through Objectives to Appraisal, adapted from Whicher (2018c)

What stands out when analysing this journey is how much of a role the policymaking team plays in analysing and developing potential solutions to problems, and how little direct or indirect access they have to information provided by people impacted by their policies. This led me to a key insight in the project: policymaking teams must have direct access to knowledge from people directly influenced by policy at an early stage and then throughout the process if they are to develop solutions that meet users' needs, but those teams generally don't include user researchers or service designers skilled in accessing users, analysing their needs and behaviours, and designing and testing solutions directly with them.

On January 21, 2019, near the end of the first research-and-design cycle, I also attended my first cross-government policy design meet-up, which I've since begun attending regularly. This event included very thought-provoking presentations from Policy Lab's Dr. Andrea Siodmok and PhD student Federico Vaz, who is researching policy labs across Europe. The discussion highlighted the extent to which various policy-design teams, including UCPD, tend to focus their work more toward the service end of the spectrum of activities, and less on influencing departmental strategy. This became a critical insight for me as I moved toward and into my second cycle of research and design, leading me to focus more effort and activities on attempting to influence Ministry of Justice strategy and senior leadership.

Engaging with policymakers to apply user-centred design approaches – Youth Justice, Legal Support, and Mental Health projects

One of the earliest practical activities I conducted during the first research-and-design cycle was to engage with the Youth Justice policymaking team at the Ministry of Justice to help them address the issue of youth resettlement in the community after release from custody, focusing particularly on the relationship between caseworkers in custody and the community — the people responsible for supporting young people during this transition.

Over a period of approximately three months, I worked with a product manager, user researcher, delivery manager and business analyst to conduct research into the experience of these caseworkers, understand the context in which they work and the tools they use, map their processes, identify opportunities to improve their systems, and test some ideas. We visited the Feltham Youth Offender Institution in West London to meet with the Head of Resettlement and tour the establishment, we interviewed Youth Offending Team caseworkers in Brighton, and we held a co-design session with custody and community caseworkers at our offices in Central London. I took field notes throughout the activities, reflecting regularly on the process as it related both to policymakers and to the user-centred design supporting them to carry out research and design activities.

This was the first time I experienced the policy design process first-hand and it was a revealing exercise. I was exploring the key question Ferlie (2017) asks about how government should

tackle complex problems that cross silo boundaries and require responses that also cross those boundaries and engage whole networks of actors. I discovered that applying user-centred design activities to policy questions is often very inter-related to applying user-centred design to improve services. The two are fundamentally linked and can't be separated. By researching how services are implemented we can inform how policy should change to better achieve the organisation's mission. In this case, by researching the service of supporting a young person to re-establish themselves in the community in a positive, non-criminogenic way, we were able to make 11 individual recommendations to policymakers that included 58 distinct ideas for service and system-level improvements, ranging from how government could improve the services its staff delivers to how government invests its money, shares information, communicates with the public, assesses risk, and convenes and incentivises stakeholders. This helped me begin to understand how Siodmok's (2017) 28 styles of government action could be applied to the real-world challenge of making policy at the Ministry of Justice. This insight would also be critical in informing the Open Policymaking Framework I would eventually develop (described in Chapter 7).

Between October 2018 and March 2019 I worked with another UCPD team — this time with a different product manager, user researcher, and delivery manager — to support the policy team developing the government's Legal Support Action Plan, helping them to better understand the context within which people face legal problems including debt, discrimination, housing and family disputes, and consider the various options for helping people faced with these issues. I took field notes throughout this process, reflecting not only on the process that policymakers and user-centred design professionals went through, but also considering opportunities to change the process in the future.

One key insight emerged as I engaged with the policy team to prepare several submissions to the minister responsible for this policy area. This helped me better understand the relationship between the policymaker and the minister, as well as the official ministerial submission process. This was the first time I encountered the ministerial submission format, which places a premium on brevity and clarity, and requires policymakers to get approval from key directorates within the department, like legal and analytical services, before sharing information with a minister. There is currently, however, no requirement to get approval from any part of the department to ensure the user-centricity of the approach described in the submission — a key opportunity I would later develop into one of the formal recommendations of this project (described in Chapter 7).

In March 2018 I joined the advisory group of a team exploring how the Ministry of Justice could better ensure offenders' mental health needs are met while they are in custody. While

my participation in this project was limited to reading papers and discussing the project's approach with the policy team carrying it out, it was a valuable endeavour as I learned two key insights that would inform my work to embed user-centred design across the department.

First, every interaction with a policymaker could be an opportunity to raise awareness about user-centred design and its potential to be applied to policymaking. This is a key aspect of what Greenway et al. (2018) call "preparing the ground." In this case, I was the only user-centred design practitioner at advisory group meetings with 10-20 people from various policy and operations teams across the Ministry of Justice and the National Health Service. Most of them had never encountered user-centred design or approaches rooted in service-dominant logic or jobs to be done (Bettencourt et al. 2014; Lusch and Vargo 2014; Stickdorn et al. 2018) before. While my contributions at these meetings were limited to a few interjections, I was able to raise questions about how and how much user research was done, whether ideas would be tested with real users, and whether an iterative action plan with embedded feedback loops would be developed — raising awareness with all the project's advisory board members about key aspects of applying user-centred design to make improvements to policies and services.

Second, I learned that influencing a policymaker in a small way now can have large impacts in the future. The policymaker leading this piece of work was later in charge of the team drafting the Ministry of Justice's Single Departmental Plan, which acts as the department's strategy document and sets its guiding principles for the following years. A few months after my interactions on this advisory board, our team was asked to draft a paper about user-centricity, which was used to inform the department's guiding principles for all staff to follow.

6.1.2 First cycle — Co-creation, prototyping, and testing activities

The co-creation, prototyping, and testing activities I conducted during the first participatory action research cycle were intended to enable me to begin testing ideas to embed user-centred design methods and mindsets more in the policymaking process, building on the information I was learning from the research and problem-definition activities. The activities conducted included co-creating a vision statement and set of principles for the UCPD team, along with the Head of UCPD Jack Collier; co-producing and facilitating awareness sessions and trainings for policymakers of various levels of experience, along with UCPD teammates; and contributing to the development of the Ministry of Justice's strategy for the coming years. Field notes were taken throughout the process, including regular reflections on the value of each activity in supporting policymakers to better employ user-centred design methods and adopt user-centred design mindsets.

Draft vision and principles for the User-Centred Policy Design team

In May 2018, I worked with Head of UCPD Jack Collier to draft a vision and principles for the UCPD team, establishing the team's core beliefs: that policies and services are more effective and long-lasting when they are designed and tested with people who will use them and when they are adapted regularly as circumstances change and information is collected about how they are functioning in real-world conditions. We established that the team's guiding principles were to understand users' needs, prototype ideas, and iterate everything that we do. We learned that the process of developing the vision and principles was very useful, as it helped clarify why the team was carrying out its particular activities, and enable us to communicate the value of the team's work more effectively, thus gaining new opportunities to work with different policy teams.

This became a very useful document as it enabled the team to clearly communicate its vision and the value it could offer to policymakers in awareness-raising sessions and other presentations about user-centred design and policymaking. The feedback we received when sharing these principles with policymakers was almost always positive, as policymakers consistently followed up with requests for our teams to support them in their work.

User-centred design awareness sessions for policymakers

Shortly after drafting the UCPD vision and principles, we suggested that the UCPD team begin presenting about user-centred design and the team's offer, as part of the 2-day policymaking induction that all new policymakers joining the Ministry of Justice attend. We thought this opportunity could allow us to test the value of communicating about user-centred design to policymakers early in their journey through the Ministry of Justice.

Since July 2018, the UCPD team has presented at each of these monthly inductions, and its sessions have consistently been rated by participants as one of the most interesting and useful sessions. Participants have provided feedback like "effective introduction to UCD" and "didn't know this team existed but would love to work with them" (Worboys 2019. Personal communication), demonstrating the value of presenting at these types of sessions in order to raise awareness of the potential of user-centred design to improve policymaking.

In addition to the very positive direct feedback, presenting at policy inductions also led to several policymakers contacting the team to discuss how they might be able to incorporate user-centred design practices in their work. It was clear to us that, as Greenway et al. (2018) suggested, this was becoming a very successful way of "preparing the ground" that should definitely be continued. As a result of this insight, we looked for other similar opportunities, like presenting at policy team meetings, which I and other colleagues have since arranged to do as often as possible.

User-centred design training programme for policymakers

In August 2018 I decided to explore the potential of a user-centred design training programme to influence policymakers to embed user-centred design approaches in their work. I prototyped and tested a half-day training programme, adapting course materials that had originally been developed by previous colleagues who had since left the team, and adding a feedback form to collect evidence of the training programme's potential impact. I conducted the session for six policymakers on August 22, 2018 and again for 11 policymakers on October 3, 2019.

Of those 17 participants, six filled out the feedback form sent after the session. All six said they "probably" or "definitely" would do something different in their work as a result of the training, with most citing activities like considering the users of their policies more, mapping user journeys, charting pain points, and including others more when developing solution ideas. Several indicated they would share information about the UCPD team and its offer to other members of their teams. Anonymised and aggregated survey results are shared in Appendix 7.

While the training programme hadn't yet reached a large number of policymakers, the clear indication was that it had the potential to not only raise awareness about the potential for user-centred design to improve policymaking but also to demonstrate to policymakers what they need to do to begin applying user-centred design in their work. These were critical insights to help me understand policymakers' needs and enable me to further develop the user-centred design maturity model during the second research and design cycle. This also influenced the team's decision to hire a senior designer in 2019 with significant experience delivering user-centred design trainings, in order to increase the department's capacity to provide these trainings.

User-centred design poster campaign

Following the policy design co-design session with Policy Lab on July 12, 2018, I worked with my colleague Carolina Pizatto to develop and test some prototype awareness-raising posters aimed at focusing policymakers' attention on key aspects of user-centred design, like user research and prototyping ideas. One poster asked "How well do you understand the people affected by your policy? Do you know what motivates them? What frustrates them? What delights them? Can you design a truly effective policy without knowing that?" Another asked "How do you build confidence in your policy interventions? Are you testing your ideas early and often to make sure your policy will work in the real world? Could you have designed a better policy if you had only tested it earlier with the people whose lives it will change?" See Figure 8.

How well do you understand the people affected by your policy? Do you know what motivates them? What frustrates them? What delights them?

Can you design a *truly* effective policy without knowing that?

We're collaborating with policy teams to encourage open policy making
Contact us [local contact details here]
Visit us at [website or location]

How do you build confidence in your policy interventions? Are you testing your ideas early and often to make sure your policy will work in the real world?

Could you have designed a better policy *if you had only* tested it earlier with the people whose lives it will change?

We're collaborating with policy teams to encourage open policy making
Contact us [local contact details here]
Visit us at [website or location]

Figure 8: Provocative poster prototypes

The prototype posters were put on a wall in our workspace, accompanied by a note requesting feedback alongside a pack of sticky notes and a pen. The prototype posters were also shared with a few policymakers by email to solicit feedback.

The aim was to be provocative, but initial feedback from a few policymakers was that the tone of the posters risked alienating the very people we wanted to encourage, by implying that they're not currently doing their job well. This led me to another key insight about embedding user-centred design in the policymaking profession: it's critical to not only communicate to policymakers in language and formats they understand, but also to communicate in a way that is respectful of the work they are already doing and empowers them to feel like what they're doing is good, but that user-centred design practices could help them achieve even more with their work.

If our goal is to gain a mandate to transform the department, as explained in Greenway et al. (2018), we must build goodwill among those who are currently doing the work and setting the rules of how the work will be done in the future. The way we communicate with them is very important in ensuring that we build goodwill and trust rather than contempt and distrust.

Convening service design teams within the Ministry of Justice

In June 2018 the UCPD team was asked to provide advice on a toolkit for how to design services that a team in the policy directorate was developing. Through this engagement it be-

came clear to me that some leaders within the department had identified the design of services as a critical function that must be improved if the Ministry of Justice is to achieve its objectives, but the department was largely unaware that service design is a specialist skill, with associated methods and requiring a certain mindset to be successful. It also became clear that there were multiple teams within the department whose aim was to help the department to better conduct some of the aspects of service design as described by Stickdorn et al. (2018) and service-dominant logic as described by Lusch and Vargo (2014). We therefore realised that by influencing the way they work, we could multiply our impact in spreading user-centred design methods and mindsets throughout the department.

That insight led us to convene those teams to discuss our approaches to promoting high-quality service design, beginning with a first meeting in January 2019. Other teams who eventually got involved with this group included the User Research team, the Service User Involvement Group within the Prisons and Probation directorate, and the Implementation Unit within the strategy and policy group. The group decided that, as first steps, we would aim to standardise the language and approach we used and signpost people who requested support from any of our teams to the appropriate other teams within the department as well. We also strived to continuously identify others working in the area of user-centred design throughout the department and bring them into this informal group.

These activities proved to be very critical to preparing the ground, as Greenway et al. (2018) advise. This is because, by mid-2019, the team that had been commissioned to develop the Service Design Toolkit and provide service design consultancy support to the policy directorate had been disbanded, due to overriding departmental priorities on another issue where their support was urgently required. The UCPD team was, however, well positioned to advocate with senior leaders that they should be mandated to fulfil this pressing departmental need.

Drafting the user-centricity statement for the Ministry of Justice Single Departmental Plan

In January 2019, I co-created a paper about user-centricity with the Head of UCPD, Jack Collier, to inform the department's Single Departmental Plan, 2019-2022 (Ministry of Justice 2019b), which defines the department's strategy and provides guiding principles for all staff. Following the approach laid out by Greenway et al. (2018), the preparing of the ground and building of credibility we had done over the past few years was finally paying off in the form of a mandate to start to transform the entire organisation. This was our chance to begin codifying that transformation into the rulebook that defines how the organisation's 68,000 staff do their work. As Tom Loosemore explains in Code for America (2014), civil servants love to follow instructions and processes. If you want to change the way they work, change their rulebook. The Ministry of Justice's Single Departmental Plan is one of its main rulebooks.

This co-production activity led me to consider what other rulebooks guide how Ministry of Justice policymakers do their work? Another key one is the ROAMEF process, defined in the Treasury's Green Book (HM Treasury 2018). This insight enabled me to realise that, in the future, if user-centred design is to take hold more prominently across government, impacting this rulebook and others like it will be critical.

6.2   Summary of key insights from the first research-and-design cycle

In this section, the key findings from the first cycle of research and design are presented in two categories: findings related to policymaking and findings related to embedding user-centred design within the policymaking process of the Ministry of Justice.

Insights about policymaking

Policymakers set the conditions for services to be delivered to the public, to help the public meet their needs. Policymakers set these conditions in many different ways, from convening to influencing others to directing investment and setting regulations. All the work policymakers do is signed off by ministers, who make the final decisions, as they are the ones held accountable by the public for the type and quality of services delivered to meet the public's needs, as noted in Moore (1995).

The day-to-day activities of a policymaker can be very varied, from managing communications to analysing evidence to developing solution ideas to briefing ministers. To influence policymakers to apply user-centred design more in their work, it is critical to have a deep understanding of their needs as they relate to these day-to-day activities, and communicate to them in formats they are used to.

Furthermore, government structures can cause policymakers to focus solely on their own department or directorate's narrow objectives (often referred to as "working in silos"), setting up situations where policymakers across government are, at best, failing to provide services that meet people's complete objectives, and, at worst, actively being blocked from meeting their department's objectives. Fundamentally, this "siloisation" in government makes it very difficult for policymakers to create a societal environment that holistically meets a person's needs, as Ferlie (2017) points out.

When it comes to conducting good user-centred design work, it is critical to work in multi-disciplinary teams. This is particularly important in the policymaking space because government problems are so complex and inter-related that a wide range of skills and knowledge is needed to design policies that result in holistic, end-to-end services that help people meet

their needs. Additionally, in government, it is particularly important for designers to understand behavioural insights to design well for people, as government challenges — and especially the challenges of the Ministry of Justice — are often exacerbated by the behaviour of people facing difficult circumstances.

Insights about embedding user-centred design within the policymaking process of the Ministry of Justice

Changing government colleagues' traditional mindsets will be critical if we are to embed user-centred design across the Ministry of Justice. It's important to remember, however, that this takes time and happens slowly, in increments.

Additionally, as designers, we are a very small piece of the overall Ministry of Justice workforce. This is also true across government. We must therefore find ways to facilitate others to do more design-driven work, even if that means doing less design work ourselves.

A third insight is related to the makeup of policymaking teams. These teams must have direct access to knowledge from people directly impacted by policy (i.e. users) at an early stage and then throughout the process if they are to develop solutions that meet people's needs and therefore create more public value. Policymaking teams, however, generally don't include user researchers or service designers skilled in accessing users, analysing their needs and behaviours, and designing and testing solutions directly with them.

A fourth insight is about the relationship between policies and services. Through this work, I came to realise how policy challenges and service improvements are fundamentally linked and can't be separated. While service delivery professionals are largely driven by the policies set by their policymaking colleagues, policymakers should also be learning from the experiences of their service delivery colleagues, who are much closer to the public who use services to generate value, and therefore understand their needs much better.

Furthermore, various policy-design teams, including UCPD, have tended to focus their work more toward the service end of the spectrum of activities, and less on influencing departmental strategy. This has helped them prepare the ground and gain credibility, as Greenway et al. (2018) recommend. But more effort and activities should now be focused on attempting to influence Ministry of Justice strategy and senior leadership to be aware of the potential impact of user-centred design on achieving departmental objectives.

I also realised through this work that every interaction with a policymaker can be an opportunity to raise awareness about user-centred design and its potential to be applied to policymaking. Furthermore, influencing a policymaker in a small way now can have large impacts in the future.

Another insight from this work was related to the value of user-centred design training. It became clear that a training programme focused on the needs and objectives of policymakers and rooted in their day-to-day realities has the potential to not only raise awareness about how user-centred design can improve policymaking but also to demonstrate to policymakers what they need to do to begin applying user-centred design in their work.

Communication methods were also highlighted through this work. I learned that it is critical to not only communicate to policymakers in language and formats they understand, but also to communicate in a way that is respectful of the work they are already doing and empowers them to recognise how user-centred design practices could help them achieve even more.

Furthermore, by influencing other teams tasked with supporting colleagues to design services across the department, the UCPD team can multiply its impact in spreading user-centred design methods and mindsets.

The final insights from the first cycle of research and design are related to influencing senior leaders and the structures that guide the policymaking process at the Ministry of Justice. Some leaders within the department have identified the design of services as a critical function that must be improved if the Ministry of Justice is to achieve its objectives. Many leaders, however are still largely unaware that service design is a specialist skill with associated methods and requiring a certain mindset to be successful, or that those skills already exist within the department.

If one wants to change the way people work, it can be very effective to change the rules that staff are required to follow and influence the messages staff receive about how they should work. Policymakers, for example, are required to get approval from legal, analytical services, and other directorates within the department for any content they submit to a minister for information or a decision, but there is currently no requirement to get approval from any directorate responsible for user-centricity. A change to that internal regulation, therefore, could lead to a widespread application of user-centred design methods.

And finally, if user-centred design is to take hold more prominently across government, impacting cross-government guidelines could be very effective. the Treasury's ROAMEF framework is one prime candidate to be changed, as it is very influential across government.

With these insights in mind, I was able to re-plan my activities for the second research-and-design cycle to focus more on influencing senior leaders and engaging with key actors within the policymaking community at the Ministry of Justice.

6.3 Second research-and-design cycle (Mar 2019 – Oct 2019)

Following the departure of Jack Collier, I took on more of a leadership role on the UCPD team. This offered me the opportunity to conduct more activities during the second research-and-design cycle focused on engaging with senior leaders and opportunities to influence the culture and processes of the institution, while I also continued expanding my understanding of policymakers' needs and motivations through focus groups, surveys, and workshops. I was also able to build on the contextual learnings of the first cycle to focus more on specific needs and ways to fulfil them during the second cycle. The second research-and-design cycle activities are described in Table 4.

Table 4: Activities of the second cycle of research and design

Activity	Aims	Participants	Date(s)	Method(s)
Research and problem-definition activities				
Desk research	Understand wide range of context about policymaking and user-centred design	Myself	Through-out	Collecting relevant materials; note-taking; key theme identification
Semi-structured interview	Understand policy-making, how user-centred design could apply, and specific experiences from the Ministry of Justice	Myself; Jack Collier (Head of UCPD); Carolina Pizatto (UCPD Service Designer)	5 Mar 2019	Preparing interview guide; conduct interview (1 hour); note-taking; key theme identification
Group discussions with experts from different fields	Understand wide range of context about org. change, policymaking, and user-centred design	Myself; organisational change practitioners; policy-design practitioners	Beginning Apr 2019	Group discussion (2 hours); email discussion (ongoing); note-taking; key theme identification
Focus groups with Ministry of Justice policymakers	Understand how policymakers perceive their role and how user-centred design and open policymaking could impact it	Myself; focus group facilitators from Open Policymaking Group of policy profession; 10 policymakers in two groups (one of new policymakers, one of veteran policymakers)	4 Apr 2019	Prepare facilitation guide; run focus groups (4 30-min sessions); note-taking; key theme identification; debrief with Open Policymaking Group; reflection with UCPD team

Survey of policymakers at the Ministry of Justice	Understand how policymakers apply user-centred design to their work, how they would like to, and what support they would need	Myself; Open Policy-making Group of the policy profession; 93 policymakers responded (out of approximately 500 who were emailed the survey)	May – June 2019	Co-design survey questionnaire; distribute survey; analyse results (free text results analysed via Theme Coding); discussion and reflection with Open Policy Group and UCPD team
Co-creation, prototyping and testing activities				
Workshop at the International Design in Government conference	Develop ideas about how to better communicate about user-centred design with policymakers	Myself; 1 Ministry of Justice policymaker (co-facilitator); approx. 40 conference participants from around the world	26 June 2019	Co-produce workshop stimulus; share with participants (20 min); small group discussions (20 min); plenary discussion (20 min); (afterward) solo reflection and key theme identification; reflection with UCPD team
User-centred design awareness sessions for policymakers	Raise user-centred design awareness among policymakers; prepare the ground; establish credibility	Myself; Jack Collier (Head of UCPD); various other UCPD teammates; hundreds of policymakers	Throughout	Develop presentation materials; present to policymakers (15 min to 45 min per session; solicit feedback; adapt materials
Testing a new user-centred design training programme	Influence policymakers to embed user-centred design approaches in their work	Myself; 7 policymakers	Aug 2019	Re-design training plan and materials; deliver 1-day training over 2 ½-day sessions; solicit feedback; reflect with UCPD team; adapt plan and materials
Co-creating personas and objectives for user-centred design in policymaking	Test, validate, and refine understanding of what support policymakers need to apply user-centred design methods more consistently	Myself; six members of the Open Policy-making Group of the policy profession	6 Sep 2019	Develop workshop stimulus (Open Policymaking maturity model + blank persona templates for different kinds of policymaker); present organisational maturity model and discuss; participants develop personas in small groups and synthesise key themes in plenary discussion; (afterward) discussion with UCPD team

Developing a value proposition for the User-Centred Policy Design team	Refine the UCPD team's value proposition to the department	Myself; Amanda Smith (Head of UCPD)	Oct 2019	Co-complete the value proposition canvas
Influencing organisational strategy and advocating with senior leaders	Test how the team could influence organisational strategy and build awareness of and support for user-centred design among key senior leaders	Myself; Amanda Smith (Head of UCPD)	Through-out	Discuss and negotiate with senior leaders; discuss with strategy team to establish mechanisms for UCPD to support staff to understand and act on the user-centricity principle of the Ministry of Justice strategy; discuss and reflect with Amanda Smith (Head of UCPD)
Embedding user-centred design skills within a policy team	Test appetite for and potential value of embedding user-centred design skills directly in a policy team	Myself; policy team	Through-out	Discuss with policymaking colleague; co-develop proposition; present to senior leaders; reflect with Head of UCPD

6.3.1 Second cycle — Research and problem-definition activities

The more-general learnings from the first research-and-design cycle about policymaking and the Ministry of Justice enabled me to focus the research and problem-definition activities of the second cycle more on the specific needs, motivations, and process of policymakers at the Ministry of Justice. These included focus groups, surveys, and targeted discussions, as described below.

Semi-structured interviews

On the margins of the Service Design in Government conference in Edinburgh on March 5, 2019, I met with outgoing Head of UCPD Jack Collier and UCPD service designer Carolina Pizatto to discuss what we had learned about how user-centred design approaches can be applied to policymaking over the past year. This led to some very important insights about the nature of policymaking, and opportunities to improve the process by embedding user-centred design more thoroughly within the process.

We began to develop a framework describing how policies are created at the Ministry of Justice and communicated to operational staff who then must develop or adjust services they implement for the public. These operational activities carry on for long periods of time,

sometimes being adjusted to account for new realities or unforeseen difficulties, sometimes not. Eventually, policies are reviewed — often as many as five or more years after the initial policy creation. This often leads to new changes, or entire overhauls of policies and services.

Jack and Carolina helped me begin to develop an alternative framework, where policy would be developed and then continuously adapted as a result of research and testing done to help policymakers empathise with those impacted by their policies and to help operational staff understand how to better implement the policies. The research and testing would be done continuously, and services would be built with feedback mechanisms embedded within them, to enable regular and perpetual analysis of how the services are performing, but also how the policies are enabling the sector to provide the services the public requires to meet their needs. The influential role of ideology in the process — stemming both from ministers' personal points of view as well as the democratic process — was noted as well.

Figure 9 presents the current state, with policy changes leading to operational activities and eventual policy review, on the left. On the right it shows an early sketch of this alternative framework, in which policy development and review happens in tandem with operational activities, which are continuously being tested and evaluated.
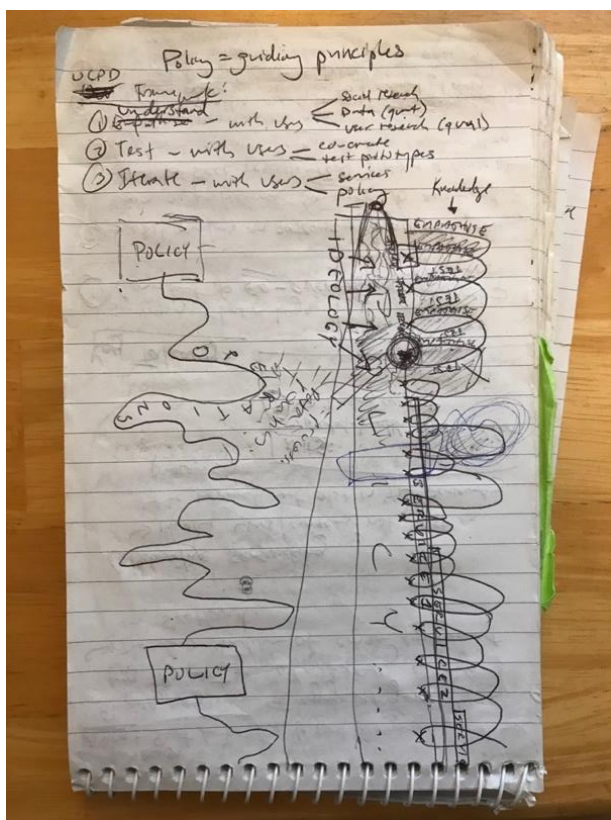

Figure 9: Sketch made during the interview with Jack Collier and Carolina Pizatto, describing current and ideal future state policymaking frameworks

I would later develop this framework more completely into the Open Policymaking Framework, which will be discussed in Chapter 7.

Another key insight that came out of this and future discussions with Jack Collier was that policymakers tend to be very receptive to the idea that user-centred design approaches help them reduce the risk of proposing the wrong solutions. This led us to develop a visualisation that has become a critical part of discussions with policymakers explaining how user-centred design can add value, showing that our current policymaking processes mitigate the risk of investing in solutions that are not politically or technically feasible, but not the risk of investing in solutions that the public won't want or be able to use. This visualisation is shown in Figure 10.
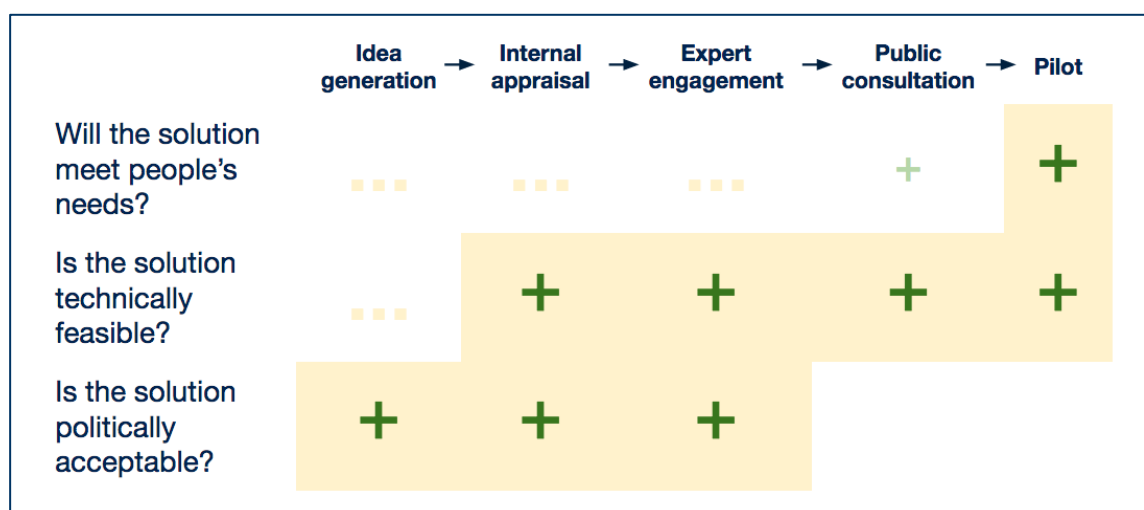
Figure 10: Visualising how current policymaking processes don't address the question of desirability until very late in the process

User-centred design, we now tell policymakers, helps policymakers to mitigate the risk that the solution won't be desirable, in addition to the two other risks (that the solution won't be technically feasible or politically acceptable.

Group discussions with experts from different fields

On April 8, 2019, I joined a discussion group focused on organisational change along with three other practitioners in the field working in or with government agencies. I documented the discussion by taking notes, sharing those notes with the co-discussants to add their feedback, and then analysing the notes to highlight key themes related to the issues discussed in this thesis project.

Discussion ranged from systemic design and systems thinking to organisational design and the principles of cybernetics, or methods for steering an organisation or other entity through constantly changing circumstances. When applied to a government institution like the Ministry of Justice, this is what Trilly Chatterjee (2019) calls creating an "adaptive state" — one whose structures enable it to recognise how circumstances are changing (usually through feedback mechanisms) and provide the right mix of service offerings to enable the public to integrate resources with those offerings to generate the value they need to meet their objectives.

The group noted that organisations can take many forms, which are represented in how they are funded, how they govern themselves, how they generate products or services, how they collect feedback and how they are able to change over time. Organisations are most effective, it was noted, when their purpose is aligned with their form. The metaphor of a ship, built to convey cargo from one place to another in unpredictable seas, was used. An aircraft carrier, the group noted, would not be used for pleasure sailing.

To fundamentally change an organisation, the group agreed, it is critical to influence both the organisational structures as well as the mindsets of the people in the organisation, much as Stickdorn et al. (2018) argued.

At the beginning of April, following discussions with participants at the Service Design in Government conference, I launched an open Google Group to enable people interested in issues related to policymaking and user-centred design to ask questions and share ideas. By the end of October 2019, the group included 75 members from the UK, US, Canada, Norway, and Lithuania, among others. The list has already been used to share resources for policymakers to apply user-centred design methods to their work, to recruit new staff, and to share speculative fiction prompting discussion about how policymaking might change in the future.

Focus groups with policymakers

I began working more closely with the Open Policymaking workgroup with the Policy Profession of the Ministry of Justice in March 2019. This provided another opportunity for me to research and better understand the needs and motivations of policymakers. The week of April 4, 2019, two colleagues in that group conducted two focus groups with approximately 10 policymakers within the Ministry of Justice to better understand how they perceive their role and how user-centred design, service design, and open policymaking could impact it.

We decided that I should not be present during these focus groups as I could be perceived as a representative of the "user-centred design community" and we wanted participants to feel free to express their honest opinions during the session. We felt that recording the sessions might also stifle discussion, so it was decided that the focus group leaders would take exten-

sive notes and share them with myself and the rest of the Open Policymaking Group after-ward. After thoroughly reading the notes of the sessions, we also conducted an oral debrief with the two focus leaders to ensure we fully understood the perspectives of the participants. To ensure the learnings from the focus groups were well understood and acted upon by the User-Centred Policy Design team, one of the focus group leaders conducted an hour-long de-brief with the entire team during which the findings were further considered and analysed by the group. The focus group discussion guide is shown in Appendix 8.

The focus groups clarified that many policymakers do already engage directly with people im-pacted by their policies from time to time and would very much like to engage more fre-quently with them. There was a sense, however, that some of the engagements they have with the public are not as meaningful as they would like them to be — for example visiting a prison but only getting to speak to the best-behaved prisoners, or conducting a consultation that's only responded to by the most active members of society. Participants indicated they would like to be presented with new ways to have meaningful interactions with members of the public impacted — or potentially impacted — by the policies they work on. They also indi-cated that they wanted to more easily access the skilled professionals that could help them do that, like user researchers.

Policymakers also found it very compelling that user-centred design, when done well, would enable them to balance users' needs with business objectives and with what is practical to achieve with existing resources. This insight led us to update the UCPD presentations and training to include a discussion about desirability, feasibility, and viability, showing how user-centred design approaches include consideration of all three.

The terms "design" and "digital" were considered largely irrelevant or even problematic by the participants, though they reacted much more favourably to the concepts of "open policy-making" and "user-centricity". There was some confusion, however, about the use of the term "user", which has led us to speak more about "the people impacted by a policy" rather than "the users" when engaging with policymakers.

Survey of policymakers at the Ministry of Justice

Following the focus groups, we decided to extend our research by distributing a survey to all the other members of the policymaking profession within the Ministry of Justice. I worked with my colleagues in the Open Policymaking working group to develop the survey, building both on the findings from the focus groups and on the results of previous surveys of policy-makers that had been conducted in 2018 and 2014 (for other purposes).

Of the approximately 500 Ministry of Justice policymakers who received the survey, 93 replied. Questions attempted to help us understand how often policymakers engage with various different types of people who could provide insight into their policy area, how they feel about those engagements, and what kind of support they believe they need to engage more in user-centred design activities like evidence gathering, co-designing policy with others, conducting user research, testing ideas, and developing user journeys and personas. The survey questionnaire and aggregated results are included as Appendix 9. The free text survey questions were analysed by a process of Theme Coding, with the codes not pre-determined, but rather allowed to emerge as the free text responses were analysed.

The findings of the survey were very instructive. While 82% of policymakers said they engage with operational colleagues at least once per month, far fewer policymakers say they engage at least once per month with members of the public who are impacted by their policy area (27%), frontline staff who implement the services related to their policy area (40%), or academics working in their policy area (11%). Fully 92% of those who expressed a view (69 out of 75 participants) indicated that when they do engage with these and other stakeholders, they see positive effects. Of the 75 people who expressed a positive or negative sentiment about the experience of working with external stakeholders, 39 (52%) specifically indicated that the result is that policies tend to be designed more effectively, while only 6 (8%) expressed that there are generally negative results or no benefits from engaging more with external stakeholders.

Of the 77 respondents who offered feedback on what support would enable them to make more use of open policymaking or user-centred design approaches, 46 (60%) indicated that connections to experts and resources would be helpful, while the next most significant categories of reply were focused around more training in how to do it (21 out of 77 respondents, 27%) and more support from senior leaders for working in this way (13 out of 77 respondents, 17%). More time to work in this way (9 out of 77 respondents, 12%) and culture change (5 out of 77 respondents, 6%) were mentioned by some respondents as well.

Overall, the survey helped validate our hunch that a combination of training, tools, and support from experts would enable policymakers to apply user-centred design approaches more regularly in their work.

The survey also indicated that UCPD's efforts to advocate for user-centred design approaches with senior leaders, as recommended by Greenway et al. (2018), would be welcome by policymaking staff at the Ministry of Justice as well.

6.3.2 Second cycle — Co-creation, prototyping and testing activities

The co-creation and prototyping and testing activities I conducted during the second participatory action research cycle were intended to enable me to learn more by further testing ideas to embed user-centred design methods and mindsets in the policymaking process, building on the information I had learned in the first cycle as well as the new information I was learning from the research and problem-definition activities.

Some of the co-creation and prototyping and testing activities conducted in the second cycle were focused on expanding and extending some of the initiatives tested in the first cycle. For example, an awareness session targeting the entire policymaking community was tested, a new version of the user-centred design training programme was tested, and an enhanced user-centred design maturity model and support framework for policymakers was co-created.

Other activities were focused more on testing the feasibility and potential value of embedding user-centred design in organisational structures, including efforts to advocate with senior leaders, influence the implementation of organisational strategy, and embed user-centred design professionals within a policy team.

Workshop at the International Design in Government conference

On June 26, 2019, I co-presented to approximately 40 participants at the International Design in Government conference in Edinburgh, many of whom had long experience working in and with government agencies around the world. This was an opportunity to share much of what UCPD had learned with others in the design field interested in working more with policymakers, but also to develop ideas together with them about how to better communicate to policymakers about user-centred design.

The stimulus we used for the ideation session was background information about the needs and goals of policymakers as well as two personas bringing to life the policymakers' perspectives on engaging with users. The goal was to surface ideas from participants about how they would encourage traditional policymakers to be interested in user-centred design methods, and how they would support policymakers who were already convinced about user-centred design methods to advocate for new ways of working and get buy-in from senior leaders.

To prepare for the session, I worked with a former policymaker and member of the Open Policymaking Group at the Ministry of Justice, who was then a policymaker at a different government department, to develop personas for two types of policymaker: the "Old-School Policymaker" who is resistant to new ways of working, and the "New-Age Policymaker" who is very open to new ways of working. The goal of the personas was to help workshop participants and

others to quickly understand and empathise with the perspective of both kinds of policy-maker, and so was intentionally brief. Joe, the "Old-School Policymaker", was described as having spent 26 years in the civil service, working in the same policy area for the past eight years, and believing that consultations are the best way to find out what the public thinks about ideas. Sam, the "New-Age Policymaker", was described as working in three policy areas over four years, going out of the office to meet stakeholders whenever she can, diving deeply into issues and sketching journey maps to understand people's needs. Both personas were tested with UCPD and policymaking colleagues at the Ministry of Justice to validate their representativeness. The workshop presentation and agenda are included as Appendix 10.

Following our introductions of the policymaker's experience and the two personas, the workshop participants were divided into five groups of 6-10 people each, given stimulus materials and questions to use as discussion prompts, and then fed back to the entire room. Workshop participants suggested that user-centred design professionals should make even more effort to get to know the "Old-School Policymakers" to understand their pressures and constraints and better tailor messages to them. They also suggested that case studies are very effective tools to demonstrate the benefits of working in user-centred ways, that quantifying the risks of not working in user-centred ways could provide a convincing argument for user-centred approaches, and that it can be very effective to emphasise that working with user-centred design methods is often more enjoyable than traditional policymaking work focused on reading and analysing reports. They noted as well that even quick demonstrations of user-centred ways of working can be very useful to raise awareness of user-centred design methods, and that it can be helpful to tell policymakers that user-centred design methods are simply versions of the same information-gathering and idea-generating process they already do, but using a slightly different set of inputs (i.e. interviews with users rather than discussions with academics and other policymakers). This reinforced previous findings about the importance of the approach to communications that should be used when engaging with policymakers, and corresponds with Kotter and Schlesinger's (2008) suggestion of using communication and education to drive change in an organisation.

Participants also suggested that it can be very important to introduce people to user-centred design methods by showing them how they can adapt their existing processes slightly without having to commission outside experts — like user researchers and service designers — that they might not have budget for. For example, policymakers could be encouraged to do more visits to engage with people impacted by their policy area, and to ask different types of questions, to think about the user's experience while on the visit and while synthesising notes, and to develop simple journey maps in Excel. That can help policymakers begin to see the value in user-centred design methods immediately, while also beginning to adopt a user-centred-design mindset.

User-centred design awareness sessions for policymakers

I organised a session for the UCPD team to present at the annual conference of the Ministry of Justice's policy profession on April 4, 2019, as one of three breakout sessions held concurrently. Approximately 50 policymakers attended. In addition to a general informational presentation I conducted, members of the UCPD team presented actual case studies and outputs from the team's work with policymakers over the past year, showing how we conduct user research, produce journey maps and personas, and prototype policy ideas.

This session received excellent anecdotal feedback from the participants, re-emphasising the value of sharing not just what we do, but demonstrating how we do it, to highlight how this way of working can produce greater value for policymakers in the form of qualitative information and well-crafted and well-tested ideas to solve policy challenges.

Figure 11: Presenting why and how we apply user-centred design to policymaking at the annual Policy Profession Conference of the Ministry of Justice

I presented and co-presented UCPD's approach, outputs, and impacts to several other audiences of policymakers during this cycle as well, including to all new staff joining the policy profession as part of the monthly policy inductions; the Administrative Justice policy team; the Strategy, Implementation and Priority Projects team; and a conference of recent university graduates working in the Civil Service Faststream — the policy leaders of the future — across the Ministry of Justice and other departments.

This regular stream of presentations allowed the team to not only raise awareness across the department about user-centred ways of working, but also to continuously adapt the content we present to audiences based on feedback from the sessions, to ensure we're offering the

most convincing arguments for the application of user-centred design methods to policymaking processes.

Testing a new user-centred design training programme

In August 2019 I revised and tested our user-centred design training programme for seven policymakers, extending it from a half-day session focused on theory and case studies to add in a second half-day session focused on practical experimentation with user research and journey mapping.

The revised theoretical and case-study session made the links more directly between the Treasury's ROAMEF and business case model of policymaking and the methods of user-centred design that can be applied to improve policymaking processes, demonstrated the team's work from the past year, and emphasised the role of policymaker to use both qualitative and quantitative evidence to educate ministers about the impacts of their proposals.

This first application of the revised training programme was met with very positive feedback. Four of the participants completed the post-training survey, all of whom saying they probably or definitely would do something different in their work as a result, citing things like building feedback loops into new policy to enable continuous evaluation; being conscious to test desirability of ideas in addition to feasibility and viability; mapping out processes to understand them more deeply; and advocating for user-centred design with ministers. All respondents also said they would probably or definitely engage in a longer training programme, if it were offered, as did all the participants in the training sessions during the first cycle, which indicates that a longer training programme on user-centred design, offered to all policymakers in the department, would likely be welcomed and impactful in changing policymakers' mindsets and ways of working. One participant suggested that this training should be mandatory for all policymaking staff.

Co-creating personas and objectives for user-centred design in policymaking

On September 6, 2019, I conducted a 1-hour workshop with six core members of the Open Policymaking group of the Policy Profession to test, validate, and refine our understanding of policymakers' perspectives on applying user-centred design.

The participants were chosen because they are policymakers with significant experience in the domain who understand not only the needs and motivations of policymakers, but also have some understanding of the user-centred design process as a result of their participation in the Open Policymaking group. They also were all aware of the feedback the group had received from policymakers across the department in the focus groups and surveys described

earlier in Chapter 6.3, which enabled them to co-create personas of policymakers based on extensive knowledge from both their own experiences and the research already done.

The workshop also drew on the participants' knowledge of policymakers and the user-centred policymaking process — which we called "Open Policymaking (OPM)" — to iterate the maturity model that had first been drafted during the previous research-and-design cycle and tested at the International Design in Government conference. A new maturity model was suggested and validated by the group, proposing a framework for how policymakers at the Ministry of Justice can be supported to progress from being unaware of user-centred design (referred to as Open Policymaking or OPM in this case) to eventually espousing user-centred design mindsets and integrating user-centred design methods into all their work by default.

The participants were first presented the framework — set against axes representing a policy-maker's consciousness and competence in relation to user-centred design — which suggested a maturation process from an initial stage where policymakers know nothing about the exist-ence of user-centred design ("The unaware") or are potentially sceptical of user-centred de-sign's value ("The OPM sceptic"), to a stage where they know about it but still don't know how to practice it very well ("The OPM-curious"), to a stage where they can practice it well but must consciously think about everything they are doing ("The practitioner"), to a final stage where they unconsciously apply user-centred design in everything they do ("The evan-gelist").

The framework also proposes what kind of support policymakers would need at each stage of their maturation process to be able to apply user-centred design more effectively in their work and eventually move on to the next stage. The "unaware" and "sceptic" would benefit most from awareness sessions and trainings (indicated on the framework by the icon of a per-son instructing other people), while the "curious" and "practitioner" would benefit from a combination of trainings, tools (indicated by the icon of a puzzle piece), and bespoke support (indicated by the icon of two people linking arms), depending on the complexity of the chal-lenges they are confronting and their individual levels of awareness. The "evangelist" would still benefit from user-centred design tools, despite having already adopted a user-centred design mindset and being very familiar with the methods. I've used this framework, which is shown in Figure 12, as the core of a Theory of Change to guide recommendations for the UCPD team's future activities.
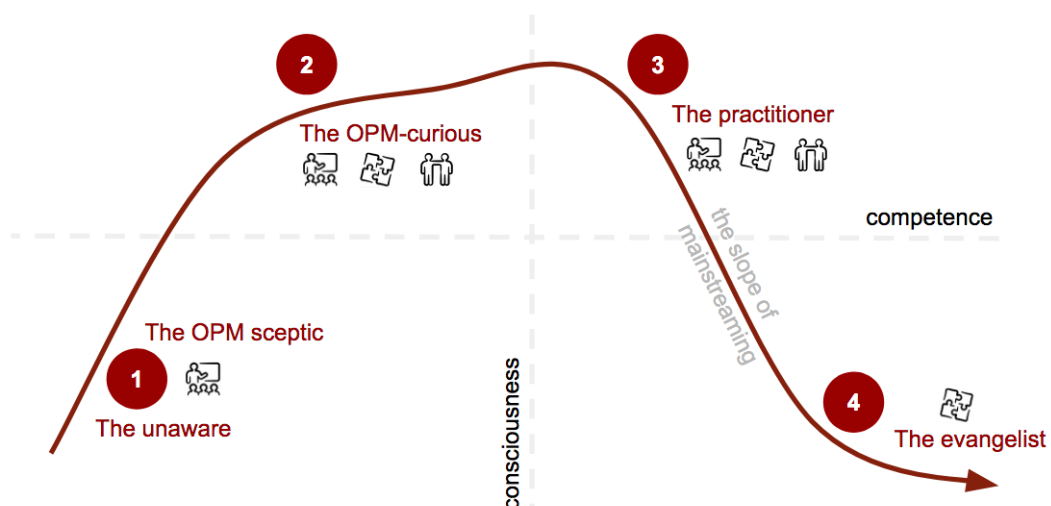
Figure 12: The revised user-centred design maturity model (referring to Open Policymaking or OPM rather than "user-centred design" to connect more effectively with policymakers)

After presenting and discussing the framework, the workshop participants broke into two groups of three people, and spent thirty minutes filling out persona templates for "The unaware", "The OPM-sceptic", and "The OPM-curious," indicating what that type of policymaker tends to think about Open Policymaking, and what support would enable them to mature from their current position on the framework to the next level of user-centred design consciousness and competence. We chose to focus on those three types of policymaker because the group believed they represented most of the policymaking community at the Ministry of Justice. After thirty minutes of group discussion, during which each group used sticky notes to fill out the persona templates they were given, each group of three fed back to the whole group of six, there was further discussion, and the small group notes were consolidated into key themes for each persona.
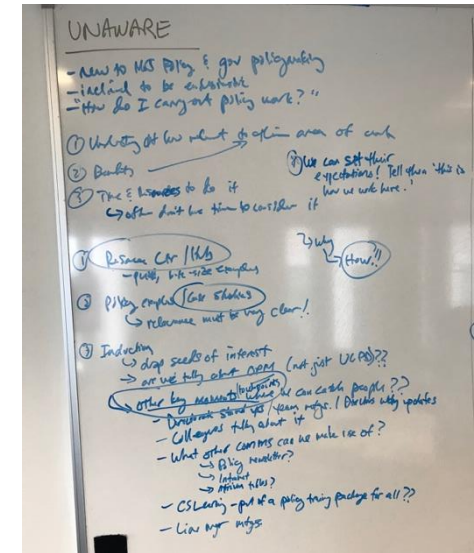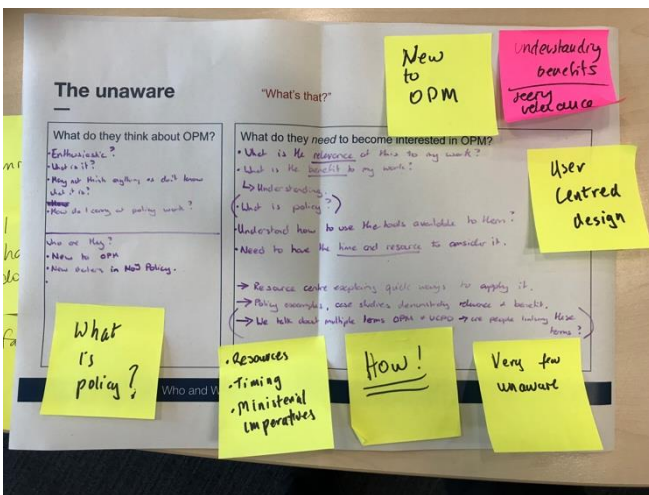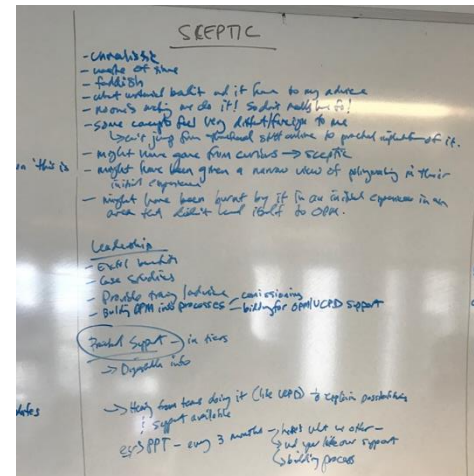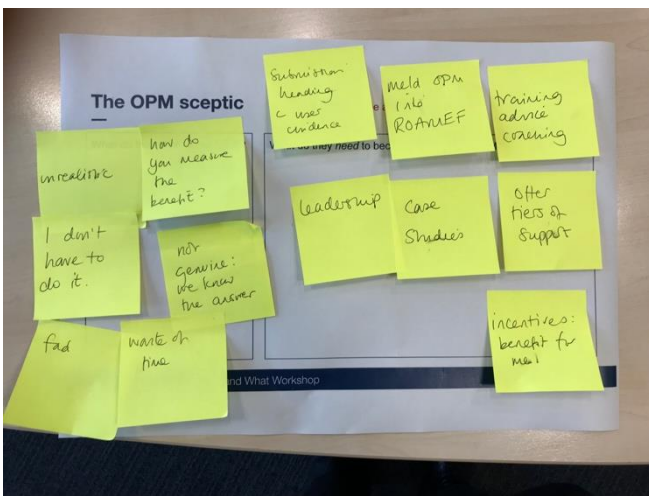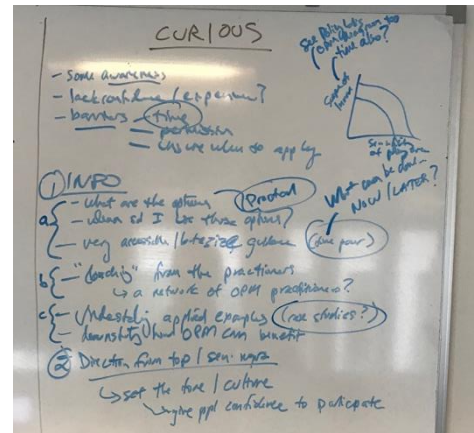
Figure 13: Images from the workshop - activities and outputs

The group felt there was great opportunity to set the expectation for those who are new to policymaking at the Ministry of Justice that applying user-centred design is a required part of the job. The group suggested that seeds of interest in user-centred design should be planted by continuing to present at the policy inductions but also by sharing information about user-

centred design at as many other key moments as possible, including at directorate and team meetings, in the policy profession newsletter, on the intranet, at tables in the building lobby, and in line manager meetings. The group suggested developing a resource centre or hub with quick, bite-size examples of how to apply user-centred design, alongside more extensive case studies of how user-centred design methods have been applied to policy areas at the Ministry of Justice. A more extensive training package, potentially delivered through the online Civil Service Learning platform that many policymakers use for professional development, could also be considered.

While the group felt that the Open Policymaking sceptics might also benefit from awareness sessions and seeing case studies of how user-centred design has been applied to positive effect at the Ministry of Justice, because many will have unfounded concerns about the applicability of user-centred design, which can be debunked, others will require convincing from senior leaders and peers. It was suggested that senior leaders should be asked to encourage their staff to apply user-centred design methods, and user-centred design should be built into standard policymaking processes as much as possible, echoing the advice of Greenway et al. (2018) to codify digital ways of working throughout the organisation. For example, a regular bidding round for UCPD team support could be launched, so that policymakers will be regularly notified and encouraged to compete for the team's support.

The key barriers for the curious policymakers were believed to be time, permission, and a lack of understanding of when to apply which user-centred design methods. The group therefore suggested providing clear, simple guidance describing what the user-centred design methods are and when to use them. This could build on existing resources like those produced by the Department for Education (Knight 2019) or the Service Design Studio of the New York City Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity (n.d.). A network of user-centred design coaches was also suggested, as those who are farther along the maturity process could be incentivised to support those interested in learning more. It was suggested that case studies would benefit this group as well.

Finally, it was determined that direction from senior managers would be a critical factor in establishing a culture that expects user-centred design to be applied to policymaking. If that's done, then all the different kinds of policymaker would make the effort to figure out how to apply user-centred design in their work. Leaders should emphasise that user-centred design is not a separate activity, it is simply the Ministry of Justice's way of making policy.

Many of these suggestions have been incorporated into the recommendations of this thesis project, which are described in Chapter 7.
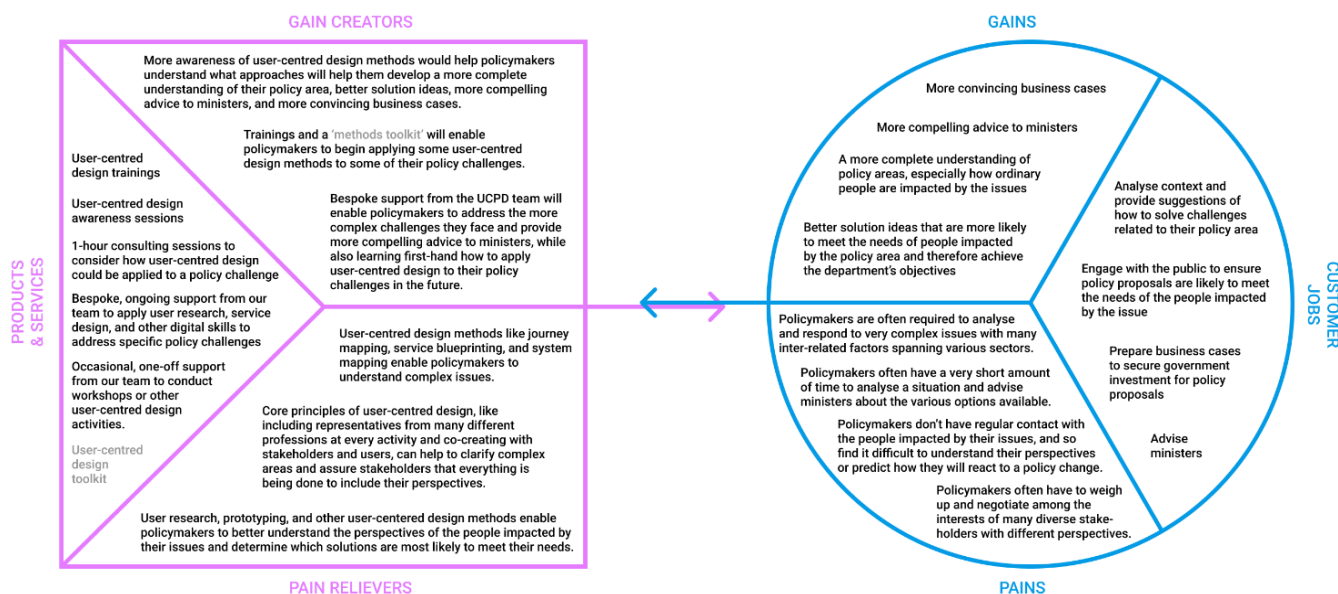
Developing a value proposition for the User-Centred Policy Design team

Following the workshop with the Open Policymaking group of the Policy Profession, I worked with the Head of UCPD, Amanda Smith, to articulate what value proposition the team offers to the department.

Using a traditional value proposition canvas and building on the learnings from both cycles of research and testing, we first considered the primary jobs that policymakers need to accomplish, including analysing context and providing suggestions of how to solve challenges related to their policy area, engaging with the public to ensure policy proposals are likely to meet the needs of the people impacted by the issue, preparing business cases to secure government investment for policy proposals, and advising ministers. We then considered what gains policymakers would like to achieve, including having a more complete understanding of their policy areas, being able to develop solution ideas that are more likely to meet the needs of people impacted by their policy area, and being able to develop more compelling advice to ministers and more convincing business cases. We also considered what pains policymakers often experience, including the difficulties analysing very complex issues with many inter-related factors that span various sectors, the lack of regular contact with and understanding of the people impacted by their issues, and the need to negotiate among many competing demands from diverse stakeholders.

We then looked at the UCPD team's current and potential future offering to the department and identified the products and services the team offers or could offer, including trainings, awareness sessions, short consulting sessions, one-off and longer bespoke support to address policy challenges, and a user-centred design toolkit showing what methods can be used to help analyse and respond to different kinds of policy challenges. We considered how these would enable the gains policymakers are looking for, noting that more awareness of user-centred design methods would enable policymakers to identify which approaches could help them achieve each of their gains and relieve their pains, while trainings, a toolkit, and bespoke support from the team would help them begin to apply those methods in the best ways at various times in their policymaking process. We noted that the core principles and methods of user-centred design would help policymakers to address their pains by enabling them to better understand the perspectives of people impacted by their policies, understand and respond to complex issues, as noted in Snowden and Boone (2007) and Rittel and Webber (1973), and also assure stakeholders that their perspectives are being considered.

We then developed the following value proposition statement: The UCPD team helps Ministry of Justice policymakers who want to understand and effectively respond to complex policy challenges by providing training, tools, and bespoke support to apply Open Policymaking methods. The full value proposition canvas and resulting statement can be seen in Figure 14.

GAIN CREATORS

More awareness of user-centred design methods would help policymakers understand what approaches will help them develop a more complete understanding of their policy area, better solution ideas, more compelling advice to ministers, and more convincing business cases.

Trainings and a 'methods toolkit' will enable policymakers to begin applying some user-centred design methods to some of their policy challenges.

User-centred design trainings

User-centred design awareness sessions

Bespoke support from the UCPD team will enable policymakers to address the more complex challenges they face and provide more compelling advice to ministers, while also learning first-hand how to apply user-centred design to their policy challenges in the future.

1-hour consulting sessions to consider how user-centred design could be applied to a policy challenge

Bespoke, ongoing support from our team to apply user research, service design, and other digital skills to address specific policy challenges

User-centred design methods like journey mapping, service blueprinting, and system mapping enable policymakers to understand complex issues.

Occasional, one-off support from our team to conduct workshops or other user-centred design activities.

Core principles of user-centred design, like including representatives from many different professions at every activity and co-creating with stakeholders and users, can help to clarify complex areas and assure stakeholders that everything is being done to include their perspectives.

User-centred design toolkit

User research, prototyping, and other user-centered design methods enable policymakers to better understand the perspectives of the people impacted by their issues and determine which solutions are most likely to meet their needs.

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

PAIN RELIEVERS

GAINS

More convincing business cases

More compelling advice to ministers

A more complete understanding of policy areas, especially how ordinary people are impacted by the issues

Better solution ideas that are more likely to meet the needs of people impacted by the policy area and therefore achieve the department's objectives

Analyse context and provide suggestions of how to solve challenges related to their policy area

Engage with the public to ensure policy proposals are likely to meet the needs of the people impacted by the issue

Prepare business cases to secure government investment for policy proposals

Advise ministers

CUSTOMER JOBS

Policymakers are often required to analyse and respond to very complex issues with many inter-related factors spanning various sectors.

Policymakers often have a very short amount of time to analyse a situation and advise ministers about the various options available.

Policymakers don't have regular contact with the people impacted by their issues, and so find it difficult to understand their perspectives or predict how they will react to a policy change.

Policymakers often have to weigh up and negotiate among the interests of many diverse stake-holders with different perspectives.

PAINS

VALUE PROPOSITION: The UCPD team helps Ministry of Justice policymakers who want to understand and effectively respond to complex policy challenges by providing training, tools, and bespoke support to apply Open Policymaking methods.

Figure 14: The Value Proposition canvas developed for the UCPD team (proposed new products are in grey)

Influencing organisational strategy and advocating with senior leaders

Throughout the second cycle of research and development I worked with the Head of UCPD, Amanda Smith, to test how the team could influence organisational strategy and build awareness of and support for user-centred design among key senior leaders in the department. As Greenway et al. (2018) advise, we had been preparing the ground and building credibility for several years, it was now time to work on getting a mandate to promote the application of user-centred design methods and mindsets throughout the department and codifying the use of user-centred design methods throughout the policymaking profession.

After successfully ensuring that "user-centricity" would be included as a guiding principle in the department's key strategy document, we now began working with the strategy team to consider how staff across the department would be supported to apply this principle, suggesting that the expertise of the UCPD team be capitalised on to ensure policymakers have the skills and support they need to apply user-centred design methods. It is too early to determine the effectiveness of this approach, but initial feedback from the team member requesting support indicates that this could be a very effective way for the UCPD team to influence the extent to which user-centred design is embedded in Ministry of Justice structures over the long term.

Embedding user-centred design skills within a policy team

During the course of the second research-and-design cycle, I identified an opportunity to demonstrate how the Ministry of Justice could address complex policy challenges if user-centred design skills were embedded directly in policy teams, rather than being brought into teams from other directorates. The opportunity arose because a policymaking colleague who had collaborated with the UCPD team in previous years had been reassigned and asked to address a new challenge.

Recognising from the outset that user-centred design could play a role in addressing the challenge, she contacted our team immediately and we discussed how user-centred design practitioners might tackle the challenge. We developed a proposal together, which she then presented to senior leaders in her team with my support, to hire a user researcher and a service designer into her team to begin working on the challenge.

The proposal was initially well-received and is currently being considered by senior leaders in the department. If successful, this will give us a first opportunity to learn by doing — to test the impact of embedding user-centred design expertise directly within the policymaking profession. We think this could not only help that policy team to better address the complex issue they're facing, but also demonstrate to others throughout the policy profession that it is possible to address policy challenges in new ways, including even reconsidering how the department is structured and staffed.

We hope this experiment can begin to erode the psychological and organisational barriers that many perceive between the policymaking and the digital professions. As Tom Loosemore explained in Code for America (2014), policy and digital should not be separate entities, but rather members of their professions should be working together on the same team to solve all the challenges government faces.

This experience highlighted how change can happen suddenly, but often builds on the momentum of many small activities over a longer period of time. This particular policymaker had worked with the UCPD team on another policy area several years previously, had participated in a user-centred design training, and been influenced by being part of the Open Policymaking group of the Policy Profession. All of that meant that, when the time came for her to address a new issue, the ground was sufficiently prepared and credibility established for her to be aware and approving enough of user-centred design to make the effort to build a user-centred design approach into the very fabric of how her next policy challenge would be addressed. That insight about her personal progression as a policymaker applying user-centred design would become a very important insight for me and for the UCPD team as we considered how to apply the learnings from this thesis project.

6.4 Summary of key insights from the second research-and-design cycle

In this section the key findings from the second research-and-design cycle will be presented in three categories: first, findings related to policymaking; second, key findings related to organisational design and organisational change; and finally, findings on how to embed user-centred design within the policymaking process of the Ministry of Justice.

Insights about policymaking

The problems that policymakers are trying to address are inherently complex (Snowden and Boone 2007), or "wicked", as Rittel and Webber (1973) would call them, because they impact on and are impacted by human behaviour, which is inherently unpredictable, and conditions that cause the problems are constantly changing. This insight led to the development of the framework for understanding how to respond to problems of differing levels of complexity in government shown previously in Figure 4, which combines Snowden and Boone (2007) with Rittel and Webber (1973) and Siodmok (2017).

Furthermore, this work also helped me understand how new policies (or changes to existing policies) are often created by policymakers and then communicated to operational staff who then must take account of these new policies by developing or adjusting the services they implement for the public to use. But critically, while operational activities are often (though not always) adjusted to account for new realities or unforeseen difficulties, findings from the operational implementation are often not fed back to policy teams to enable the policies to be adjusted. Eventually, policies are reviewed, but this is often as many as five or more years after an initial policy is created. The link between policymakers and those at the frontline of using and implementing services is not strong. This insight led to the development of the Open Policymaking Framework, which will be discussed in Chapter 7.

And finally, while ministers set the agenda for the department's work, policymakers can also influence ministers' agenda by providing them evidence of the impact (or potential impact) of their work. This evidence traditionally tends to be largely quantitative, but user-centred design approaches can provide very important qualitative evidence as well, which enables policymakers to provide more compelling advice to ministers. Qualitative evidence can be particularly compelling when it is presented in the format of a well-composed story. Researchers and designers must therefore be particularly careful to present evidence that represents a balanced reality of users' experience that they have uncovered through their work, so they don't unduly influence ministers and policymakers with unbalanced research results.

Insights about organisational design and organisational change

Organisations are most effective when their purpose is aligned with their form. Just as an aircraft carrier would not be used for pleasure sailing, a structure that doesn't encourage or even allow staff to quickly analyse and adapt to changing circumstances shouldn't be used for an organisation that's dealing with complex or wicked problems as described in Snowden and Boone (2007) and Rittel and Webber (1973). This is a critical insight that the Ministry of Justice will need to consider in the years to come, as it needs to be an institution that provides structures to carry out the activities of a national justice system, while also enabling its policymaking staff to adapt regularly to changing circumstances.

This work also helped me understand that to enact fundamental change in an organisation, the structures of the institution and the mindsets of the staff must all be influenced. It should also be noted that change can happen suddenly but often builds on the momentum of many small activities over a longer period of time. Taking these two insights together, the UCPD team should consider how it can influence mindsets and structures in small, steady ways — generating what Thackara calls "small islands of coherence" (This is HCD 2018a). This should in turn catalyse the larger-scale institutional change the team wants to create.

Insights about embedding user-centred design within the policymaking process of the Ministry of Justice

An adaptive government institution will have structures in place that enable it to recognise how circumstances are changing in its environment (usually through feedback mechanisms) and provide the right mix of services to generate the value its public needs to meet their objectives (Chatterjee 2019). This insight was very important in helping me develop the Open Policymaking Framework discussed in Chapter 7.

Several insights emerged about the mindset of policymakers at the Ministry of Justice and their willingness to incorporate user-centred design methods into their work. Ministry of Justice policymakers largely believe that engaging more with people impacted by policies and other stakeholders results in better designed policies. Policymakers are often very receptive to the idea that user-centred design approaches help them reduce the risk of proposing the wrong solutions. Policymakers are also generally receptive to the idea that user-centred design helps them balance users' needs with what the business wants to and is able to achieve (desirability + viability + feasibility). Ministry of Justice policymakers don't react favourably to the terms "digital" or "design", but are much more receptive to the concepts of "open policymaking" and "user-centric".

The research also highlighted key details about how policymakers currently work at the Ministry of Justice and how those methods could be improved. Policymakers already engage with

the public in some ways. These approaches should be acknowledged and built upon by providing policymakers with advice on how to engage more meaningfully and more often, using skills and tools they already have. Importantly, policymakers should be reassured that user-centred design is not an add-on to their current work, but rather offers an alternate approach to achieve the goals of the information-gathering and idea-generating activities they already do.

The classification of policymakers into "the unaware", "the sceptics", "the curious", "the practitioners", and "the evangelists" seems to be a useful approach, and currently, most policymakers in the department probably fall into the first three categories. Supporting each of them to apply user-centred design methods will require different combinations of trainings and awareness sessions, tools, and bespoke support, depending on the individual and the challenges they're trying to address. This became a critical insight to help develop the UCPD Theory of Change discussed in Chapter 7.

Many Ministry of Justice policymakers want senior leaders to be more explicit that they should be applying user-centred design methods more in their work, and they should take the time needed to do so. Senior leaders can set the tone by explicitly saying that user-centred design should not be an afterthought, but rather should form the core principles of how we develop policy at the Ministry of Justice. This also became a critical insight to help us develop the UCPD Theory of Change.

Some sceptics may benefit from user-centred design awareness sessions and case studies, as many will have unfounded concerns about the applicability of user-centred design that can be debunked; others will require convincing from senior leaders and peers. Case studies and quick demonstrations can be very effective tools to demonstrate the benefits and feasibility of working in user-centred ways. These could be supplemented effectively by a resource centre online with easy-to-consume examples of how to apply user-centred design. Quantifying the risks of not working in user-centred ways could also provide a convincing argument for user-centred approaches. Many policymakers noted that user-centred design approaches to problem solving are often seen as a more enjoyable way to work than traditional policymaking approaches. This can be a compelling argument in favour of applying user-centred design when communicating to policymakers. User-centred design professionals should make more efforts to get to know policymakers who are sceptical about the value of user-centred design in order to understand their pressures and constraints and better tailor messages to them.

Key barriers blocking "curious" policymakers from applying user-centred design methods are often lack of time, permission, and understanding of when to apply which methods. Providing clear, simple guidance describing what the user-centred design methods are and when to use

them could help address the third issue, while the first two would benefit from senior leadership support for the practice.

A network of user-centred design coaches could provide a welcome support mechanism for the "unaware", "sceptics", and "curious", while incentivising policymakers to mature their own user-centred design practice to the "practitioner" level in order to become coaches.

A regular bidding process for its services — similar to what is done to prioritise how other support teams allocate their resources — could elevate the importance of the UCPD team in some policymakers' minds. Presenting to policymakers regularly about user-centred design also enables the UCPD team to raise awareness throughout the department and improve its own communications by iterating its messaging based on feedback from each presentation. And finally, the user-centred design training sessions have been very well received, even at the longer duration of two half-day sessions, and all participants indicated they would likely participate in an even longer and more thorough user-centred design training programme. An online version, making use of the Civil Service Learning platform that policymakers are familiar with, could be impactful.

Taken together, these insights, together with those from the first research-and-design cycle, led to the conclusions and recommendations that will be discussed in the following chapter.

7   Conclusions and recommendations

Embedding user-centred design methods into the working practices of the Ministry of Justice — and particularly in the policymaking processes that determine the approach the Ministry of Justice and others will take to solving the problems of the justice system — can have a significant positive impact on the overall effectiveness of the organisation in achieving its goals. But embedding user-centred design mindsets within the officials and managers who make policy will be equally crucial, as Stickdorn et al. (2018, 21) and Moore (1995, 4) note.

As Ken Clarke MP argued in House of Commons (2008), policymakers need to be able to give ministers frank and fearless advice. This is only possible if policymakers are equipped with holistic understanding of the context in which their policy operates and accurate information about the likely impacts of the potential solutions they're proposing to policy challenges. User-centred design can provide policymakers with this information by enabling them to understand not just the political viability and technical feasibility of solutions, but also the extent to which solutions are likely to meet the needs of the people impacted by the policies.

Several UCPD projects have shown that it is possible to provide ministers with this frank and fearless advice when a user-centred design approach is used. For example, the team worked

to support policymakers developing the Government's Legal Support Action Plan, which resulted in a decision to prototype and pilot several different approaches rather than committing to any particular course of action up front (Ministry of Justice 2019f). This marks a real shift in approach for the Ministry of Justice. And this is just one example among more than 30 policy challenges the team has worked on over the past three years (Collier 2019). But more systematic analysis is needed to confirm the extent and durability of the value that is generated by this shift in approach.

The following sections summarise the key conclusions and recommendations drawn from the two cycles of research and design conducted between February 2018 and October 2019 to better understand the workings of the Ministry of Justice and how user-centred design might be embedded within the policymaking processes of the institution to generate more public value. First, I reflect on the participatory action research process and present five key conclusions of the work alongside a new framework for Open Policymaking. Following that are seven recommendations for the UCPD team to continue embedding user-centred design within policymaking processes of the Ministry of Justice, summarised within a Theory of Change and Roadmap of future activities. The transferability of results to other institutions and sectors is considered and three recommendations are made for future research questions to pursue.

7.1   Reflections on the participatory action research process

The goal of a participatory action research project is to enable the researcher to develop and evolve their own practice (Kemmis and McTaggert 2005, 278), but also to produce knowledge relevant to and used by those at the heart of the study. That is why I chose this method — I wanted the UCPD team and policymaking community at the Ministry of Justice, with whom I would be working, to help me produce the knowledge and then make use of what we learned.

Upon reflection, I believe this was a very good choice of methods, but I could have applied it more systematically throughout the research process. The method enabled me to act — and reflect on those actions — together with core members of the UCPD team, like the Heads of UCPD Jack Collier (until March 2019) and Amanda Smith (from May 2019). I was also able to involve key members of the policymaking community — especially the Open Policymaking Group — within the planning and execution of the research and design activities, like the focus groups with policymakers and the workshop to develop policymaker personas and set objectives and develop a Theory of Change to support those policymakers to embed user-centred design within their work. And the involvement of both target groups in the research activities meant that both were able to make use of the learnings during the course of the project and both groups have committed to carrying out many of the recommendations in this report and continuing to work in this participatory way.

The action research approach, coupled with Design Thinking methods, enabled me to continuously plan and re-plan, to respond with agility and take advantage of new opportunities that arose as a result of previous activities. I was able to iteratively build knowledge and act on that knowledge. For example, the opportunities to conduct focus groups and surveys during the second cycle of activities, which were critical to enhance my understanding of the policymaker's needs, only emerged during the early days of that cycle of activities thanks to previous engagements I had with the Head of UCPD and the Open Policymaking Group. And the results of those research-oriented activities prompted me to conduct the co-creation workshop with the Open Policymaking Group later in that cycle of activities. The flexibility and collaborative nature of the action research approach, combined with the theoretical rigor of the Design Thinking methods, which build from the problem space to solution testing, proved to be a very effective combination to achieve my goals of building knowledge and testing potential ideas to help the UCPD team achieve its goals.

This approach definitely enabled me to evolve my own practice as well. I have much greater knowledge of how user-centred design can be applied to policymaking — both the opportunities and the difficulties — than I did at the start of this project. I am able to work much more effectively both with the UCPD team and with policymakers, and to influence senior leaders within the department, than I was at the start of this project, and I take those skills into my ongoing role as a leader within the UCPD team and the wider department. Should I move to another role within government or beyond, the lessons learned from this study will continue to be extremely valuable, as they can be applied to many other institutions undergoing transformation in today's complex global environment. (Transferability will be discussed further the following section.)

In retrospect, however, I believe I could have engaged both the UCPD team and the Open Policymaking Group more systematically in the reflection process. I did organise group reflections, like, for example, when the UCPD team came together to discuss the results of the focus group of policymakers, or when we shared learnings from the International Design in Government conference that I attended along with several other team members. These were very useful sessions because they socialised the results of the research and design activities, and led to decisions about future activities. For example, a discussion of the policymaker focus group results among the Open Policymaking Group led to a group decision to launch a survey of the wider policymaking community, and the results from the focus groups informed the survey design. But I could have organised a monthly group dialogue with UCPD or the Open Policymaking Group to discuss my activities and request their feedback, rather than doing this on an ad hoc basis. As Pant (2014, 585) notes, dialogues in which problems are posed and discussed can encourage critical analysis through group discussion.

7.2 Five key conclusions of the participatory action research

The five major conclusions of this research project are discussed next and presented in Table 5 below. While the first three research questions are largely discussed in the theoretical section of this thesis (Chapters 3 and 4), these conclusions build on that theoretical framework and attempt to respond to the fourth research question: how might the UCPD team apply the lessons of digital transformation and change management to embed user-centred design methods into the Ministry of Justice's policymaking work?

These conclusions consider how the Ministry of Justice — and particularly the UCPD team within it — has fared in relation to Greenway et al.'s (2018) framework for embedding user-centred design methods and mindsets within an organisation, building on Osborne et al.'s (2015) explanation of how value is generated by public sector institutions as well as arguments about driving change within an institution made by Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) and Stickdorn et al. (2018). The conclusions also consider what opportunities exist to continue applying those principles to further embed user-centred design within the Ministry of Justice.

Table 5: Five key conclusions of the participatory action research

1. The Ministry of Justice has taken steps to increase public value by applying user-centred design to its work since 2012.
2. The UCPD team has begun embedding user-centred design within the policymaking process of the Ministry of Justice since 2016, and now the opportunity exists to take the next steps.
3. Ministry of Justice policymakers are largely open to applying user-centred design methods in their work, but feel they need support to do so.
4. Ministry of Justice senior leaders have begun to embrace user-centred design.
5. Framing is important when promoting user-centred design to policymakers.

1. The Ministry of Justice has taken steps to increase public value by applying user-centred design to its work since 2012.

Applying the lens of digital transformation as described by Greenway et al. (2018), we can see how the Ministry of Justice has begun its efforts to increase public value by applying user-centred design methods to its work. This process largely began in 2012, with the publication of the government's digital strategy for justice (Grayling 2012), which aimed to ensure the Ministry of Justice would design its services around the needs of people who use the justice service, including victims of crime and those who commit offenses.

The user-centred approach that was implemented within the Ministry of Justice's Digital and Technology directorate has indeed enabled some people to achieve their goals with less expenditure of time, effort and money, thus increasing public value, as described in Figure 3, in some cases. For example, as Stead (2018) explains, family members can now use an online service to send money quickly and cheaply to someone in prison, which has saved members of the public millions of pounds in direct costs to achieve their objective, reduced government costs by millions of pounds (thus saving taxpayers money), improved staff efficiency (thus saving taxpayers even more money), and reduced violence levels in prisons (advancing another government objective).

But improving how government delivers services is only one of 28 ways a policymaker can intervene to influence people's actions and behaviours and facilitate the creation of more public value (Siodmok 2017). As Rebolledo (2016, 40) suggests, improving the processes by which governments develop their policies and allocate resources should generate more public value and have a direct impact on people's lives. The UCPD team's efforts to do that are described and discussed in the following conclusions.

2. **The UCPD team has begun embedding user-centred design within the policymaking process of the Ministry of Justice since 2016, and now the opportunity exists to take the next steps.**

In 2016, the Ministry of Justice's User-Centred Policy Design team began experimenting with how user-centred design could be applied to support policymakers in their efforts to influence and shape the entire landscape within which services are delivered in order to facilitate the generation of even more public value. In the three years of its existence, the UCPD team has worked on dozens of projects with many different policy teams in the department, exploring all four of the new approaches to applying user-centred design to policymaking described by Van Buren et al. (2019, 6): exploring the context of the policy problem and potential solutions much more broadly, focusing on empathy rather than rationality and political objectives, involving those affected by a problem in the search for solutions, and exploring provisional ideas through rapid prototyping.

Applying Greenway et al.'s (2018) lens of digital transformation, we can see that over the past three years, through this work the UCPD team has successfully embarked upon steps 1 and 2 of the digital transformation process: preparing the ground and establishing its credibility within the policymaking process. It now has an opportunity to fully transform the policymaking process by carrying out steps 3 and 4: getting a mandate to embed user-centred design throughout the department and embedding the application of user-centred design methods into the structures of the institution.

Some critical first steps have been taken in that direction during this project, including through advocacy with key senior leaders, securing the inclusion of user-centricity as a key guiding principle in the department's latest strategy document, and proposing an experiment to embed user-centred design professionals within a policy team for the first time.

Over the first two years of its operations, the UCPD team relied primarily on the first three of Kotter and Schlesinger's (2008) strategies for affecting change in an organisation: education and communication, involving others in the change, and training and supporting others through the change. Over the past year, while continuing to apply these strategies, the team has also increased its efforts to apply Kotter and Schlesinger's (2008) fourth strategy, negotiating with key decision makers, to begin to get a mandate to embed user-centred design more widely through the policymaking process. Negotiation with key decision makers will likely prove to be increasingly important to the team's strategy as it focuses more on embedding user-centred design into the department's core functions in the years to come.

Only in hindsight, perhaps several years from now, will it be clear whether the UCPD team's activities have led to user-centred design becoming further embedded into the structures of the Ministry of Justice. And only after more time and extensive study will it be possible to determine whether applying user-centred design will improve the quality of policymaking, and if so, how much additional public value it may generate. But the anecdotal success of these initial efforts to apply user-centred design to policymaking indicates that further steps should be taken to extend this work.

3. **Ministry of Justice policymakers are largely open to applying user-centred design methods in their work, but feel they need support to do so.**

Throughout the course of this project, it has become clear through interviews, surveys, and day-to-day engagements that policymakers are largely open to applying user-centred design methods in their work. Policymakers' initial engagement with user-centred design can be said to have been relatively slow but enthusiastic. The UCPD team has found that policymakers are generally very happy to be asked to be involved in key user-centred design activities like user research, co-design workshops, and prototype development and testing.

Policymakers tend to enjoy working in this way and see the benefits of it in helping them achieve their objectives of better informed analyses of policy challenges, solution ideas that are more likely to achieve the department's objectives over the long-term, and more compelling and convincing advice to ministers and business cases for investment.

But despite desiring to work in user-centred ways, many policymakers have indicated a need for support to do so. Considering that working in these ways can be a daunting proposal for policymakers not trained in user-centred design, it is not surprising that training and support

would be required — this is indeed exactly what Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) predict in such circumstances. The user-centred design trainings and awareness sessions the UCPD team have conducted throughout the course of this project have been very well-received, with many participants requesting follow-up sessions to extend the learning or put user-centred design methods into practice. The Open Policymaking group within the policymaking profession has expressed a willingness to work with the UCPD team to develop a toolkit of materials to support policymakers to apply user-centred design methods.

4. Ministry of Justice senior leaders have begun to embrace user-centred design.

As Moore (1995, 4) notes, how managers respond to institutional reforms can be the decisive factor in how successful the reforms are. Embedding user-centred design mindsets within senior leadership will be critical to the success of this process. It has taken three years to reach a stage where senior leaders within the policy profession are beginning to embrace user-centred design at the Ministry of Justice, but it is clearly now happening, as the UCPD team is being asked by senior leaders to contribute to strategic discussions, sit on advisory boards, and present to all-staff team meetings and all-profession conferences.

This indicates that the first steps have been taken toward getting a mandate to embed user-centred design throughout the policymaking process, and there is now opportunity to establish this mandate and embed user-centred design methods into policymaking structures and culture, from guidelines, induction, and learning and development materials to senior leader speeches and line managers' discussions. These opportunities are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.4, which focuses on recommendations for future actions for the UCPD team.

5. Framing is important when promoting user-centred design to policymakers.

Ministry of Justice policymakers are much more open to user-centred design concepts when framed as "Open Policy Making" than when framed as "service design", "user-centred design", or "digital". This became clear not only from the UCPD team's regular engagements with policymakers but more explicitly through the focus groups conducted during this project. This insight should inform the UCPD team's communications in the future.

Communicating to policymakers should be done using language and formats they are comfortable with; for example, the ministerial submission, the newsletter, or the white paper. This will facilitate the willing reception and assimilation of messages by all sorts of policymakers, including the "unaware", the "sceptical" and the "curious". Policymakers should, however, when possible, be encouraged to be open to new ways of communicating that are more transparent and open — for example, Twitter, blogs, and visual presentations — as these enable more people to engage with policymaking, which is a key principle of user-centred design.

7.3   A user-centred design framework for policymaking

Bearing in mind the learnings from the two cycles of research and design, I have developed an ideal future-state journey of a policymaking team that has embedded user-centred design methods into their work, building on the current-state journey adapted from Whicher (2018c) in Figure 7. This ideal future-state journey, which is shown in Figure 15, also incorporates the key elements of the government's ROAMEF cycle described in HM Treasury (2018, 9) and Whicher (2018a). It brings together Moore's (1995) theory that public value is rooted in the democratic choices of the society, with Van Buren et al.'s (2019) description of how successful design-driven policymaking is carried out today, with policymakers unlocking and combining different sources of knowledge, involving more diverse stakeholders in the development of public policy, and testing and refining potential solutions.
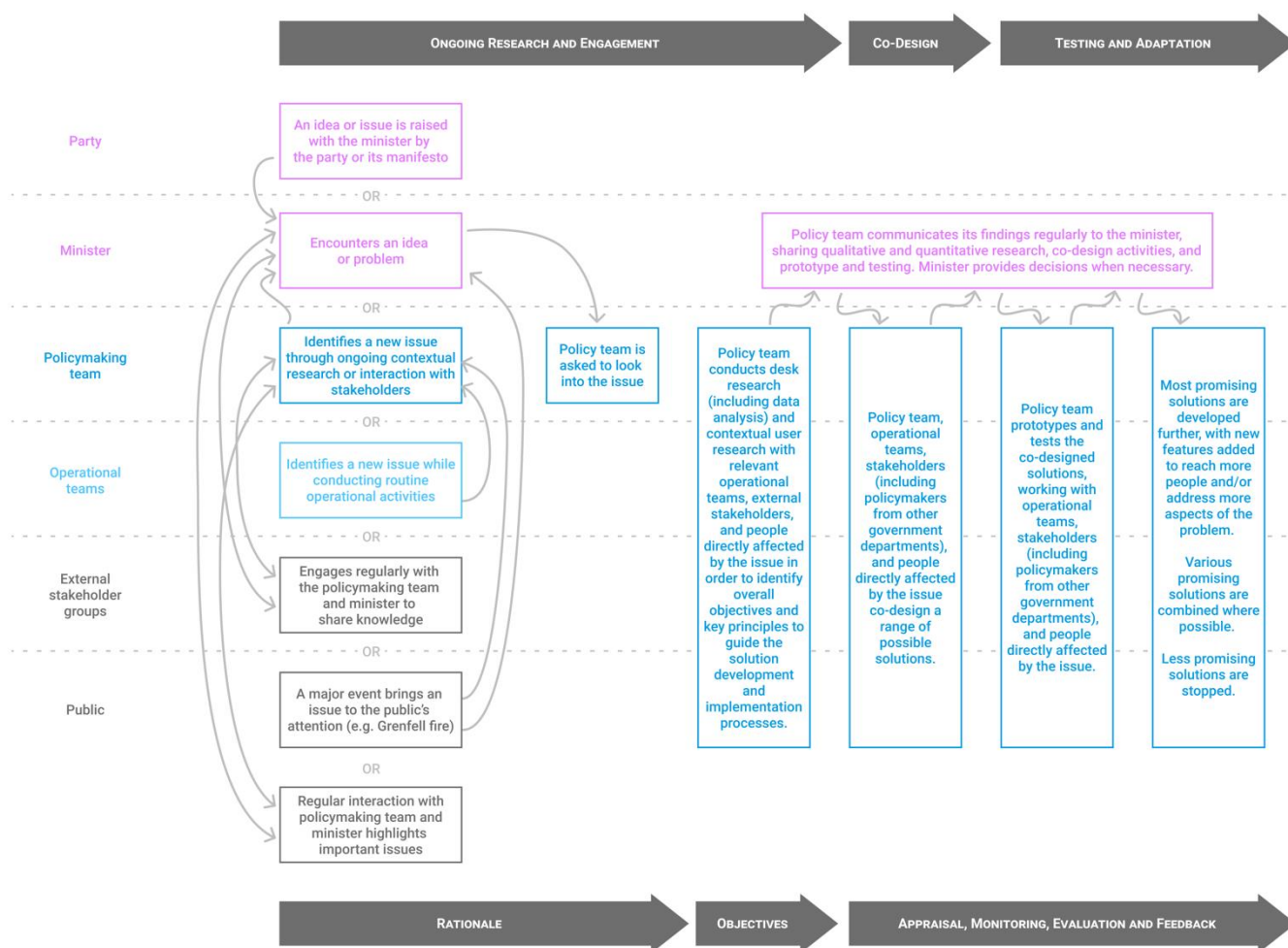

Figure 15: The ideal future-state journey of a policy team practicing open policymaking

On the left side of the framework, the key actors are listed, starting with the party and the minister and then continuing with the policymaking team and operational teams within

government, and concluding with external stakeholder groups and finally the public. The framework starts by recognising the importance of ongoing research and engagement to the open policymaking process. In this stage (which corresponds to the Rationale and Objectives stages of the government's ROAMEF framework), the minister encounters an idea or problem and asks the policymaking team to look into it. The issue may be brought to the minister's attention by any of the other actors but, critically, regular interactions between the policymaker operational team, external stakeholder groups and the public make it much more likely that the policymaking team will be made aware of important problems or solution ideas when they arise. This ensures that government actions are more likely to be responsive to the real and current needs of the public. Once the issue has been identified and the minister asks the policymaking team to look into it, the policymaking team will build on its existing relationships, working with the other actors to identify objectives to be achieved and key principles to guide the solution development and implementation processes.

Next, the process enters the co-design and testing and adaptation phases, which correspond to the Appraisal, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Feedback stages of the government's ROAMEF framework. In the co-design phase, the policy team works together with relevant operational teams, stakeholders from across and beyond government, and the public to imagine a range of possible solutions to improve the situation. During the testing and adaptation stage, the same actors all work together to prototype and test aspects of the solution ideas, and the most promising solutions are developed further, with new features added to reach more people and address more aspects of the problem. The less promising solutions are stopped, and where possible, various promising solutions are combined together.

Between each stage there is communication between the policy team and the minister, to ensure political actors are regularly inputting to and making decisions about the development of the solutions. They are the ones who are directly responsible to the public through democratic processes, and must therefore play a key decision-making role in the processes intended to generate public value, as Moore (1995) explained.

The key differences between the policymaker's current and ideal future-state journeys are that, in the ideal future-state journey, the policy team is continuously engaging with operational teams, external stakeholder groups, and the public to conduct research into the key issues faced by the public and issues are then addressed through a collaborative process of co-design, prototyping, testing, and adaptation.

The current policymaking process is shown in Figure 16. In that process, ministers set policy objectives, sometimes after being influenced by the public directly, but often having been influenced by their party, which is of course influenced directly by the public through the mechanisms of democracy. Policy teams then collect qualitative and quantitative information

to advise the minister, who then makes a decision about how to proceed. In the current process, policy teams tend to rely more on quantitative information than qualitative information, and their primary route to access qualitative information is through intermediaries like civil society organisations and the consultation process, rather than through direct engagement with people impacted by their policies. As Stickdorn et al. (2018, 468) explain, numbers can help identify when a problem exists, and sometimes clarify where the problem is, but qualitative information is needed to truly understand why people like or dislike something, or what they want to achieve.

Once a policy decision is made, that information is communicated to operational teams who are tasked with creating or adapting the services that are needed to carry out the policy directives. The current process also typically includes a long period of time — often as much as five or seven years — during which services are launched and run by operational teams but little or no feedback is collected or shared with policymakers. Policy reviews are often mandated by law, or occur when mounting public opinion demands it, but this can be many years after a policy first begins to be implemented. By this time, a great deal of opportunity to learn and adapt both policies and services has been missed.
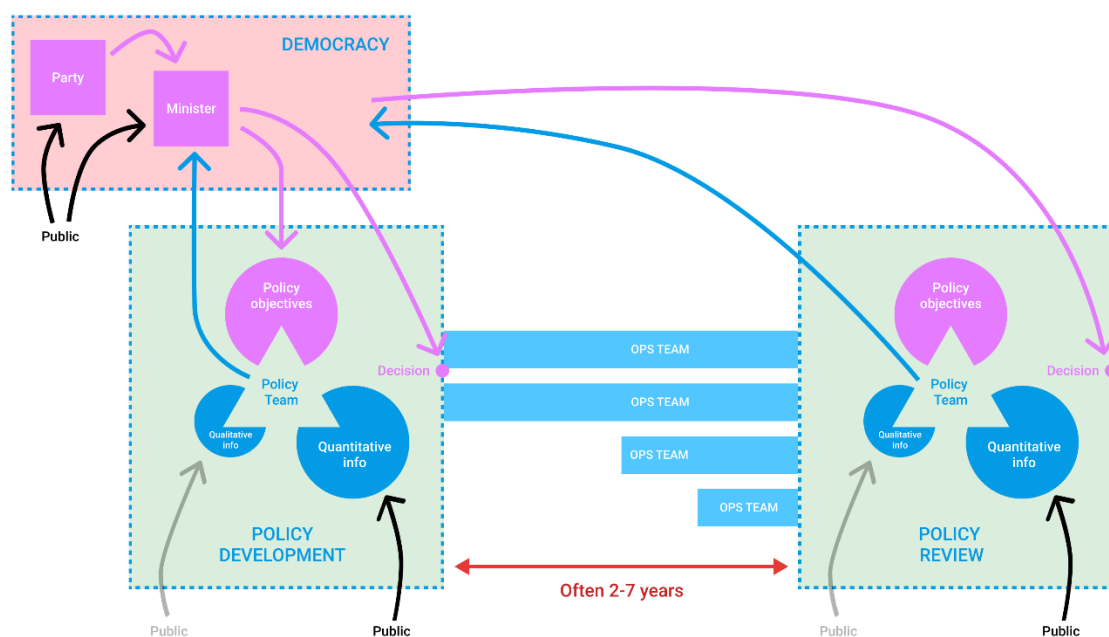

Figure 16: The current policymaking process

I have also developed a modified process diagram — called the "Open Policymaking Framework" — showing how policymakers should operate in the ideal future state described above. This framework demonstrates how services and policies should be subject to continuous evaluation and adaptation based on direct research and testing with the public and regular information sharing between operational teams, policy teams, and ministers.

The "Open Policymaking Framework" is shown in Figure 17 below. Just as in the current process, policymakers must balance policy objectives set by ministers and informed by the public with qualitative and quantitative information collected with and about the public, in order to advise ministers about policy issues. But in the proposed new framework, that process is informed by relatively equal measures of qualitative and quantitative information, and the qualitative information is collected more directly from members of the public impacted by the issue. Ministers must make the final decisions about each policy issue, as ministers are ultimately the ones held responsible by the public for the generation of public value through democratic events (Moore 1995).

Once those decisions are made, however, the policymakers would work closely with operational teams, who develop and implement services, to research and test how well those services are enabling the public to achieve their aims and meeting the department's objectives. This research and testing would provide the qualitative and quantitative information needed for the operational teams to adapt their services to better meet the public's and the department's objectives, and for the policymaker to advise the minister about how policies should be adapted to better meet those objectives.
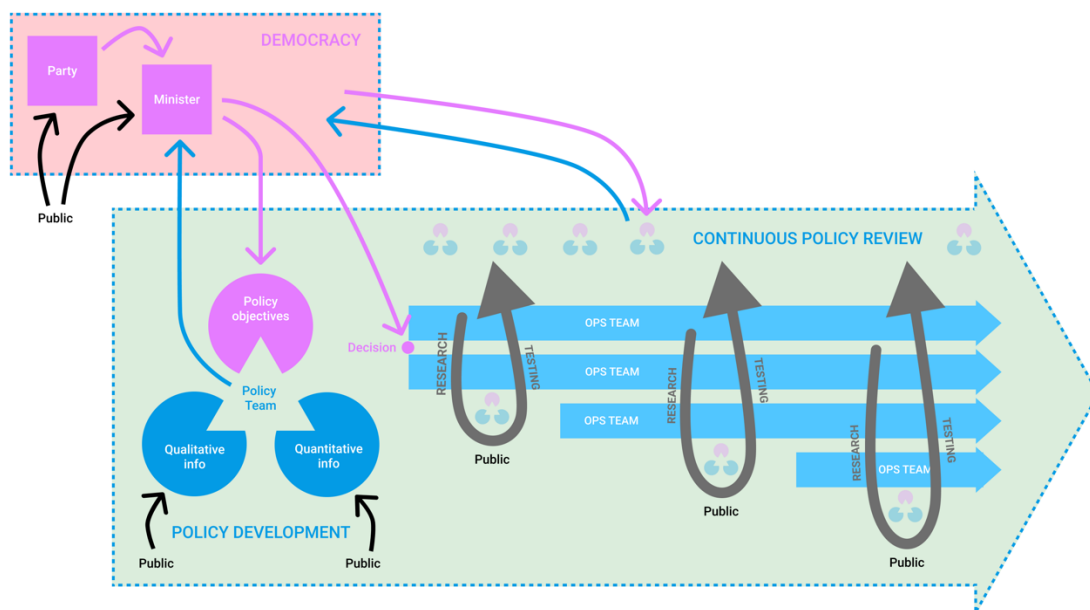

Figure 17: The Open Policymaking Framework

Critically, this would be a continuous process, not a process that is triggered by legal requirements or external events. In this way, operational staff and policymakers would be regularly receiving feedback about which aspects of policy decisions are generating the expected results to help achieve the policy objectives, and which ones are not. Services and policies could all be adapted, as and when necessary, to continuously adjust course to ensure society

is heading towards the preferred policy objectives. The regulating effect of democratic events would also ensure that the policy objectives chosen represent the overall collective preference of the society, which Moore (1995) says is the best determinant we have of how to generate the most public value.

7.4 Recommendations for the User-Centred Policy Design team

Next I will offer seven recommendations for the UCPD team to continue pursuing its objective of embedding user-centred design methods and mindsets within the Ministry of Justice's policymaking profession and processes. These recommendations are derived from and build on the conclusions presented above, and are intended to provide both principles and activities the team can use in its work. These recommendations, which are listed in Table 6, are also summarised in a Theory of Change and Roadmap of initial activities for the team to pursue.

Table 6: Recommendations for the UCPD team

1. Communicate to policymakers in language they appreciate and channels they use.
2. Continue to use communication, inclusion, support, and negotiation change strategies.
3. Develop User-Centred Policy Design case studies.
4. Expand the user-centred design training programme.
5. Develop user-centred design tools for policymakers to use.
6. Encourage senior leaders and policymaking structures to explicitly demand the application of user-centred design methods.
7. Identify opportunities to influence the development of key frameworks, including the Treasury's Green Book.

1. Communicate to policymakers in language they appreciate and channels they use.

Policymakers, like all other established professionals, have developed a language and method of communicating they find familiar. User-centred design professionals have as well. As Stickdorn et al. (2018, 456) notes, the service design process should be communicated in language that is familiar to the organisation and fits within its culture. If the user-centred design professionals in the UCPD team want policymakers to adopt new approaches to their work, they

should express design methods in language as familiar to policymakers as possible. For example, policymakers generally don't connect with the concept of "service design". "User-centred design" is better because policymakers can immediately grasp the idea of designing things around the needs of a user. But "open policymaking" is even better, as this is what policymakers see themselves as doing.

While some information is best conveyed in slide-decks using open platforms like Google Slides — and it can be important to nudge policymakers toward these more open and collaborative ways of working — it can sometimes be more effective to convey information to policymakers in traditional report formats, even mimicking the conventions of the ministerial submission or the white paper. A thoughtful balance of approaches, knowing and adapting to one's audience in each particular circumstance, will improve the UCPD team's ability to continue building credibility and getting the mandate it seeks to transform the department.

The UCPD team should continue to plant seeds of interest in user-centred design by presenting at the department's monthly policy inductions, but also by communicating through as many other mechanisms policymakers use as possible, as suggested by Stickdorn et al. (2018, 458). This might include sharing user-centred design experiences at directorate and team meetings, in the policy profession newsletter, on the intranet, or by setting up tables in the building lobby. As Stickdorn et al. (2018, 470) notes, it's important to make the design process visible and transparent by exhibiting the outputs of that work as prominently as possible. The UCPD team has discussed using these communications mechanisms, and these approaches seem likely to offer tremendous opportunity to continue building credibility across the department. None require large investments of time or effort, and so all would seem to be worth experimenting with. As with all other approaches, however, each activity should be evaluated and adapted, scaled, or ended based on results from initial forays.

2. **Continue to use communication, inclusion, support, and negotiation change strategies.**

Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) suggest six potential methods to promote change within an organisation. The UCPD team has had success using the first four — communication and education, including key people in the change, providing training and support to help people through the change, and negotiating with key decision makers. This should continue.

As the team moves more into the phase of engaging with senior leaders to secure a mandate to embed user-centred design more thoroughly across the policymaking profession, however, the negotiation strategy will likely become ever more important, especially for the Head of UCPD and other senior members of the team. For example, in 2019, the team offered to provide staff above and beyond its normal allocation to support a cross-government project being managed by one of the policy teams, because UCPD identified the project as a high-profile

opportunity to demonstrate user-centred design ways of working throughout and beyond the department. In future situations, the team might consider negotiating its role in such efforts up front, to ensure its team members are able to influence not only the outputs of such a project but also the strategic direction of the work.

3. Develop User-Centred Policy Design case studies.

Case studies have been repeatedly requested by policymakers — from participants at the policy induction to those who attend awareness sessions to focus group and survey respondents. These can be a powerful tool to raise awareness and convince sceptical policymakers about the value of applying user-centred design methods to policymaking. Stickdorn et al. (2018, 458) notes that case studies have been very effective communications tools in many institutions beginning to experiment with user-centred design.

The UCPD team should develop case studies, following a rapid prototyping methodology, identifying the key use cases and audiences for the case studies, determining their informational needs and behaviours, and developing and testing prototype case studies that demonstrate the team's work. These might take the form of 1-page text documents, which policymakers will find familiar and be able to read quickly, or they might take the form of visual slide-deck reports or even short videos. Different formats should be considered and tested with potential users to determine which are most likely to efficiently reach the team's goals for the product.

4. Expand the user-centred design training programme.

The nascent user-centred design training programme can also be a very useful tool to raise awareness and begin to show reluctant policymakers the value of user-centred design. In its first couple iterations, the programme has received very favourable reviews. It should now be systematised and implemented more frequently. For example, UCPD could make the programme a pre-requisite for all policy teams that want to commission a UCPD team to work with them.

UCPD could also capitalise on its strong relationship with the Open Policymaking stream of the policy profession to offer the training more frequently. If, for example, the UCPD team offered the training to 10-12 policymakers every week, it could train the entire policy profession in approximately one year. The UCPD team should discuss with senior leaders in the policy profession whether they might consider including the training in the department's formal learning and development offerings, or even making the training mandatory for all policymakers.

UCPD has also begun working with the human resources team to embed key aspects of the user-centred design training into the Forward Leadership training that team conducts. This should continue to be explored. A merger of the UCPD training offering with that offered by the human resources team might provide an excellent avenue to embed user-centred design training in department-wide learning and development structures.

5. **Develop user-centred design tools for policymakers to use.**

Policymakers have repeatedly requested a toolkit of user-centred design resources that they can consult in order to understand how to apply these methods to their work. This suggestion has come up in casual discussions and formal focus groups and surveys. The difficulty with a toolkit is ensuring that it meets users' needs. There are already two policymaking toolkits available to Ministry of Justice policymakers: one developed by the policy profession and published on the department's intranet (Ministry of Justice 2017), and another developed by Policy Lab and published publicly on the Gov.UK website (Cabinet Office 2016). Neither seem to be used very frequently — perhaps because policymakers are not aware of them, but more likely because they don't meet policymakers' most important needs.

While there are strong arguments in favour of developing a new toolkit, a process of research and prototyping should be used to develop the toolkit to ensure that it meets policymakers' needs and will get genuine and regular use. Any new toolkit should also build on existing similar resources, including the two toolkits mentioned above as well as the Department for Education's Delivery Book (Knight 2019) and the manual produced by the Service Design Studio of the New York City Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity (n.d.).

6. **Encourage senior leaders and policymaking structures to explicitly demand the application of user-centred design methods.**

Statements from senior leaders about the importance of applying user-centred design can be very powerful tools to encourage staff at all levels to make the efforts necessary to learn about user-centred design and begin to apply new methods in their everyday activities. Equally, staff pay attention to guidelines in determining how to conduct their work. As Tom Loosemore points out in Code for America (2014), British civil servants have a longstanding reputation for adhering to rules — the best way to get them to change their way of working is to change the rules governing how they're supposed to work.

The UCPD team was successful in supporting the strategy team to include user-centricity as a guiding principle of the department's work. It should now work with the strategy team to make explicit to the department what is meant by user-centricity, focusing on key methods including user research, co-designing solutions, and rapidly prototyping, testing, and adapting policy instruments.

The team might also explore the possibility of embedding user-centricity within the ministerial submission process. All memorandums submitted by policymakers to ministers must be signed off by the legal, analytical services, and other departments to ensure they have properly considered the elements in the document from those perspectives. The UCPD team might encourage senior leaders to add a user-centricity requirement to all ministerial submissions, to be signed off by the UCPD team.

The UCPD team should continue to present at the policymaking induction, but it should also attempt to influence key guidelines for policymakers, including the Policymaking Toolkit on the Ministry of Justice intranet, and it should attempt to influence senior leaders to instruct their teams on a regular basis to be applying user-centred design methods and mindsets to their policymaking processes.

7. **Identify opportunities to influence the development of key frameworks, including the Treasury's Green Book.**

The Treasury's Green Book defines how policymakers across government should do their work, establishing the ROAMEF framework as the guiding approach for policymakers, and the Business Case process for getting agreement to spend government's money on a particular course of action (HM Treasury 2018, 9). The UCPD team should seek out opportunities to influence these key cross-government documents to embed language requiring user-centred design approaches to be included in all policy development and investment justification processes.

Working prominently in cross-government networks, like the Policy Lab's network of departmental policy labs, can be effective ways to begin to prepare the ground, build the credibility, and eventually influence the people with the power to revise the government rulebooks to include more user-centred design approaches.

A Theory of Change and Roadmap of future activities

The UCPD team has made an excellent start to the process of embedding user-centred design in the policymaking profession and processes of the Ministry of Justice. Following Greenway et al.'s (2018) approach, it has prepared the ground and built credibility, and begun to seek a mandate to embed user-centred design farther throughout the department. The team should continue to build credibility while extending its efforts to seek a mandate and to start embedding user-centred design in the guidelines that govern the policymaking process.

The team should continue to take an agile approach to managing this change, following the advice of Potts and Kastelle (2010) and Snowden and Boone (2007) to experiment by probing, sensing, and responding — letting the best approaches emerge and then pursuing them. The best a leader can do in this complex context is to work with the team to establish its goals

and initial activities and then continue assessing the team's progress towards those goals and adapting the roadmap of activities.

Working with Head of UCPD Amanda Smith, I have established a set of long-term goals to propose to the UCPD team, as well as a roadmap of activities to be launched or continued. The goals are based on a Theory of Change that follows the advice of Greenway et al. (2018) to get a mandate for change and then use that mandate to codify user-centred design into organisational structures and culture. The Theory of Change also follows Stickdorn et al.'s (2018, 456) advice to take a "middle-top-bottom" approach, which means working with mid-level managers (middle) to determine how to incorporate user-centred design in the organisation's work, with senior leaders (top) to get approval for the way of working and spread it throughout the department, and with staff conducting the work (bottom) to actually embed user-centred design into work processes. The Theory of Change builds on the maturity model developed by the team and then validated with the Open Policymaking group within the policy profession this year, as explained in Chapter 6.

The Theory of Change, which is shown in Figure 18, considers how the UCPD team can help enable policymakers who are unaware, sceptical, or curious about user-centred design to increase their consciousness and competency in user-centred design, using both bottom-up and top-down strategies. While the unaware and the sceptics can benefit from awareness sessions and trainings, the curious and practitioners could benefit from trainings and awareness sessions, tools, and bespoke support. The bottom-up work of building capacity will be done by providing the trainings, awareness sessions, tools, and bespoke support for policy teams. The top-down strategies include influencing senior leaders and organisational guidelines, which can in turn influence policymakers of all kinds to grow their abilities to apply user-centred design methods and develop a user-centred design mindset.
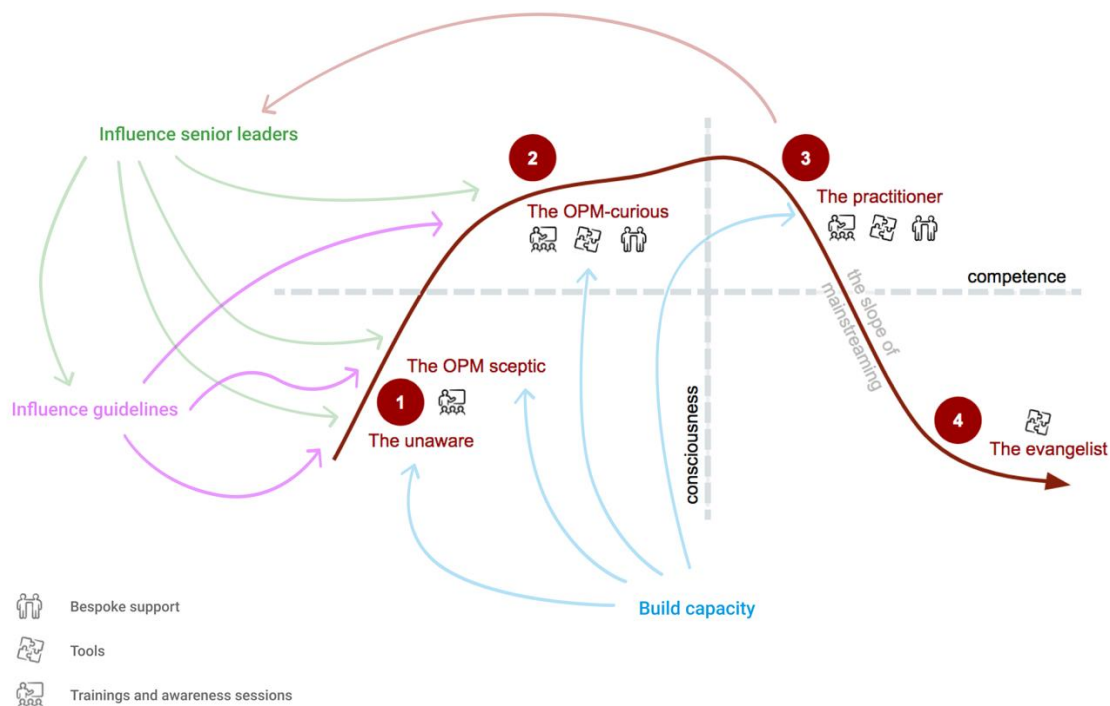
Figure 18: Theory of Change for the User-Centred Policy Design team

To develop the Roadmap, which is shown in Figure 19, we identified three long-term goals that, if accomplished, would indicate that user-centred design has been effectively embedded within the policymaking profession and processes, and then identified the current state of each of those objectives. We then specified a series of initial activities — some new and some building on existing work — that would help begin to promote the achievement of those objectives.

The first goal is that 80% of policymakers are considered user-centred design "practitioners" or "evangelists". A precise definition of "practitioner" and "evangelist" tailored to these circumstances will be needed, as well as a mechanism to measure whether or not individuals fit these definitions. Those should be developed by the UCPD team in order to put the roadmap into practice and measure the team's success in adhering to it. Based on a standard understanding of the terms "practitioner" and "evangelist", however, we estimate that currently fewer than 10% of Ministry of Justice policymakers would fit into these categories.

The second goal is that 80% of senior leaders are considered user-centred design advocates. Again, precise measures should be developed in order to evaluate the UCPD team's efforts against it. But currently, using a standard understanding of the term "advocate", we estimate that fewer than 50% of senior leaders would be considered user-centred design advocates.

The third goal is that the Ministry of Justice's Single Departmental Plan and/or policy guidelines identify research, co-design, and rapid prototyping as core methods to be used in policymaking. Currently, the Single Departmental Plan and policy guidelines identify user-centricity as a core principle but don't specifically refer to research, co-design, or rapid prototyping. This will therefore be a key goal for the team to pursue, with clear measures of success.

GOALS
- 80% of policymakers are considered user-centred design 'practitioners' or 'evangelists'.
- 80% of senior leaders are considered user-centred design advocates.
- The Ministry of Justice's Single Departmental Plan and/or policy guidelines identify research, co-design, and rapid prototyping as core methods to be used in policymaking.

BUILD CAPACITY
- Continue providing bespoke user-centred design support to policymakers across the department
- Expand and mainstream user-centred design awareness communications, focusing on the policy induction, directorate and team meetings, the policy profession newsletter, the intranet, and periodic tables in the building lobby
- Expand and mainstream the user-centred design training programme
- Develop and share UCPD case studies
- Co-design and prototype an open policymaking toolkit

INFLUENCE SENIOR LEADERS
- Build and expand relationships with senior leaders in the policymaking profession

INFLUENCE GUIDELINES AND STRUCTURES
- Encourage the strategy team to explicitly include user research, co-design, and rapid prototyping in policymaking guidelines
- Investigate the possibility of adding a user-centricity requirement to all ministerial submissions
- Promote and support the recruitment of multi-disciplinary policymaking teams that include user-centred design expertise.

evaluate & recalibrate

evaluate & recalibrate

evaluate & recalibrate

evaluate & recalibrate

CURRENT STATE
- Less than 10% of policymakers are considered user-centred design 'practitioners' or 'evangelists'.
- Less than 50% of senior leaders are considered user-centred design advocates.
- The Ministry of Justice's Single Departmental Plan and policy guidelines identify user-centricity as a core principle but don't specifically refer to research, co-design, or rapid prototyping.
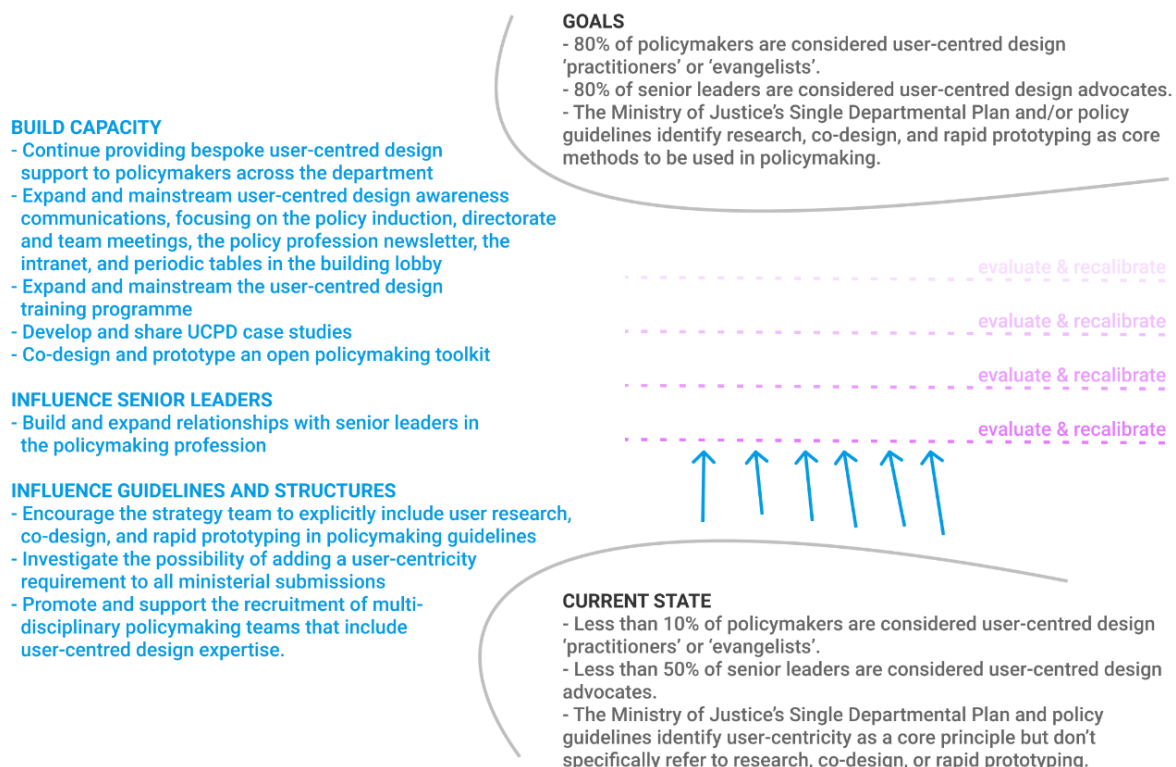
Figure 19: Roadmap of activities for the User-Centred Policy Design team

The initial activities are broken down into the three categories of activity identified in the Theory of Change: building user-centred design capacity, influencing senior leaders, and influencing guidelines and structures. There are five key activities identified to continue building user-centred design capacity. First, the team should continue providing bespoke user-centred design support to policymakers across the department. Second, the team should expand and mainstream its user-centred design awareness communications, focusing on the policy induction, directorate and team meetings, the policy profession newsletter, the intranet, and setting up tables in the building lobby periodically. Third, the team should expand and mainstream its user-centred design training programme. Fourth, the team should develop and share case studies about UCPD's work. And fifth, the team should co-design and prototype an open policymaking toolkit together with the open policymaking group within the policy profession.

To continue influencing senior leaders, the first key activity identified is to build and expand relationships with senior leaders in the policymaking profession. Based on the initial experience doing this, the team should consider how best to continue pursuing this objective.

And finally, to influence the department's guidelines and structures, the UCPD team should encourage the strategy team to explicitly include user research, co-design, and rapid prototyping in policymaking guidelines, investigate the possibility of adding a user-centricity requirement to all ministerial submissions, and promote and support the recruitment of multidisciplinary policymaking teams that include user-centred design expertise.

Once it has developed tailored definitions of "practitioner", "evangelist", and "advocate" and measures for each attribute, the team should establish a baseline for each of these figures by conducting a survey to evaluate how many of the department's policymakers currently meet these criteria, and then continue to carry out the survey every 6-12 months to determine how the policymaking profession is changing. Where possible, the survey should attempt to link these measures back to activities the team has carried out, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of particular approaches to embedding user-centred design within the policymaking profession.

Usability of the research

As discussed above, the UCPD team and the Open Policymaking Group at the Ministry of Justice have both been extensively engaged in the research activities and the process of reflecting on the results of the research. The current Head of UCPD and the policy lead for Open Policymaking have both welcomed the results in initial discussions and have expressed a strong desire to continue building on the activities described in this report.

For example, the UCPD team is already experimenting with options to merge its user-centred design training offer with that of the human resources team. The Open Policymaking Group is interested in developing an Open Policymaking Toolkit, and has asked for the support of the UCPD team in doing that. The Theory of Change and UCPD Roadmap have been co-designed together with the UCPD team, and will therefore play a significant role in the development of the team's upcoming activities.

The ability to root the team's activities in respected academic theories like those proposed by Rittel and Webber (1973), Moore (1995), Lusch and Vargo (2014), Osborne (2018), and Osborne et al. (2015) will undoubtedly strengthen the efforts of the UCPD team and the Open Policymaking Group to influence senior leaders within the department.

7.5 Transferability of the research

While this research project has been focused particularly on the User-Centred Policy Design team and the policymaking profession of the UK Ministry of Justice, the findings are very relevant for other government entities and large institutions in the United Kingdom and around the world. Globally, many companies and government entities are undergoing similar transformations. As Edgar (2015) makes clear, most of the work that governments do is focused on improving experiences for people who use services, and therefore everyone who works in and around government can benefit from user-centred design methods and mindsets. The lessons for the UCPD team and the Ministry of Justice policymaking profession in this research can equally be applied to those working in policymaking at any other government ministry or agency, at any level, in the United Kingdom or beyond.

The current policymaking journey map and process diagram, as well as the ideal future-state policymaking journey map and the Open Policymaking Framework developed through this work and described in Chapter 7, should all be familiar to many people working in government, at any level, in any part of the world. Indeed, in the course of this research, I have shared the thinking behind these frameworks and journey maps and preliminary versions of these models with academics and practitioners working in and around various government agencies, and all have found it relevant and useful.

While the Theory of Change and Roadmap developed in this work are tailored to the particular situation of the UCPD team at the UK Ministry of Justice, I expect that many organisations around the world will find them useful as inspiration for their own activities. Similar teams with similar missions have been launched in at least a half-dozen government departments in the United Kingdom in recent years, including the Department for Work and Pensions; The Department for Education; the Ministry for Housing, Communities, and Local Government; and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. User-centred policy design teams are emerging in many other countries as well. Indeed, more than 60 teams, structures, or entities across the European Union are focused on designing public policy by using innovative methods that involve all stakeholders in the design process, note Fuller and Lochard (2016, 6-7). And this number has surely grown even larger in the past three years. The policy-design sessions at the International Design in Government conferences have been attended by participants from across the UK, the European Union, Asia, Latin America, and North America.

My hope is that others will be intrigued enough by the theoretical frameworks I have developed in this work to use and adapt them for their own particular circumstances. The work was conducted in a way to ensure that learnings would be widely applicable. Having worked in the non-profit and media sectors previously, and recognising that the work of those sectors

is inextricably linked to the work and success of government entities, I'm also very interested to ensure they can all benefit from the findings in this paper.

But recognising that academic theses do not always reach many of these practitioners, I aim to socialise much of this work by producing blog posts and presenting many of these ideas at conferences like Civil Service Live and the annual International Design in Government events, which attract government officials from around the United Kingdom and many other countries. I've already considered how a series of blog posts could socialise many of the learnings presented in the theoretical section of this work as well as the recommendations and conclusions from the practical work, focusing on both why and how one would apply user-centred design to policymaking (and other complex problems).

And finally, the discussion of value in Chapter 3 and the theoretical models produced and discussed in Chapter 4 aim to add to the nascent discussion among Osborne, Van Buuren, and others about how to define and measure value in the public sector.

7.6   Recommendations for further study

While I was able to begin to answer most of the project's research questions through this work, some aspects could still benefit from further research, and some new questions have emerged. These new research questions are summarised in Table 7.

Table 7: Recommended research questions to pursue in further study

1.   How might we quantify public value and measure the impact of applying user-centred design to policymaking?
2.   How do policymakers perceive the Open Policymaking Framework as a tool for communications and strategic planning?
3.   How should policymakers and policy teams function in an ideal future state?

1. **How might we quantify public value and measure the impact of applying user-centred design to policymaking?**

The question of how to prove that user-centred design improves policymaking is a very difficult one. First, there is no set definition of what makes one policymaking approach better or more effective than another. It could be said that an approach is better if it generates more public value than other approaches. But measuring public value is not an exact science, and

even if it were, linking a policymaking approach to the public value generated over the long term would be nearly impossible. At a cross-government policy-design meetup I attended in April 2019, user-centred design practitioners and policymakers from various government departments discussed exactly this, with one participant noting that participants have been seeking proof of the value of this approach for years, to no avail.

Through this work, I have proposed a new framework for considering the government's relative contribution to public value, building from the perspectives of Bettencourt et al. (2014), Moore (1995), Talbot (2011), and Colfer (2019). As Figure 3 demonstrates, I argue that public value is generated when people engage with government institutions to integrate their resources together to accomplish the people's goals, and therefore the government can be said to contribute more to the generation of public value when people are able to achieve their goals with less input of their own resources — which are primarily time, physical or mental effort, and money. But even from this starting point, it would still be very difficult to measure precisely how much of a person's time, effort, and money is saved by policymakers adopting a user-centred design approach to address a particular challenge, as policymaking is a complex process that triggers many far-reaching changes in society, that themselves cause other changes in other aspects of society, extending forever into the future.

To begin to measure the impact of applying a user-centred design approach to policymaking, assumptions would probably need to be made, and proxy measures established. Anecdotal evidence would need to be considered alongside quantitative measures. But further research in this space could still be very useful for user-centred design practitioners advocating for new approaches within government, to help demonstrate the potential benefits of adopting such an approach alongside the estimated costs to a department (including the costs of not adopting such an approach).

2. **How do policymakers perceive the Open Policymaking Framework as a tool for communications and strategic planning?**

Visual frameworks can be powerful tools to demonstrate to people how complex processes work, and to aid discussions about the value of taking one approach over another. The Open Policymaking Framework was developed during this work to help demonstrate to policymakers how applying user-centred design to policymaking can enable the Ministry of Justice to provide more complete advice to ministers, learn lessons of policy implementation more quickly, and apply those lessons both to the delivery of services and the formulation of policy more expeditiously.

The framework should now be tested more thoroughly with both policymakers and senior leaders in the policy profession. Do policymakers believe that the framework accurately describes the key elements of policymaking? If so, does it help them understand the benefits of applying user-centred design methods to policymaking?

The proposed Open Policymaking approach would also necessitate changes in how policymaking is conducted and how policy teams are structured. Does it help senior leaders see the value of adding user-centred design professionals, like user researchers and service designers, to their teams? Does it help senior leaders see the value of empowering policy teams to engage with operational teams and the public to conduct continuous research and testing in order to regularly adapt service delivery approaches and the policies that govern them, rather than concluding policy development, handing off to operational teams, and only reconsidering the policy decisions when a policy review is mandated in the future?

3. How should policymakers and policy teams function in an ideal future state?

In a world where policy teams need to be comfortable conducting or commissioning research; analysing and synthesising that research; understanding complex systems of inter-related actors and services; co-creating potential solutions with affected individuals and groups; and testing, evaluating, and adapting solutions; how should a policy team be structured? And what core skills would a policymaker need to have? Should a generalist policymaker surround themselves with user-centred design specialists like user researchers, service designers, data scientists, behavioural scientists, and others in an integrated, multi-disciplinary team focusing on a single policy area over a long period of time? Or should the policymakers commission these professional services only as and when needed? Would this approach be as effective? Would policymakers know what professional services to commission and when? Would the former approach be too costly for a government institution? Or would the long-term benefits of working in an integrated fashion offset the increased costs of bringing this expertise into the policymaking profession? These are all questions that policymakers and researchers should continue to explore.

And most fundamentally, what does the policymaker of the future look like? Kempster (2019) considers exactly this through the medium of speculative fiction. The policymaker hero of Kempster's work calls himself an "outcomes designer" and works in a multi-disciplinary team with experts in user research, service design, prototyping, and service delivery, among others. They are based close to where their users live — in this case, along the Northeast coast of England, because the focus of their policy area is fisheries. Being close to people impacted by the policy enables the policy team to deeply understand their issues.

The policymaking team of Kempster's speculative future is given autonomy to explore the issues and encouraged to agilely respond to what they are learning by exploring new areas and

proposing and testing new solutions quickly. In this future world, civil servant policymakers are encouraged to be inquisitive and bold and a premium is put on accepting one's naiveté, allowing oneself to be wrong, and failing fast in order to learn. That is very different from the reality most policymakers face today, but much closer to the perspective of today's user-centred designer. While Kempster's vision for how policy teams should be structured and work is compelling, the implications of it and other approaches to policymaking should continue to be studied to ensure the profession adapts with the times to take advantage of new methods and enable government to contribute as much as possible to the processes that generate value for the public.

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Figures

Tables

Appendices

Appendix 1: The criminal justice system

Government bodies responsible for managing the various aspects of a person's journey through the Criminal Justice System are shown in National Audit Office (2018, 4).
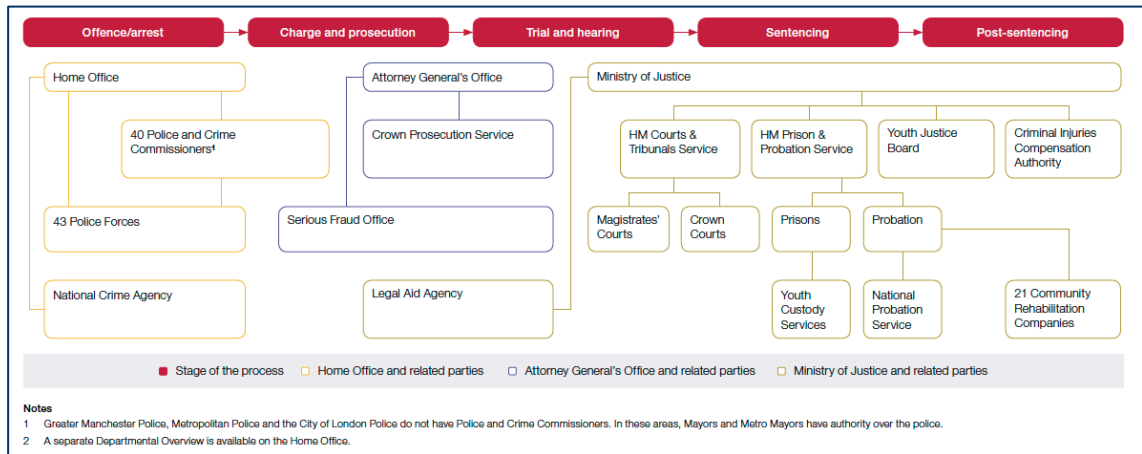
Below are graphics showing incidents of self-harm and assaults on staff in prisons and timeliness in Crown Court, as shown in National Audit Office (2017, 10, 21).

Incidents of self-harm since March 2012

Incidents of self-harm have increased by 93% (22,607) since March 2012

Source: National Audit Office analysis of *Ministry of Justice Safety in Custody Quarterly: update to March 2018*

Assaults on staff since March 2012

Assaults on staff have increased by 185% (5,846) since March 2012

Source: National Audit Office analysis of *Ministry of Justice Safety in Custody Quarterly: update to March 2018*

Regional variation – timeliness in the Crown Court

Offence to completion 2016-17

Note
1   Humberside includes data for South Yorkshire and the Humber as South Yorkshire Local Criminal Justice Board no longer exists.
2   Gwent and Dyfed-Powys have magistrates' cases only and as the timeliness data only includes Crown Courts, these areas do not have any data.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of the published Ministry of Justice *Criminal Court Statistics*

Appendix 2: The policymaking cycle

The UK Government describes the policymaking process in HM Treasury (2018, 9) as a set of activities that occur in a cyclical formation, following the stages of Rationale, Objectives, Appraisal, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Feedback, as follows.
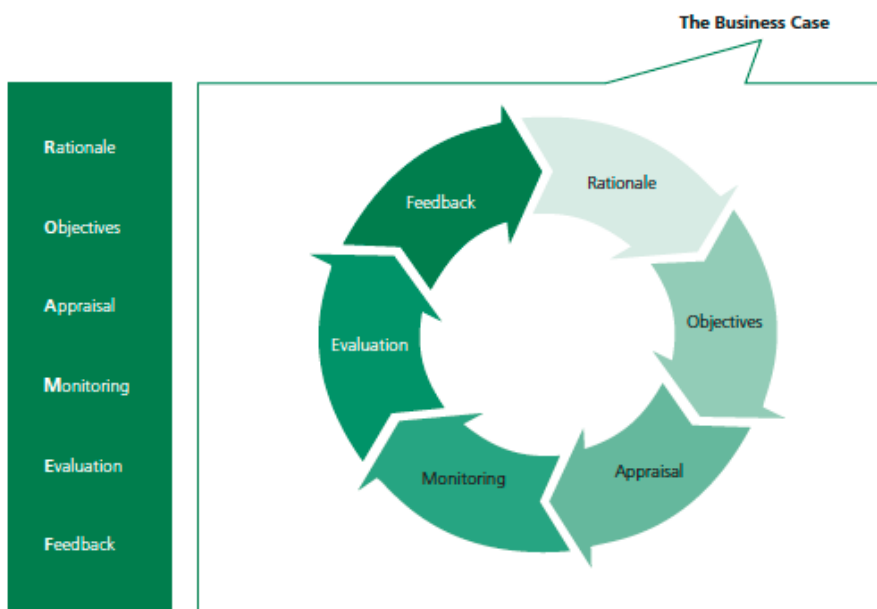
The approach proposed by Whicher (2018a) encourages a more user-centred, iterative policy design process, as follows.
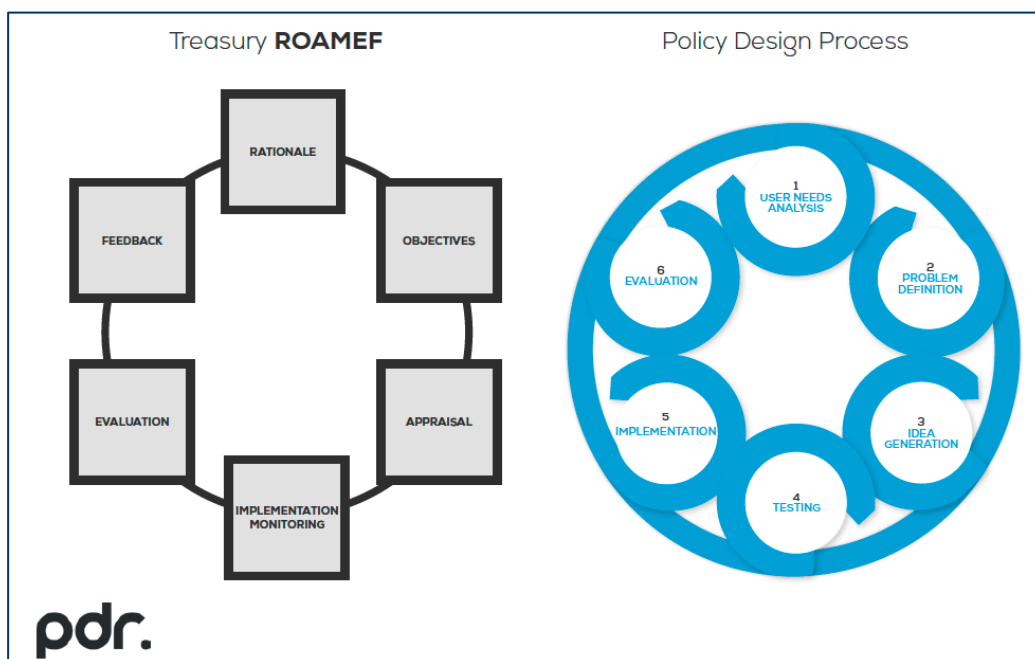
Appendix 3: Responding to complexity

Snowden and Boone (2007) propose the Cynefin framework to describe how managers should respond to challenges of varying levels of complexity, as follows.
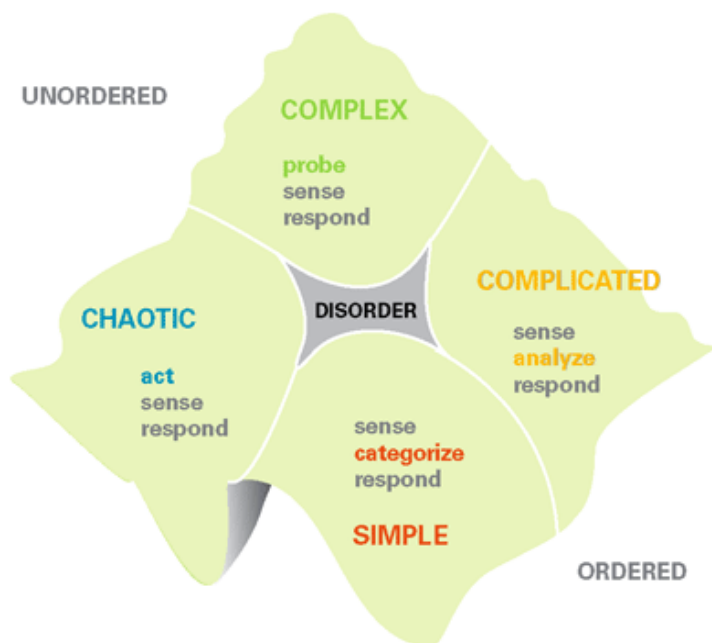
In Ministry of Justice (2019f), the User-Centred Policy Design team argues that exploratory user-centred design approaches are more effective than traditional approaches that prioritise pre-defined processes when challenges are situated in domains that are more complex and more unknown to the decision-maker.
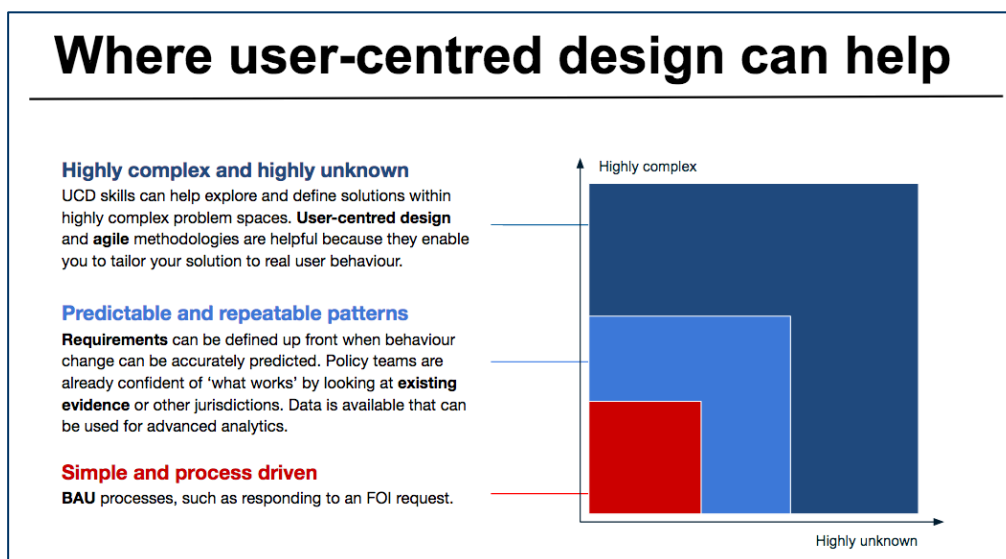
Siodmok's (2017) three levels of design, below, show how government officials work at various levels to ensure people can access the services they need to accomplish their goals, from the touchpoints people interact with, to the services that enable those touchpoints to exist, to the policies that facilitate the services.
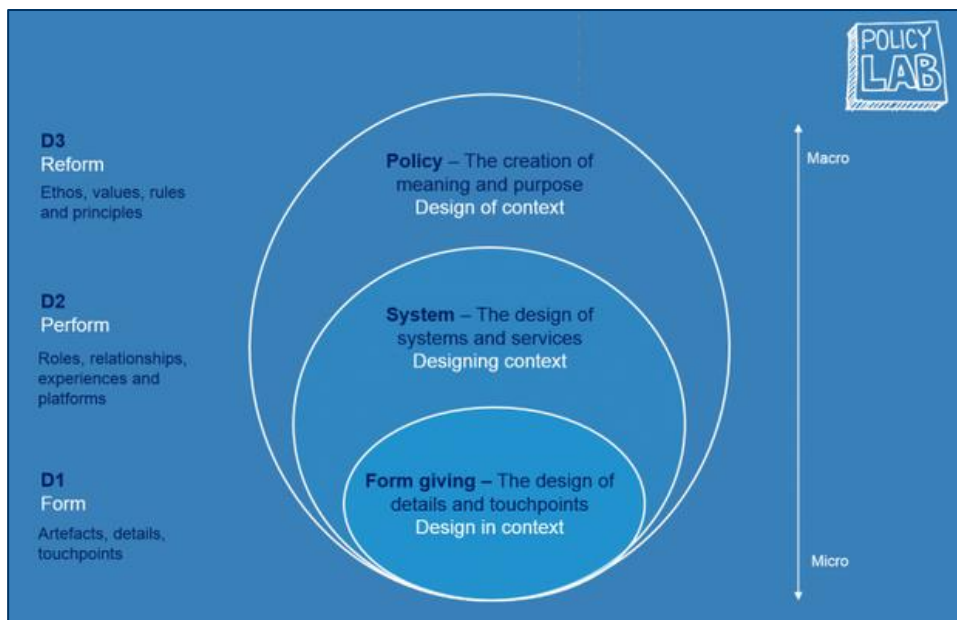
Rebolledo (2016, 42) demonstrates the increasing levels of complexity of different types of design, arguing that applying design methods at increasing levels of complexity and integration can have more wide-ranging impact in global society, as shown below.
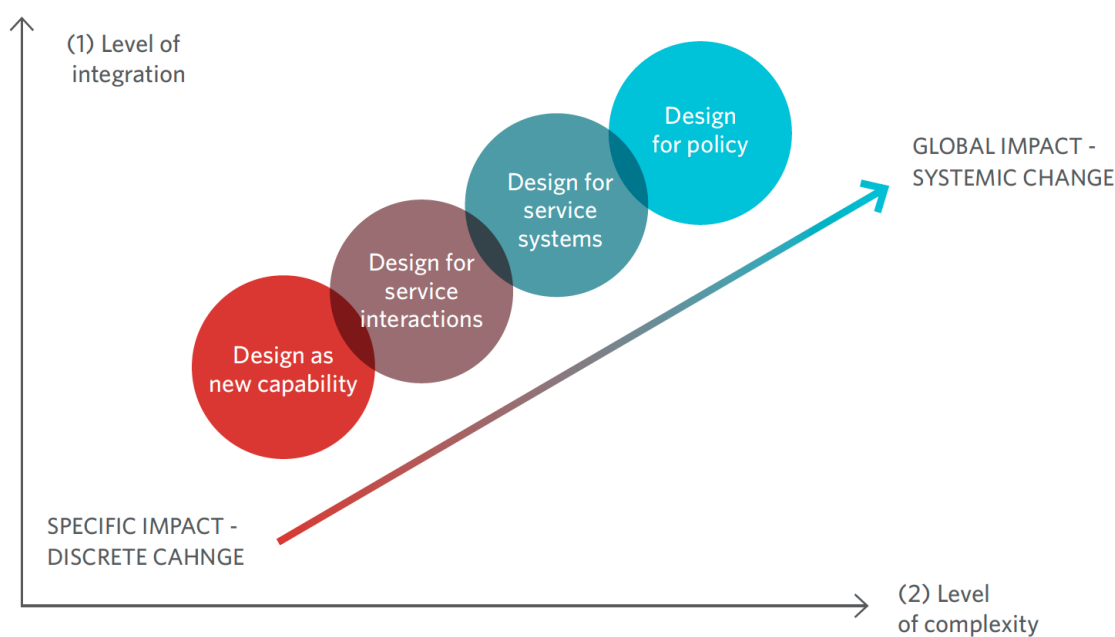
Appendix 4: Interview guides

<u>Interviewees:</u> Jack Collier and Alice Carter, Ministry of Justice UCPD team

<u>Timing:</u> 25 January 2018, 9-10am (1 hour)

<u>Location:</u> Bermondsey Yard, Bermondsey Street, London

<u>Research goal:</u> Understand the UCPD team's process of applying user-centred design to policy-making

<u>Context:</u> Jeff will be starting a new job with the User-Centred Policy Design team in February 2018. Jack is head of the team — he started the team in 2016. Alice is a product manager on the team.

<u>Introductions – Jeff, Jack and Alice (10 mins)</u>

1. Introduce myself – explain the work I've done the past 7 years in international development

2. What are your roles in the UCPD team and backgrounds?

<u>General - The team's purpose and history (15 min)</u>

3. What is the UCPD team trying to achieve?

4. How did the UCPD team get started and what have its main achievements been?

<u>Specifics – Current and future plans (35 min)</u>

5. Who's on the team now? How is the team structured?

6. What are the main projects those teams are working on now?

7. How have you found applying user-centred design to policymaking different from applying it to the design and delivery of services?

8. How do you expect the team's work will change in the future?

9. What are the team's biggest challenges (now or in the future)?

Interviewee: Vasant Chari, Cabinet Office Policy Lab

Timing: 16 May 2018, 4:30-5:30pm (1 hour)

Location: Policy Lab, 1 Horse Guards Road, London

Research goal: Understand Policy Lab's work and experiences applying user-centred design to policymaking across the UK government

Context: Jeff and Vasant have met a few times as the UCPD team at the Ministry of Justice works on similar issues to Vasant's Policy Lab team in the Cabinet Office. Vasant has expertise both as a policymaker (at the Home Office) and more recently running teams applying user-centred design to policymaking (at the Cabinet Office).

Introductions (10 mins)

1. Explain purpose of the interview

2. What is your background in policymaking and in user-centred design?

General questions about applying user-centred design to policymaking (35 mins)

1. What are the main needs of a policymaker that user-centred design can fulfil?

2. How do policymakers currently fulfil those needs (if they do at all)?

3. How have you found applying user-centred design to policymaking different from applying it to the design and delivery of services?

4. What are the biggest challenges in applying user-centred design to policymaking?

5. (if time) What were your biggest surprises when you switched from policymaking to leading user-centred design teams working with policymakers?

Specific questions about Policy Lab's work (15 mis)

1. What's Policy Lab working on now?

2. How do you expect Policy Lab's work will change in the future?

3. What do you do differently now as a result of what you've learned since you started working at Policy Lab?

Appendix 5: Conference notes slide decks

Service Design in Government conference

March 2018

International Design in Government conference

July 2018

1

2

3

4

5

Appendix 6: International Design in Government workshop agenda (July 18, 2018)

Summary

The Ministry of Justice has one of the most mature internal policy design teams in UK government. We've found that the only way to embed design thinking into policy from the outset is to create an awesome team capable of mastering design, policy and the specific context of an organisation. In this interactive session we'll cover:

- Why you need to be working with policy makers

- Why it needs to be on the inside of your organisation and the drawbacks

- How to set up a UCD policy practice in your department

- A maturity model for policy design

- Measuring value

- Our hopes for the future

Agenda

5mins: **INTRO TO MOJ**

- who are we

- what is UCPD

- what are we doing in this session

40mins: **HANDS ON PROBLEM**

- understand the kind of problems we face in the MOJ

- understand how we tackle those problems

- understand the challenges we come across

Ask participants (in groups) to look at the Witness Service and:

- refine the challenge

- define and prioritise hypotheses

- define activities to meet hypotheses

- acknowledge the risks to delivery

- present back

30mins - **DESIGN ON THE INSIDE FISHBOWL (Jeff [facilitate])**

Participants:

- Head of UCPD

- Content/product lead – GDS

- Service designer/special advisor - City of Oslo

- Australia's Digital Transformation Agency

Try and cover the following questions (not for the participants to see):

- Why you need to be working with policy makers

- Why it needs to be on the inside of your organisation and the drawbacks

- How to set up a UCD policy practice in your department

Break - 10min

30mins - **MEASURING VALUE AND MATURITY MODEL (Jeff facilitate)**

Participants:

- UCPD service designer

- Immigration team lead - U.S. Digital Service

- Designer - Nava PBC

- Director Future Gov Australia

- Consultant Communication Research at Ministry of General Affairs

Try and cover:

- Your experience of measuring value and maturity models for user centred design and thinking within government policy teams

BREAK - 10mins

30mins - **MATURITY MODEL EXERCISE**

- what would a UCD maturity model look like for gov?

- plot global govs on the maturity model

- decide how to socialise

- take a picture of everyone

10mins - **Our hopes for the future**

Appendix 7: User-Centred Design Training Programme survey results

The good stuff -- What were the best parts of the training session? Why did you like those parts?
Contextualised examples and case studies to ground the principles of UCD in reality
I really liked the café design exercise we did. I think it was a very practical way of bringing the content of the session down to earth.
really enjoyed the journey mapping exercise. Overall the course had a good balance across, listening, learning working as a team etc
Clear and interactive engaging session - learning by doing! Loved the slides, videos and actual case studies to embed the learning. XGOV group added value as felt like a multi disciplinary team tackling a challenge together. People were open and asked questions, so we learned from each other. Great conversations on tools and techniques. Developed knowledge on how to influence traditional policy colleagues on how they can use UCD in their day jobs
I enjoyed the mock application of some of the tools/approaches - this helped bring the theory to life
Case studies - starting to understand tools used and how

The other stuff -- What could we do better / more of / less of?
The pace was good and activities were well places and timed. The control of the post it notes could be shared with delegates rather than facilitator writing everything. Actions at the end through a stand-up would be great. Examples and role-plays of sprint reflection would also be useful.
It would be useful to have more "success stories" of UCD applied in concrete policy examples. It would have also been great to have the slides in advance of the session.
Could have had the slides as a handout at the time of the course. A few more end to end examples of where UCD has been successful in the MOJ
Need to ask people to arrive at MOJ reception 15 mins early to get them through reception registration and to room. Also I think we need to add an extra 30 mins to the session
I think having a more even balance between theory and practice would be beneficial. Either that, or shorten the session to a 90 minute overview seminar.
the preamble took quite a while - especially interested in the nuts and bolts

How likely are you to do something different in your work as a result of the training?
Definitely will
Probably will
Probably will
Definitely will
Probably will
Probably will

If you are likely to do something different in your work as a result of the training, what are you thinking you'll change/do differently?

I will review the user needs of Forward Leadership delegates to ensure we are delivering a service that meets their needs.

Start with the user in mind. Create a user story.

Understand our user base more, be more collaborative when solutionising

Going to feedback to my team face to face on what I've learned and play the Policy Design video. Have joined Policy Design slack group so will share information

Mapping the user journey and charting 'pain' points should be a widely applicable approach. Similarly, using user personas to support the scoping of policy/service design decisions should generate new perspectives and inspiration.

refer clients for service design support

One the UCPD team's goals is to embed service design methods and mindsets more throughout the MoJ. Do you have any advice on how we might do that?

Get your work on the intranet, share findings, hold lunch and learns, have a table in the atrium at regular intervals, raise your visibility through articles on main intranet/social media/twitter and work with us on Forward Leadership training of course. Run recommend a friend scheme...

Sharing things on the intranet, lunch and learn sessions, survey monkey to target teams that would benefit from training

Do roadshows across the MOJ hubs. Also hold hourly lunch and learns by Skype /video tools on the different UCD tools so that all the hubs can be linked up together. Work with the Head of the Policy Profession -Mark Sweeney and the Policy Profession Board members. You can even have Mark join in by video to feedback on what he is personally doing to promote UCD as Head of the Policy Profession in MOJ. I will email ███████████ Capability and Communications Lead of Learning and Development
& Policy Profession that this training is available and you (Jeff) will be in touch with her on how you can get it on the L & D timetable

(If you need any help with the sessions in Leeds in the MOJ hub , I have access to XGov colleagues through OTG Leeds Breakfast and there is lots of interest in #Policy Design outside London- Happy to help -███████████████

visibility - and join up with other teams working on related approaches

If this training was part of a longer programme of training, delivered over time, would you participate in more sessions?

Definitely

Probably

Probably

Definitely

Probably

Probably

Any thoughts on what a larger training programme would include?

I think it would be useful to review and discuss Forward Leadership first.

No

Individual sessions on the different tools used in depth. Shadowing opportunities, guest speakers doing a 20 min session on UCD policy that they are currently doing. In leeds Gov Jam & Service Jam we make prototypes etc so maybe hold a similar day for MOJ colleagues to learn by doing. Set everyone the same challenge and see how they tackle the problem

Appendix 8: Policymaker focus group discussion guide

<u>Session 1:</u>

Introductory discussion: What is the role of a policy professional?

Follow up: Should the policymaker be more a facilitator or subject matter expert?

<u>Session 2:</u>

Introductory discussion: Feedback on the UCPD slide pack

- Show UCPD slide pack

- Give participants time to look through the deck and ask for their feedback

  - General feedback

  - Slide-specific feedback

Follow up: UCD language

- Ask participants for their opinions of the following terms:

  - Open Policy Making

  - User Centred Design

  - Service Design

  - Digital

Appendix 9: Policymaker survey questionnaire and aggregated results

Survey Questionnaire

Q1	Which directorate are you in?
Q2	Do you agree with this definition of Open Policy-Making? "Open policy making is about developing and delivering policy in a fast-paced and increasingly net-worked and digital world through:- using collaborative approaches in the policy making process, so that policy is informed by a broad range of input and exper-tise and meets user needs- applying new analytical techniques, insights and digi-tal tools so that policy is data driven and evidence based- testing and iteratively improving policy to meet complex, changing user needs and making sure it can be successfully implemented"
Q3	In your current role how often do you engage or work with the following groups?
Q4	In genereal when you engage with these groups what is the result?
Q5	In what other ways do you practice open policy-making?
Q6	In your current role would you like to make more use of open policy approaches?
Q7	If you would, what support do you need to be able to do so? For exa,ple: support from senior leaders, accessing expertise within the Department?
Q8	Do you plan to work with any of the following groups in the future?

Aggregated Survey Results

Q1	Which directorate are you in?			
	Judicial and Legal Services Policy		6.45%	6
	International and Rights Directorate		19.35%	18
	Access to Justice Policy		17.20%	16
	Family and Criminal Justice Policy		24.73%	23
	Youth Justice and Offender Policy		16.13%	15
	Prison Reform Policy		16.13%	15
	Total			93

Q2	Do you agree with this definition of Open Policy-Making? "Open policy making is about developing and delivering policy in a fast-paced and increasingly networked and digital world through:- using collaborative approaches in the policy making process, so that policy is informed by a broad range of input and expertise and meets user needs- applying new analytical techniques, insights and digital tools so that policy is data driven and evidence based- testing and iteratively improving policy to meet complex, changing user needs and making sure it can be successfully implemented"		
	Yes	88.17%	82
	No	11.83%	11
	Total		93

Q3	In your current role how often do you engage or work with the following groups?														
		Never		Between once a year and once in six months		Between once in six months and once a month		Between once a month and once a week		Every week		More than once a week		Every day or nearly every day		Totals
	External Stakeholders e.g. charities, lobby groups	8.60%	8	21.51%	20	29.03%	27	13.98%	13	11.83%	11	8.60%	8	6.45%	6	93
	Operational Partners e.g. ALBs, HMCTS, HMPPS	6.45%	6	4.30%	4	7.53%	7	18.28%	17	21.51%	20	16.13%	15	25.81%	24	93
	Frontline staff or services e.g. judges, ushers, OMs	17.20%	16	17.20%	16	25.81%	24	25.81%	24	5.38%	5	4.30%	4	4.30%	4	93
	Academics with an interest in your policy area	33.33%	31	26.88%	25	29.03%	27	6.45%	6	4.30%	4	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	93
	Users of your police area / service	21.74%	20	26.09%	25	25.00%	23	13.04%	12	4.35%	4	5.43%	5	4.35%	4	92
	User-centred policy deisgn team	61.80%	55	17.98%	16	10.11%	9	7.87%	7	0.00%	0	2.25%	2	0.00%	0	89
	MoJ Digital	43.48%	40	29.35%	27	15.22%	14	7.61%	7	2.17%	2	1.09%	1	1.09%	1	92
	MoJ Analysts	10.00%	9	11.11%	10	18.89%	17	21.11%	19	18.89%	17	8.89%	8	11.11%	10	90
	Data-driven department team	71.43%	65	17.58%	16	1.10%	1	6.59%	6	1.10%	1	2.20%	2	0.00%	0	91

Q4	In genereal when you engage with these groups what is the result?	
	See tab	93 responses

Q5	In what other ways do you practice open policy-making?		
	Evidence gathering	69	
	Co-deisgning of policy	34	
	Internal Challenge Sessions	32	
	User Research	30	
	Testing / Trialing	28	
	User Journeys	26	
	Monitoring Social Media	22	
	Scenario Testing	21	
	Publishing Evidence	18	
	User Personas	9	
	Other	8	See tab
	Data Science	6	
	None	5	
	Total	92	

Q6	In your current role would you like to make more use of open policy approaches?	
	Yes	84
	No	9
	Total	93

Q7	If you would, what support do you need to be able to do so? For exa,ple: support from senior leaders, accessing expertise within the Department?
See tab	82 responses

Q8	Do you plan to work with any of the following groups in the future?		
	External stakeholders e.g. charities, lobby groups	81.72%	76
	Operational partners, e.g. ALBs, HMCTS, HMPPS	81.27%	76
	Frontline staff or services e.g. judges, ushers, OMs	63.44%	59
	Academics with an interest in your policy area	59.14%	55
	Users of your policy area/service	63.44%	59
	Data-driven department team	27.73%	23
	MoJ Analysts	81.72%	76
	MoJ Digital	40.86%	38
	User-centred policy design team	29.03%	27
	No	3.23%	3
	Total responses		93

Appendix 10: International Design in Government conference workshop: presentation and agenda (June 26, 2019)

What do policymakers do all day?
—

Policy professionals see themselves as...

- Expert
- Problem Solver
- Analyser
- Facilitator
- Advisor
- Broker

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What do policymakers do all day?
—

Policy professionals' contacts and 'bosses' at work are

- Ministers
- Directors

...and they care about...

- Media — Public
- Parliament — Public
- Party — Public
- Treasury
- The Permanent Secretary

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What do policymakers do all day?
—

They spend a large amount of time finding out how to make things work.

→ Sectoral organisations
→ Visits
→ Forums
→ Meetings with 'operational' colleagues
→ Consultations

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Policymakers want to reduce risk
—

	Idea generation	Internal appraisal	Expert engagement	Public consultation	Pilot
Will the solution meet people's needs?	•••	•••	•••	+	+
Is the solution technically feasible?	•••	+	+	+	+
Is the solution politically acceptable?	+	+	+		

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Adaptive policymaking
—

Policy development → Service / Service / Service → Policy review

Policy development → Policy review / Service / Service / Service → Research & testing (x4)

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How do policymakers engage the public?
—

1. **Transparency**
   → Parliament is a proxy for the public

2. **Openness**
   → Correspondence and MPs' constituency work
   → Consultations
   → Meetings
   → (Impact Assessments)

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What policymakers think about design and openness
—

"Open Policy Making"

→ Openness was perceived as positive - loud and proud, not secretive

"User-Centred Design"

→ Ministers' ideas come first, users come second (if anywhere)
→ It's impossible to please everyone
→ Users don't always know what's in their best interests or what their needs are.

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The Old-School Policymaker
—

Joe has been in the civil service 26 years, and has been working on this policy area for the last eight. He thinks that consultations are the best way to find out what the public thinks about ideas.

→ "Everyone's biased toward themselves, so their contributions are unreliable."
→ "Everyone already knows this group is against our policy so what's the point?"
→ "It has to be cost neutral, so their ideas are unlikely to be accepted."
→ "I'll be yelled at for 90 minutes… great."
→ "It's unfair — you just hear whoever's loudest."
→ "It's a dupe — you only ever meet the best-behaved prisoner on the wing."

* These are not real quotes, but they represent real sentiments we've heard from policymakers over the years.

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Slide 17 — The New-Age Policymaker

Sam has worked in three policy areas over four years. She goes out to meet stakeholders whenever she can, loves to "deep dive" into issues, and sketches simple journey maps to understand people's needs.

→ "This is so relevant."
→ "These visits are so helpful… if we could just do them a bit more..."
→ "This is going to make the advice I give to my Minister so much more accurate and useful."
→ "I learn so much from this."
→ "It's so helpful to understand how what we do fits into what people really want."
→ "This is a great antidote to Whitehall groupthink."

* These are not real quotes, but they represent real sentiments we've heard from policymakers over the years.

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Slide 18 — What we're doing to engage policymakers

→ User-Centred Design issue explorations / discoveries / deep dives

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Slide 19 — What we're doing to engage policymakers

→ Research into what policy makers think

& Carolina Pizatto

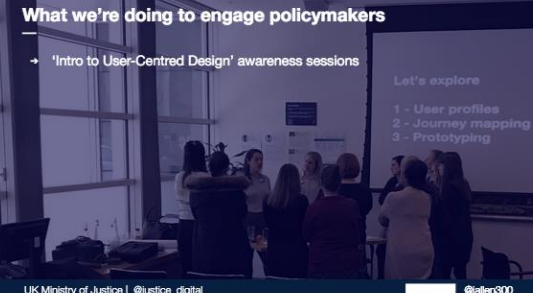UK Ministry of Justice | @justice_digital   @jallen300

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Slide 20 — What we're doing to engage policymakers

→ 'Intro to User-Centred Design' awareness sessions

Let's explore
1 - User profiles
2 - Journey mapping
3 - Prototyping

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Slide 21 — What we're doing to engage policymakers

→ ½-day User-Centred Design 'trainings'

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Slide 22 — What we're doing to engage policy makers

→ Provocative poster campaign

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Slide 23

What do you think about all this?

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Slide 24

Group discussion [30 mins]

1. If you got a number earlier, please go to that table number
2. If you didn't, please choose any table (other than the one you're at now)
3. Discuss the questions at your table
4. Document your group's thoughts on the Idea Canvas
   → Scribe!

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Slide 25

1. What do you think about what you've heard so far?
→ Do you agree?
→ Have you had different experiences?
→ How does this work in your organisation?

2. Look at the two personas
→ What would you do to encourage the old-school policymakers to be interested in this way of working?
→ How would you support the new-age policymakers to advocate for this way of working, and get senior buy-in?

3. What would you do to convince policymakers that citizen engagement is a worthwhile use of their time?

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Slide 26

— What should we do about it?

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Slide 27

Stay in touch:

→ Jeffrey.Allen@digital.justice.gov.uk
→ bit.ly/policy-design

Also… we're hiring! http://bit.ly/moj-jobs

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