Charitable Organisations and Ambidexterity: Implications for Charity Sector Leaders

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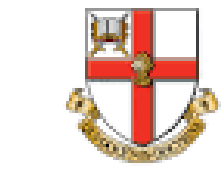

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The material being presented for examination is my own work and has not been submitted for an award of this or another HEI except in minor particulars which are explicitly noted in the body of the thesis.

Where research pertaining to the thesis was undertaken collaboratively, the nature and extent of my individual contribution has been made explicit.

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Abstract:

Charitable Organisations and Ambidexterity
Implications for Charity Sector Leaders

The survival and sustainability of charities, also sometimes referred to as not-for-profit organisations (NPOs) has been a long-term challenge for the sector because of changeable socio-economic events, which have taken place throughout the last century and beyond. Charities and charity leaders demonstrate significant capability in managing the competing demands of short-term and long-term survival in accordance with their social mission. Despite this, there is limited scholarly literature, which considers how this is achieved.

This research seeks to address this by examining the organisational concept 'organisational ambidexterity' in the context of private charitable organisations. In doing so it offers new contribution to the organisational literature on charity and organisational ambidexterity, as well as new knowledge to charity sector leaders through determining key components of organisational ambidextrous design in the delivery of social mission.

The research was conducted between 2021 and 2022 using mono method research in the form of 14 semi-structured interviews with executive members (Chief Executives and Directors) of UK based charities in the disability, health, or social care arena. Analysis took place through a reflexive thematic analysis process, with findings culminating in eight key components for the application of organisational ambidexterity in charity.

It is believed that this research represents the first scholarly research conducted into organisational ambidexterity applied to private charities in the UK. Building on previous knowledge, it finds clear evidence of organisational ambidexterity represented in multi-dimensional structural models, culture, systems, and strategy. It is limited by its size and unique context and therefore establishes a basis for further studies in this field to evolve.

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction and background:

The philanthropic tradition, known today as 'Charity' dates to the 1600s in Great Britain and was grounded within the religious institutions of its day. Then, as now, charitable acts and 'giving' were undertaken to provide welfare support to those in greatest need, in place of, or to supplement the State. Historically, charity was inextricably linked to State institutions such as the Church, schools, and governmental policy movements. This contrasts with today, where an independent charitable sector is a fundamental and distinct part of civil society. However, the essential value and identity predominantly remains the same; and that is to deliver on the public purposes identified within their mission statements, whilst offering "moral authority infused with nonprofit values and purposes" (Robichau & Wang, 2018, p. 151).

The survival and sustainability of charities has been a long-term challenge for the sector because of changeable socio-economic events, which have taken place throughout the last century and beyond (Clifford, 2017). Currently, as the world emerges out of one of the greatest pandemics to threaten human life in recent decades, the scale of the challenges faced by charities in the provision of social welfare have magnified these recent trends. Paradoxically, it's at those very times when social need is at its greatest that the stability and continuity of charities are most at risk (Clifford, 2017). When periods of socio-economic disruption and government induced austerity exist, social need increases and with that, the need for voluntary aid and support. Conversely, funding from the public purse, the government, trusts, and donors reduces, creating a vicious circle of increasing social demand versus decreasing voluntary service capacity (Hopkins & Shaw, 2020). This creates significant pressures on charities to manage the competing demands of delivering on social mission whilst adjusting internal resources, systems, and cultures (Bryson et al., 2008; Horvath et al., 2018; Miller, 2018; Taylor et al., 2019; Robichau & Wang, 2008), to meet the external and developing environments.

In this context, the location of a strategic mission within charitable organisations acts as an anchor in the delivery of that organisation towards its beneficiary group and towards serving their needs. An organisation's statement of mission aims to describe its fundamental and distinctive purpose. In the case of charitable organisations, it most often identifies a beneficiary group and the unique value of the purpose towards serving their needs. Taking the charitable mission forward, a sound strategy will determine the social impact that the organisation intends to produce, the methods or actions it will take to produce it and how it will sustain the impact into the future. As noted by Liao and Huang (2015), it will emphasise the "unique value-driven dimension of their program" and "on ways for society to be mobilized to contribute to social purposes rather on financial objectives such as selling products and services" (p. 22).

Notwithstanding this, missions and ensuing strategic intent towards financial sustainability, whilst adhering to the legal and moral requirements set upon charities to offer charitable public benefit (Clifford, 2017), can risk visionary idealism, or them becoming limited by their own "mission stickiness" (Moore, 2000, p.192). Indeed, the tension between the realities of mission and money has been identified by a number of writers in recent years (Henderson & Lambert, 2018; Liao & Huang, 2015; Maier et al., 2016; Young & Kim, 2015). Subject to the age of the charity/NPO and the conditions under which it has lived, it is likely to have proactively or reactively adapted, to survive in the present or to sustain in the future. This is marked by a recent body of research, which identifies 'business like' methods and models such as marketisation, commercialisation, dynamization (Schreyögg & Kliesch-Eberl, 2007), and strategic management being employed by charities as mechanisms to increase their chances of survival.

Traditionally, charities have endeavoured to execute their philanthropic cause, often working within unpredictable and volatile external funding markets to achieve sustainability over time. Inevitably, this has led to competing demands between balancing social mission and money in charity survival (Henderson & Lambert, 2018), and the "need to recognise competitive realities and the competencies required for success" (Bennett, 2016, p.333). Indeed, charities are faced with both challenges to achieve organisational sustainability and the opportunity to innovate to achieve social mission. Henderson et al. (2018), in their analysis of the marketisation of social care,

identified that reinvention by social organisations towards enterprising methods enabled them to exploit their markets in a similar way to commercial businesses. The main difference for social organisations is that they trade explicitly for social purpose. This is not without risk however as the primary mission to deliver quality social value can be compromised by the challenge of gaining resource, which can in turn drive mission drift or numerical, or qualitative reduction in service value. As noted by Henderson et al. (2018), "this duality can lead to restrictions in the pursuit of profit through operational compromises through contrasting both potential opportunities and profit distribution within the organisation and through its focus on the social objectives it is pursuing" (p. 6). Therefore, charities have a complex challenge to deliver a clear organisational strategy that plans to manage the demands on delivery on present social purpose and predict the innovation required to sustain that or its future chosen mission.

1.2 The scholarly context and gap:

Organisational theory referring to the challenge of balancing the contending requirements of efficiency and flexibility dates to the 1960's (Thompson, 1967), and proposes that different types of organisations are associated with different strategies and environmental conditions (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). The term 'organisational ambidexterity' was coined by Duncan in 1976, as a means of framing the simultaneous requirement to achieve efficiency in the present and innovation in the future. March (1991) developed the concept further introducing the twin requirements of exploitation comprising "refinement, choice, production, efficiency, selection, implementation, execution" and exploration comprising of "search, variation, risk taking, experimentation, play, flexibility, discovery, innovation" (p. 17). The duality of these requirements heavily resonates with the challenges faced within the charity sector and yet there appears to be very little published consideration of social mission and strategy through this lens (Sinha, 2015). As noted, there have been a number of studies into the application of 'business-like' models and practices to the charity sector, with noteworthy claims in the areas of explorative practices such as flexibility translated as adaptability (Laurett & Ferreira, 2018; McDonald, 2007; Peric et al., 2020) and innovation (Cipriani et al., 2020; McDonald, 2007; Renjini, 2018; Svensson

et al., 2020). None of these studies however have gone so far as to adopt or apply a full scholarly concept such as organisational ambidexterity to charity sector organisations.

Indeed, if we were to take March's (1991) descriptors and reframe exploitation in the context of the charity sector as 'purposeful, mission-led, driven, cost-effective, resourceful, performance managed, quality service delivery' and reframe exploration as 'creative, explorative, diverse, agile, solution focused, testing, evaluative and celebratory,' the parallels exist. Furthermore, the challenges for charities in determining appropriate strategies and structures to achieve ambidexterity whether it is sequential, simultaneous, or structural (March, 1991) remains the same as for commercial businesses. As stated by Turner et al., (2013), "organisations within all sectors and markets face escalating pressure to service their customers better by innovating in the delivery of goods and services, yet the competitive environment also requires increasing operational efficiency" (p. 317). Notwithstanding this, the void in research to date leads to a question as to how the pressures for organisations delivering social mission are different? How do they influence their structural approach? How do they determine their mechanisms for managing the demands and how does this influence their future viability? Turner et al. (2013), have identified the lack of generalisable theory as to how organisational ambidexterity can be understood as a deliberate strategy within complex organisations, and that a broader approach is needed towards understanding the benefits. Similarly, writers in the field of charity strategy have drawn conclusions as to the requirement for more research in general towards public organisational ambidexterity (Bryson et al., 2008) drawing on the unique value of charity and the innovative methods they have developed (Peng, 2019).

Hence, there is an opportunity to develop empirical knowledge in this field so that the practices and effects of charities and mission led organisations can be firmly located in new literature, however, how does this apply in practice?

1.3 The location of the Professional Doctorate – the researcher's perspective:

This section temporarily departs from third person writing to provide an autobiographical account of the practice problem to inform the introduction to this research.

Having qualified in social work some 19 years ago, I have spent my entire working career within the public sector, most notably medium sized national charities within the UK. Within this time, I have progressed from front line practitioner to director level, where I have been responsible for strategic design and development, and accountable for operational performance and sustainability. It is from within this context that I have come to learn first-hand of the unique challenges and requirements needed to run an effective, successful, and long-term charity business. It is within this time, that I have been led by and led teams of highly committed individuals dedicated to social mission and outcomes, driven by principles of altruistic concern for human well-being. My experience of working in the charity sector has brought me to work with some of the most incredibly motivated people and at the same time taught me the methods by which success and survival can take place within one of the most changeable, dynamic, and competitive arenas in business development. I use the term businesses with specific intent because of my belief that charities act as social businesses, delivering social outcomes as opposed to profit. Significantly, charities are challenged by the same socio-economic environmental conditions, which affect income and the same requirements for innovation to generate future sustainability as profit making companies. It is my belief that successful charities are just as skilled as commercial businesses in managing complex conditions and environments, which facilitates their success. And yet there has never been a golden strategic rule book for me as a charity sector leader. I have never truly understood or had defined the prerequisites specifically for charity success however I have contributed towards creating them, I have lived them, and I have seen other charities live them too.

Today, as a director within a charity, which was established to deliver a social mission to war blinded veterans in 1915, I hold a unique position, which brings direct

experience of the professional context cited above. Blind Veterans UK has evolved over the last century, diversifying its mission to achieve its social purpose and sustainability. It also occupies a distinctive position in that it has forecasted the demise of its beneficiary group; blind veterans by 2050. Hence, the requirement for exploitation in the short-term to see out its commitment to its current beneficiaries as well as needing to explore to determine its future purpose is critical right now. This position in time is not unique to Blind Veterans UK. There are many military charities in the same position whose social mission is predicated on supporting ex-military personnel, and there are many charities in the disability sector where the requirement for support is diminishing due to the regulation of services or scientific advancements in health treatment and cures. Hence, this research is relevant to the broader charitable sector as we all progress through changing socio-economic and technologically advancing contexts, which will create new challenges to survival.

1.4 Research purpose, aim, objectives and question:

The overarching purpose of the research was to address the gap in knowledge; organisational ambidexterity applied in the context of private charitable organisations, and offer a new contribution to the organisational literature, which provides awareness and new knowledge to charity sector leaders.

The research aim was to determine key components of organisational ambidextrous design in the delivery of social mission.

The objective of the research was to produce new knowledge in the form of key components, which determined how social mission is achieved within charitable organisations through the lens of organisational ambidexterity. In order to achieve that and based on the assessed parallels between the two areas of organisational ambidexterity concept and charity context, a subset of objective criteria was identified to satisfy the overall research objective in the areas of:

1. Vision, mission, and focus, in the achievement of ambidextrous working in charity

2. Capability towards managing the dichotomies of the exploitative to the explorative
3. Charity architecture towards delivering ambidextrous outcomes

Each of the subset of objective criteria are considered in turn within the analysis and findings chapters, four to six.

The research question was: what are the key components of organisational ambidexterity that are evident in charitable organisations, and what can be learnt from them?

1.5 Methodology:

The research design adopted is qualitative mono-method inclusive of convenience and snowball sampling methods, and semi structured interviews using a priori qualitative thematic analysis technique (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The research methodology is aligned with the common perspectives in the chosen field of study, which follow a constructionist-interpretivist approach. Not only is this consistent with the work of previous academics in this area of research, but it was chosen to enable improved application of the research through the lens of organisational ambidexterity and analyse and interpret comparatively on this basis. Consistent with this, the orientation of the methodology has been inductive, and the research philosophy is primarily that of descriptive research with exploration of the research theme to fulfil the gap in the research area. The researcher's axiological position is rooted in a universalist ethical standpoint, with measures in place within the research process to uphold ethical principles and legal requirements for producing research information. Values and skills in reflexivity are determined as enablers in upholding the integrity of the research practice throughout. Finally, the research ontology is that of relativist (constructionist) in considering the interconnected nature of all constructed forms of phenomenon and the underlying epistemology is that of interpretivism.

1.6 The structure of the thesis:

The thesis is comprised of seven chapters in total. Further to this introductory chapter, Chapter 2, is dedicated to a review of the literature and takes into consideration individual and combined perspectives on the topics of organisational ambidexterity and charity/social mission. Chapter 3 demonstrates the methodological approach and considerations taken within the research design. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 present and discuss the thematic and sub thematic framework developed through the analysis and interpretation of the semi structured interviews. The thesis concludes in Chapter 7, by outlining the main findings, the new knowledge these findings offer within the academic literature, implications for practice, research limitations and further opportunities, and a final autobiographical summary of reflection from the researcher. All Chapters open with an introduction and close with a summary.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction:

This chapter will review the organisational ambidexterity concept, which is related to many other areas of research. This research is very much concerned with its specific application to charitable organisations and those delivering social mission.

Scholarly research and perspectives have been reviewed in the domains of organisational ambidexterity, organisational leadership, and organisational strategy; alongside non-profit and voluntary sector and charity connected to social mission. Perspectives on organisational ambidexterity and perspectives on charity and social mission are each considered contextually. This is followed by a detailed analysis of articles identified through several literature reviews into the two subject areas combined. This chapter concludes with an identification of the gaps, which determine the foundation of the proposed research *'Charitable Organisations and Ambidexterity: Implications for Charity Sector Leaders.'*

Prior to undertaking a systematic literature review and for the purpose of the research proposal, 25 articles had been identified through a narrative review method, relevant to the general topic of organisational ambidexterity, one part of the chosen research theme. These were identified through a process of open access online research using the term 'organisational ambidexterity' as well as determining backward and forward linkages from the reference lists of selected peer reviewed articles. Narrative analysis was used as a means of determining what was already known in the area of research, thus informing the basis of general knowledge and generating further questions about the research topic (Bryman & Bell, 2015). All articles reviewed considered organisational ambidexterity in the context of private, for-profit business with two exceptions, which considered ambidexterity in the public sector (Bryson et al., 2008; Palm & Lilja, 2017). None of the articles reviewed on organisational ambidexterity were inclusive of the sector of charity. This indicated a narrow field of applicability in relation to other forms of organisational sector justifying the requirement for further

thorough and extensive means of literature review into the chosen combined subject areas.

In addition to the selection of articles in the field of organisational ambidexterity, 28 articles were found, relevant to the general topic of charity and social mission, the second research theme. These were also identified through a process of online research using the terms ‘charity’ ‘NPO’ ‘VCFS’ ‘third sector’ and ‘social mission’ as well as determining backward and forward linkages from the reference lists of selected peer reviewed articles. A process of narrative analysis was also used, which when combined with the initial narrative analysis on the topic of organisational ambidexterity enabled a holistic understanding of the knowledge in each area and the correlations that existed between them. For example, the mainstream literature on organisational ambidexterity was assessed for references to charity or not for profit sectors and practices, as well as further research recommendations supporting its exploration. Likewise, the mainstream literature on charitable organisational strategy and survival was assessed for concepts and methods applicable to the business world.

In the context of organisational theory, none of the articles recognised organisational ambidexterity, which again determined the need for a more thorough application of systematic review methodology into the chosen subject area. Therefore, and to apply the theme of organisational ambidexterity to the charity sector, the specific area of research interest and intent, two advanced systematic literature searches were conducted. The following section outlines the systematic review methodology and is followed by the results and implications for this research.

2.2 Literature review methodology:

The predetermining factor in selecting a systematic review methodology was that research found in the chosen fields via other narrative research methods was exceptionally limited. Therefore, the requirement for an approach to reviewing the literature that enabled a full and extensive examination was clear.

In addition, as noted by Tranfield et al. (2003), there is particular importance in having a non-biased, transparent, and replicable systematic review methodology in the policy and practice arena. The authors suggest that "by enhancing the legitimacy and authority of the resultant evidence, systematic reviews could provide practitioners and policy-makers with a reliable basis to formulate decisions and take action" (p. 208). This is a significant point, given the intent of this research to offer new, reliable, and evidence-based knowledge in the professional arena of charity service provision.

To undertake this review, secondary data was sourced from two specific databases: Firstly, EBSCO host research platform, which hosts over 1.4 million high-quality articles licensed from reputable publishers to meet the specific needs of researchers. Secondly, the University of Chester University library database, 'Summon', a search engine that hosts the largest unified index of scholarly materials including 90 content types, 9,000 publishers, and100,000 journals and periodicals (Proquest, 2021).

Following the definition of the research topic, key search terms were identified to enable a thorough exploration of existing academic literature. The first of these terms was 'organisational ambidexterity.' The American spelling of 'organizational' was also incorporated for completeness in the event of differentiated findings. The second search term was 'charity' which also translated into 5 further corresponding search terms; 'NPO,' 'VCFS,' third sector,' 'not for profit' and 'social mission.'

The reviews were undertaken through a combined 'all field' search of the key terms as above. Within the EBSCO host research platform, refined search criteria were inclusive of 'article,' 'full text,' 'scholarly peer reviewed' and (given that the platform offered no exclusion criteria) applied to all publication types. A publication date spanning ten years from 19th March, 2011 to the 19th March, 2021 was selected. Within 'Summon', refined search criteria were inclusive of articles that were 'full text online,' 'scholarly and peer-reviewed,' 'open access,' and written in English. The content type was further refined to 'journal article' and 'publication.' 'Newspaper article,' 'book review,' and 'dissertation/thesis' were deselected from the search criteria to ensure academic quality and validity. A publication date spanning ten years was also selected from 19th March, 2011 to the 19th March, 2021. Within both search

databases, Boolean filtering search options AND, OR, NOT or AND NOT were used to refine and compare specific values.

2.2.1 Results:

Combined, the databases returned findings of 2,790 documents, which were reviewed title by title. Of the 2,790 documents, 29 abstracts were read and 5 were selected as relevant to the chosen field of study. None of the 5 articles, although relevant related directly to private charity or private NPO. Three articles corresponded through the themes of publicly funded NPO or 'public sector' (Cannaerts et al., 2016, 2020; Peng, 2019) a similar form of organisation to private charity/NPO albeit government funded.

Due to the very low results in the chosen field, the search criteria were broadened to identify applicable research that was alternatively described. Therefore, the criteria of 'organisational leadership'/'organizational leadership' and 'organisational strategy/organizational strategy' was added as an alternative to organisational/organizational ambidexterity against the search terms of 'charity' and 'NPO.' This resulted in 4,663 findings, which were reviewed title by title. Of these, 88 abstracts were read and 19 were selected as relatable to the chosen field of study. Of the 19, none were found to be specific to the fields of organisational ambidexterity and charity, and none corresponded through the connected theme of 'public sector.'

In summary, from conducting extensive systematic reviews of the key search terms, as well as an extension of directly applicable search terms, three corresponding articles (Cannaerts et al., 2016, 2020; Peng, 2019) were identified to inform a review of the prior literature on the chosen subject. These combined with two previous articles (Bryson et al., 2008; Palm & Lilja, 2017) identified through a process of open access online research using the term 'organisational ambidexterity' as well as determining backward and forward linkages from the reference lists of selected peer reviewed articles resulted in 5 pieces of academic research relevant to the research topic.

It is these five articles that inform the basis of the literature review. In recognition however that the remaining articles identified within prior general literature reviews and from within the systematic reviews provide useful context to the subject matter in

question, these will be drawn up in the presentation of the context for organisational ambidexterity and charity to inform this literature review.

2.3 Organisational Ambidexterity in context:

The concept of organisational ambidexterity has received considerable and growing attention in the field of leadership and management over the last twenty years. With origins in organisation theory where the trade-off between efficiency and flexibility were originally debated (Thompson, 1967), the term ambidextrous organisation was originally introduced by Duncan (1976), as a way of describing the dual structures needed within organisations to manage activities with varying capacity and time requirements (Birkinshaw & Gupta, 2013). It was some 15 years later when March (1991), published his paper 'Exploration and Exploitation in Organisational Learning' that the focus and functionality of the dual structures became defined. He identified; "exploration includes things captured by terms such as search, variation, risk taking, experimentation, play, flexibility, discovery, innovation. Exploitation includes such things as refinement, choice, production, efficiency, selection, implementation, and execution" (p. 71). Furthermore, the requirement for balance in the dual functions and the complexity of doing so was highlighted as fundamental to enabling organisational survival in the short-term and sustainability in the long-term.

Primarily, researchers and writers have sought to understand the complex relationship between exploration and exploitation (Andriopoulos & Lewis, 2009; Judge & Blocker, 2008; Koryak et al., 2018; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008; Peng, 2019; Posch & Garaus, 2019; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008; Turner & Lee-Kelley, 2013), drawing on the paradoxes to explain risks in failing to maintain the right balance at the right time and the tensions and opportunities inherent in its ongoing management. In his recent and unique article on organisational ambidexterity in the public not-for-profit sector, Peng (2019) suggests that organisations may look to implement organisational ambidexterity for reconciliatory, mutually beneficial, and balanced solutions as a mechanism to resolve inherent differences in their design. At the same time, Peng (2019) highlights the potential for ambidextrous resolution to be the cause of organisational tension "because of the duality in terms of the resource allocation,

change rhythm, decision process, structural design, and management culture," (p. 253) all of which may differentiate the dual elements of the organisation.

Resulting from this debate, three key types of organisational ambidexterity have emerged to explain how ambidexterity can be designed structurally and contextually within an organisation. These will be offered in summary, prior to consideration of capability in their application, a theme which dominates the literature.

Firstly, sequential (temporal) ambidexterity where the functions of exploration and exploitation are managed separately and consecutively over time (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008, 2013; Peng, 2019; Sinha, 2015). This school of thought identifies the impact of changeable external market factors and advancements in technology as predicating the requirement for organisations to adapt accordingly. As noted by key scholars in this field, O'Reilly and Tushman (2008), this type of ambidexterity is "feasible" however may rely on slower paced predictable market factors and an organisation being able to choose its given response.

Secondly, structural (simultaneous) ambidexterity is based on the premise that exploitative functions and explorative functions occur concomitantly in separate organisational departments or units (Asif, 2017; Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008, 2013; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008). Significant to this type of ambidexterity and worthy of further investigation is the premise determined by O'Reilly and Tushman (2008), that each sub-unit works to a "common strategic intent, an overarching set of values and targeted linking mechanisms" (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008, p. 193) and in doing so use "different competencies, incentives, systems, processes and cultures – each internally aligned" (p. 193). The structural model shifted traditional thinking in relation to differentiations in ambidextrous functions towards one of multi-functional cohabitation and duality. Hence, mutually reinforcing, and interconnected departments working towards maintaining stability and progressing change.

Third to emerge as a form of organisational ambidexterity in academic discourse is contextual ambidexterity. This progresses the initial thinking from within sequential and structural forms based on organisational and strategic design to one of multi-level

integration (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; Sinha, 2015; Swart et al., 2019). Key to this approach is the identification of behavioural capability at the business unit level and the role of 'human capital' (March, 1991; Turner et al., 2013) in the effective execution of ambidextrous practice. In contrast to structural ambidexterity with separated units, the premise of contextual ambidexterity is that the joint requirement of exploitation and exploration is integrated in practice across multiple organisational units and levels.

As noted above, the principal emerging theme from the literature on the concept of organisational ambidexterity in all its forms, is the basis upon which, the required organisational capability to deliver effective ambidexterity can be determined. Organisational ambidexterity is not having specific organisational structures, designs, or activities but the capability to manage competing demands, which can be enabled by structures, designs and activities. 'Dynamic capability', a term coined by O'Reilly and Tushman (2008), is foundational to the development of this understanding. Associated with two critical management functions; the ability to sense change and the ability to respond to openings and threats "as a dynamic capability, ambidexterity embodies a complex set of routines including decentralisation, differentiation, targeted integration, and the ability of senior leadership to orchestrate the complex trade-offs that the simultaneous pursuit of exploration and exploitation requires" (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2011, p. 6). Here, the focus of attention for the ability to orchestrate an effective ambidextrous organisation is located firmly on the senior leadership team albeit the authors identify that research in relation to dynamic capability is at an early stage and requires much more attention.

Indeed, several researchers consider the role and impact of top management or senior leadership teams and makes various assertions. O'Reilly and Tushman (2013), note that "to be successful at ambidexterity, leaders must be able to orchestrate the allocation of resources between the routine and new business domains," (p. 18), supporting the interface between what is and what may be. Significantly, Asif (2017), identifies that to achieve this, leaders need to have capability in task and relations, or to put in another way, be transactional and transformational through the delivery of ambidextrous practice. Some authors (Swart et al., 2019), identify a hierarchical separation of long-term flexible problem solving (exploration), which happens at a senior management level and short-term task resolution (exploitation), which occurs

within operational departments. Through slightly different analysis, a number of authors, (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; He & Wong, 2004; Sinha, 2015) determine the awareness of senior managers towards organisational ambidexterity as important to creating the right context for ambidextrous working and of their own integration towards exploitative and explorative performance. Beckman (2006) also determines the diversity of the leadership team in influencing ambidextrous design with common experiences leading to high levels of exploitation and diverse experiences leading to greater explorative capability. This research builds on the above-mentioned research perspectives through further consideration of the role and impact of top management or senior leadership teams.

2.3.1 Findings and Frameworks in organisational ambidexterity:

As an evolving concept, the literature on organisational ambidexterity tells a story of discovery resulting from predominantly systematic reviews of literature over time (Asif, 2017; Benner & Tushman, 2003; Birkinshaw & Gupta, 2013; Bodwell & Chermack, 2010; Bryson et al., 2008; Judge & Blocker, 2008; March, 1991; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008, 2013; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008; Sinha, 2015; Turner et al., 2013;). Some of the earlier reviews (Benner & Tushman, 2003; Judge & Blocker, 2008; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008, 2013), traced the foundations of the concept focusing on the dual requirements of exploration and exploitation and the requirement for dynamic capabilities for performance achievement. Others, including more recent reviews (Asif, 2017; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008; Sinha, 2015), focus on the identification of antecedents to organisational ambidexterity through the literature. All reviews identified the need for further research in the field of organisational ambidexterity to further their initial conclusions. This includes the requirement to redefine organisational ambidexterity as a capability (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008, 2013); to consider the role of executive management (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008, 2013; Sinha, 2015) and the micro mechanisms beyond (Turner et al., 2013); to look at organisational ambidexterity in different organisational contexts (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008, 2013); the need for longitudinal research into organisational ambidexterity in practice (Asif, 2017), and important to this research, cross sector investigation beyond the domain of private sector business (Asif, 2017). This research responds to a

number of these recommendations including the capability that exists within the alternative organisational context of the charity.

Further to this, several key primary research studies have occurred in the last ten years (Cannaerts, 2020; Koryak et al., 2018; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2011; Peng, 2019; Posch & Gauraus, 2019; Swart et al., 2019; Turner & Lee-Kelley, 2013), all applying case study or semi-structured interview process against a framework of determinants for evidencing ambidextrous application. Findings have led to conclusions in the areas of required leadership capability (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2011; Swart et al., 2019); senior leadership innovation capability (Posch & Gauraus, 2019); leadership team composition (Koryak et al., 2018); interactions between resource allocation and process (Turner & Lee-Kelley, 2013); and specific to the area of focus within this research, tensions in the application of organisational ambidexterity within a not-for-profit context (Peng, 2019).

Key authors from the field of organisational ambidexterity literature (Asif, 2017; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008, 2011; Palm & Lilja, 2017) have developed frameworks for the measurement of organisational ambidexterity. From their research into fifteen commercial organisations confronted with the need for ambidextrous practice, O'Reilly and Tushman (2008, 2011), propose five conditions for leaders in ambidextrous organisations:

1. A compelling strategic intent that raises the significance of applying both exploitative and explorative means.
2. an articulation of a common vision and values, that support ambidextrous design and practice.
3. a senior team that explicitly owns the unit's strategy of exploration and exploitation.
4. separate but aligned architectures such as business models, structures, and cultures which operate at executive and front-line levels; and lastly,
5. the ability of the senior leadership to tolerate and resolve the tensions arising from separate alignments.

(O'Reilly & Tushman, 2011, p. 9)

Significantly, O'Reilly and Tushman (2008, 2011), found these conditions as enhancing the implementation of ambidextrous practices through the effective management of dynamic capabilities. The model produced is simple and compelling however the research sample was small. Recognising limited comparable research at that time, the authors also acknowledge the requirement for more research, which considers ambidexterity as it is applied in organisational practice.

In subsequent research, specifically appertaining to the public sector, Palm and Lilja (2017), identify nine enablers to organisational ambidexterity. Putting the service user first these are: understanding beneficiary needs, management that promote explorative practices, effective discussion, ambassadors as enablers, the allowance of mistakes in practice, funding, a systems view of how the organisation operates, the implementation of innovation, and rewards for exploitation/exploration success. Palm and Lilja (2017), recognise the limited research to date into organisation ambidexterity and public sector organisations and as such, offer a small contribution to the literature on organisational ambidexterity in a not-for-profit sector. Their work is reviewed in further depth below. Asif (2017), in exploring the antecedents of ambidexterity proposes two taxonomy frameworks. One, "based on infrastructural elements, including organisational structures, processes, and context, while the other is based on different organizational levels at which different antecedents exist" (p. 1489). Further to this, Posch and Garaus (2019), take the antecedent of strategic planning and consider its effect on organisational ambidexterity concluding the value of strategic planning in organisational ambidexterity when the leader's motivation towards explorative methods is very high.

2.3.2 Organisational Ambidexterity - the literature in summary:

As a concept, organisational ambidexterity was progressive and unique in its beginnings (March, 1991). Following a subsequent period of academic disinterest, it has experienced a recent resurgence in interest and in consequence, literature, as scholars work hard to find empirical evidence, which support its use and effect. Its basic theoretical underpinnings appear logical and applicable to the organisational context, which is why so many researchers have endeavoured to make sense of it and test its validity or the views upon its validity in recent times. Indeed, it is the attention

that it has received in different organisational contexts, over time and against alternative frameworks for its assessment that makes the subject as intriguing and complex to understand as it has now become.

Taking all the findings of the research reviewed, one of the main criticisms to result from the perspectives to date is that the interpretation of ambidexterity has been so broad that it has led to a number of reclassifications, which has compromised its integrity as a concept (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). Indeed, it is very hard to determine from the work to date, what antecedents of the approach look like (Asif, 2017) and a clear strategy for its application (Turner et al., 2013). As such, the body of work to date has been accused of being inconclusive at best and anecdotal at worst (He & Wong, 2004).

Most relevant to this area of research interest however is the fact that nearly all research to date has taken place within commercial businesses through the lens of strategic and managerial perspective and within the domains of private company profit and growth (Peng, 2019).

Notwithstanding this, as specific articles relevant to the area of investigation are reviewed, the following section considers perspectives on charity and mission, the context from which, my research is located.

2.4 Charity and Mission in context:

Whilst several hundred thousand open access, peer reviewed articles have been written on organisational strategy and the same for charity/NPO, only ten percent of these have been written about the two subjects combined (Proquest, 2021). From this, and significant to this research proposal, very little indeed can been found which attempts to consider the dynamics between charity social mission, survival, and sustainability through the lens of organisational ambidexterity (Bryson et al., 2008; Cannaerts et al., 2016; Cannaerts et al., 2019; Peng, 2019; Palm & Lilja, 2017).

Notwithstanding this, a limited body of works have emerged, which recognise that several competing demands exist for charities in dealing with the maintenance of

mission integrity; changes in external market forces (funding and public support); and meeting internal and external drivers for change. Before these works are considered, this review firsts examines the role and purpose of charity and the condition that is social mission.

Charities also sometimes termed ‘not for profit’ and ‘third sector’ are a group of organisations with a unique role in supporting the causes of greatest concern to civil society. They exist to fill the gaps between societal need and governmental provision brokering the relationship between individuals and the state, acting as advocates, service providers and social engagers in the resolution of socio-economic and political disadvantage (Kaltenbrunner & Reichel, 2018). As predominantly self-governed organisations, acting independently of the state and private industry, charities are dependent on donations and voluntary contributions to function and sustain. In more recent times, charities have co-existed as part of a mixed economy of social providers (the state, for profit business and charity) with a moral jurisdiction/motivation to take social responsibility in response to social problems (Robichau & Wang, 2018). Within this, charities often assume a critical role in times of crises to support some of the most disaffected and disadvantaged groups in society. Today, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations report that the UK has approximately 163,000 charities with an overall income of £56 billion per year and an annual expenditure towards their causes of £54.2 billion. Charities contributed £20 billion to the UK economy in 2020. (NVCO, 2021).

2.4.1 Social Mission:

For charities, it is their constituted social mission that acts both as an anchor and a driver in their pursuit of specific social deliverables. It anchors by providing clear value to its existence and effect on economic, environmental, and social problems; and it drives through providing clear moral purpose in the form of socially impactful objectives usually incorporated within short-term organisational strategies (Cipriani et al., 2020). Through the lens of ambidextrous design and practice, it is the very “articulation of a common vision and values” (O’Reilly & Tushman, 2011, p.9), to which a social mission equates in the charity sector.

Some authors (Horvath et al., 2018; Moore, 2000) have considered social mission as a motivator for strategic achievement, drawing parallels between social mission and financial profits as incentives of performance. Whilst pursuing social outcomes may be motivational to those who choose to work in the charity sector, a founded social mission exists to do so much more than motivate, through giving foundation, purpose, direction and intended outcomes (Berlan, 2017; Minkoff & Powell, 2017). This highlights the limitations of drawing oversimplistic parallels between the profit and not profit arena. Notwithstanding this, Horvath et al. (2018), identify two noteworthy points in relation to social mission. Firstly, they determine a requirement for existence beyond that of continued preservation for the purpose of being self-serving or financially sustainable, unlike profit making organisations. Hence, once the social need is fulfilled, the mission is accomplished, the charity has succeeded and may cease (Cannon & Kreutzer, 2018). The second point relates to the dynamic nature of social mission over time and how it may change to meet social need depending on socio-economic conditions forcing necessity and timeliness of demand (Horvath et al., 2018). Hence, charities may seek to diversify in mission to continue to meet relevant social demand over time. Berlan (2017) offers a proposition on the role of social mission within charity, determining two new concepts in the scholarly interpretation of social mission: that of personal and dominant mission. Berlan (2017) explains that "personal mission conceptions are the interpretations that individuals within a nonprofit hold of the mission, while the dominant mission conception is the collective interpretation guiding a nonprofit during a specific time" (p. 413). The latter concept is linked to the assertion that charities may seek to vary or reinterpret their mission within emerging or renewed environments and build this into strategic planning to maintain both mission integrity and continued legitimacy. Cannon and Kreutzer (2018), offer an in-depth analysis into organisational adaptation in response to mission success. They identify the requirement of adaptation, reinvention and change to maintain support from key internal and external supporters. This speaks to the two-dimensional concepts of personal and dominant mission of Berlan (2017), and the idea of individual and collective ideologies around mission importance.

In debating organisational transformation, Young and Kim (2015), locate the centrality of mission in the context of organisational change. The authors identify three causes of organisational change linked to mission: firstly, readjustment in activity to meet an

established mission in a new operating context; secondly, the readjustment in organisational design and focus to meet an evolved mission position; and thirdly, transformation due to the opportunity to sustain “intellectual, administrative or social capital” (p. 237). Young and Kim’s (2015) primary cause is not without its problems, however. In attempting to maintain complete mission integrity, especially in new environments, Moore (2000), identifies the risk of ‘mission stickiness,’ “to the extent that traditional purposes lay a powerful claim on nonprofit and government organizations… (where)…they can stay committed to their mission despite the fact that the task environment they confront, changes” (p. 192). Therewithin may emerge an incongruence between mission intent and mission outcome constraining future viability. This, through the lens of organisational ambidexterity may mean intense exploitation at the cost of exploitative gains.

In contraposition, Young and Kim’s (2015) latter two suppositions, which refer to the requirement for a new or revised mission brought about by social need as a determinant for change or capital resource as an enabler for change, raise the question of ‘mission drift’ (Berlan, 2017; Moore, 2000; Suykens, 2019; Young & Kim, 2015). Significant to this research, external and internal pressures affecting a charity’s capability towards survival can challenge and compromise mission integrity resulting in a move away from traditional methods and services, which satisfied the original intent.

In the external world, the demand for services and funding to meet social and welfare needs as often stipulated by the funder; the reliability on diverse, reducing, and unreliable funding sources, and the hybridity of the market creating competition for resource to meet that demand, all create pressures in survival (Henderson & Lambert, 2018; McDonald, 2007; Robichau & Wang, 2018). Internally, the requirement for improved efficiency and effectiveness to meet growing social need, deliver on social impact and gain competitive advantage, particularly in complex organisations (Taylor et al., 2019) also creates tension.

By way of example, Henderson and Lambert (2018) in their study into the survival of UK charities, identify drivers in the form of high financial dependency on grant funding and associated service specifications; as well as charities becoming more ‘business

like' as risking mission drift. From a resource dependence perspective, the authors recognise an increase in administrative processes such as performance reporting, management accounting, auditing and governance arrangements as being potentially counterproductive to serving a mission. On the same subject, in relation to Social Enterprise sustainability, Young and Kim (2015), concur that "the ability to maintain a social goal focus in the context of market pressures" (p. 236) is critical for charities being drawn towards commercialism in order achieve market survival.

2.4.2 'Business-like' Charities:

In response to the internal and external drivers faced by charities, the adoption of business-like methods as an enabler to maintaining mission integrity or diversification as a determined way forward has attracted various scholarly interest (Dart, 2004; Cipriani et al., 2020; Hovarth, 2018; Maier et al., 2016; Panda, 2019; Peric et al., 2020; Robichau & Wang, 2018; Suykens, 2018; Svensson, 2020).

Dart (2004), in highlighting the importance of the concept 'business-like' to research and practice arenas, identifies both motives and methods as evidence for its existence. Beyond the drive for and achievement of subsidiary profits within NPOs, Dart (2004) determines several distinct phenomena including: "business-like rhetoric (e.g. narratives, visual communication), business-like organization of NPO's core and support processes (e.g. changes in the NPO's governance structure to be more similar to the corporate model or becoming market-orientated in building relationships with stakeholders), and business-like goals (e.g. setting their goals in monetary terms of increasingly relying on same revenues)" (Peric et al., 2020, p. 185). Likewise, and most recently, Peric et al. (2020), identify the need for a business ecosystem in NPOs, which supports dynamic activity towards efficiency in deploying resources to achieve mission goals. Similar to the drivers for social mission noted above, the drivers for becoming business-like come from internal and external sources including internal accountability and governance expectations set by the senior leadership team, cultural expectations translated in values and policies, and working practice driven through contracts and processes. Externally, it is meeting the impact of the environmental, social, and political conditions determined above as driving the requirement for social mission, that set the requirement for business practice.

Driven by conditions in the socio-economic environment Robichau and Wang (2018), describe “marketization or commercialization, vendorism, bureaucratization, or governmentalization” as responsible for subjecting charities to “isomorphic forces” which drives them towards replicating the “norms and behaviours of other agencies” (p. 146). The authors express concerns for the identity of the sector as charities go through a process of professionalisation and adopt private sector practices in order meet business, financial and performance measures linked to social outcome. Indeed, to the extent that such practices enable improved efficiency and impact, the case for charities employing them seems clear however some writers have urged caution to their application in the non-private sector due to the risk of loss in social principles (Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Peric et al., 2020). According to Peric et al. (2020), where NPOs have engaged in business-like models and techniques, this has resulted in them shifting their attention away from solving chronic social problems in the long-term towards short-term survival. This, through the lens of organisational ambidexterity indicates stronger financial and practical investment in exploitative methods by charities in their focus on revenue and immediate impact at the expense of morally grounded benefits.

Maier et al. (2016), in recognising the tension between delivering on mission and business practices, posed the question as to “whether NPOs should, and indeed can, use business like approaches to better serve the public good” (p. 14). In their review of 599 works, which drew predominantly inconclusive evidence towards the benefit of non-profit management studies for NPOs, they adopt a subjugated approach towards NPOs, which assumes the need for education to enable them to benefit from business outcomes. This deficit lens can also be identified within the literature in relation to pressures upon charities and the subsequent ‘coping mechanisms’ towards survival through the development of specific strategies. Specifically, Henderson and Lambert (2018), note that charities can been seen to develop ‘coping mechanisms’ in relation to mission drift. In their research into public serving charities, they identified that “charities used a range of strategies and tactics to maintain organisational autonomy and minimise the influence of funders. These included compliances, avoidance, controlling the definition of satisfaction and organisational change strategies” (p. 196). Interestingly, Henderson et al. (2018), found that where third sector organisations

increased their commercial activity, it generated a change to their constitution from charity to social enterprise; a hybrid model towards maintaining social outcomes and achieving profits towards sustainability.

It would be naive and generalising to suppose that charities do not experience pressure or must find means to survive, as with the case with any form of business. That said, viewing charities and NPOs through a deficit lens, fails to appreciate the complexity of the environments they operate in, the tensions they have to manage and how their achievement and success may contrariwise benefit the business world. Indeed, this point is significant. It is important to refer to the autonomous and self-governing nature of the charity sector against this lens and their unique capability to successfully apply solutions from a strengths-based perspective in their business decisions, including exercising choice in business models, funding sources and strategies towards their chosen outcomes. As noted by Robichau and Wang (2018), "nonprofits that act more business-like can achieve greater resource stability, efficiency and innovation, focus on serving clients, and possibly increase legitimacy and accountability to the public" (p. 148).

2.4.3 Strategic Management:

The significance of strategic intent has been highlighted as a prerequisite for successful ambidextrous working (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2011) and linked to this, the role of organisation strategy as a replicable tool for non-profits (Miller, 2018). In contemplating how NPOs balance the requirements between internal capability and external demands, Miller (2018) identifies two distinct differences for NPOs in comparison to profit organisations: "(a) the value produced by nonprofit organizations lies in the achievement of social purpose rather than in generating revenues; and (b) nonprofit organizations receive revenues from sources other than customer purchases" (p. 183). He suggests three areas of focus for managers in delivering on NPO strategy: firstly, the value to the public of the services created; secondly, sources of legitimacy and support; and finally, operational capacity to deliver on the value (Miller, 2018). This speaks to the second condition chosen by O'Reilly and Tushman (2011) **"**a compelling strategic intent" (p. 9), as an enabler of ambidextrous design and practice.

More recently, the evolution of strategic management practice as a means of responding to environmental conditions has been evidenced through the work of Miller (2018), who identifies drivers to improve efficiency and effectiveness through management and operations, and their risks. Developing this theme further, Suykens et al. (2019), draws on evidence from six sociocultural NPOs in Belgium and identifies organisational characteristics (origins, professional capacity, and form of tasks) as dependable towards successful commercialisation and self-sustainability. The assertions of Miller (2018), and Suykens et al. (2019), in the context of charitable organizations, highlight what O'Reilly and Tushman (2011) identify in the for-profit word as **"**the ability of the senior leadership to tolerate and resolve the tensions arising from separate alignments" (p. 9). The deliberate recognition of social outcomes linked to mission through commercial means within charity strategy may act as a legitimate and effective means of resolving such tensions (Berlan, 2017) and will be worthy of further exploration in practice through this research.

2.4.4 Human and Social Capital:

In their article, 'Nonprofit Social Capital as an Indicator of a Healthy Nonprofit Sector,' Bixler and Springer (2018), introduce the concept of social capital as a means to improve organisational performance to fulfil a mission. Beyond organisational capacity noted above (Miller, 2018; Suykens, 2019), Bixler and Springer (2018), identify financial strength, operational capacity, and board governance as prerequisites for social capital and in turn sector effectiveness. The authors identify cognitive social capital, the "propensity to share information, share a vision, and trust others has a substantial impact on the nonprofit boards' capacity to provide oversight, strategic planning, and leadership" (p. 4), and the relevance of this to board effectiveness and innovation. Whilst their work draws on research into the individual concepts of their subject, their contribution is limited as it offers no new empirical evidence. It does however imply the value of further research, which considers the role of social capital, including the exploration of structural and cognitive forms, in the achievement of NPO mission.

Following on from this, Peric et al. (2020), in their analysis of NPOs in Croatia found that personalised relationships within stakeholder networks were intrinsic in every NPO studied, with human capital identified as the most important asset. Indeed, if social capital is connected to the achievement of social mission, then the comparative value of NPOs against for-profit business models is significantly greater (Moore, 2000). Significant to this research, this is particularly interesting when paralleled with research, which debates the role of organisational, social, and human capital made within organisational ambidexterity (March, 1991; Turner & Lee-Kelley, 2013; Turner et al., 2013). As such, it highlights an opening for further research, which connects the concepts of capital in all its forms across the commercial and charity domains.

2.4.5 Innovation:

Beyond business-like methods, strategic design, and use of social/human capital, maintaining mission integrity can foster innovation leading towards performance (Miller, 2018; Renjini, 2018; Svensson et al., 2020). This is an important point when considering the reactive/proactive dichotomy in dealing with pressures towards survival and sustainability within charity business. As noted by Miller (2018), "non-profit organizations often develop innovative, unique, or purpose-built products or services to fill a social need" (p. 34). In his study of 58 articles written over the last two decades into not-for-profit use of strategic management, Miller (2018) identified not only the role of stakeholders in driving efficiency and effectiveness but also the NPOs own desire to scale and grow and be adaptive to changing beneficiary requirements. Indeed, the causal link between innovation and performance in NPOs has been considered by Renjini (2018), in his study into the NPO sector in India. Defining innovation in business as "a new product or service; a new method of operations; or a new way of organizing resources" (p. 3), Renjini (2018), makes the case for the necessity of innovation as part of a NPO business model by suggesting that innovative solutions to social problems attract funders and beneficiaries beyond traditional services. Relevant to organisation design and practice, which succeeds through explorative means, he determines organisations that offer flexibility in their structures as opposed to bureaucracy enable greater innovation towards meeting their social objectives. Svensson et al. (2020), in their study into the meaning of innovation across NPOs worldwide similarly concluded that "perspectives on nonprofit innovation

are multifaceted, yet the overarching emphasis is finding transformative ways to attain organizational goal(s) for social change" (p. 380). These authors note the difference in the conceptualisation of innovation between profit and non-profit organisations and identify three reasons for this: Firstly, due to the idiosyncrasies affecting NPO businesses, namely that competitors are also allied collaborators with social outcomes in common; Secondly, due to the long-term orientation of social mission in NPOs versus market orientated motives towards profits; and thirdly, motivation towards product/service innovation versus social transformation (Svensson et al., 2020). All these combined suggest that the explorative requirement on NPO's is necessary however need to be reframed through the lens of charity and NPO business.

2.4.6 Capability:

Undeniably, the requirement for charities and NPOs to become more corporate to meet their funder's expectations has in turn led them towards improved creativity, efficiency, quality, and effectiveness that may not have been achieved without such driving pressures (Cipriani et al., 2020; Miller, 2018). The dynamic nature of this capability in a constantly changing environment is what enables charities to continuously survive and sustain. Kaltenbrunner and Reichel (2018), in researching crises response and dynamic capability (DC) as a means of capacity building in NPO Refugee Aid assert that "DC's support organizations to adapt to changing conditions by contributing to an environment-organization fit and hence support organizations to compete in dynamic environments" (p. 995). According to the authors, dynamic capabilities enable organisations to sense changes in the form of both opportunities and threats and determine how to respond. They enable organisations to make the most of opportunities when they do arise by identifying the correct resource and plan to respond to them; and they enable an aligning of the organisational position to that of the external environment (Kaltenbrunner & Reichel, 2018). Significantly, and in relation to managing ambidextrous design, "DC's can cope with dilemmas in terms of multi-dimensional, partly conflicting interest, such as discrepant dominant logics of diverse internal and external stakeholders" (p. 996). In connecting the capability to the value of human capital, the authors determine the importance of participative leadership and empowerment at the contextual level of the organisation, which links

to O'Reilly and Tushman's (2008) final condition; "the ability of the senior leadership to tolerate and resolve the tensions arising from separate alignments" (p. 9).

There are many examples of dynamic capability and competency being detected in research on charities and NPOs to date (Cipriani et al., 2020; Henderson & Lambert, 2018; Kaltenbrunner & Reichel, 2018; Panda, 2019; Peric, 2020). In the context of grant funded organisations, Henderson and Lambert (2018) suggest that dynamic behaviours will have possibly necessitated intensive application against a number of simultaneously running, short-term funding contracts. Hence, significant performance measures will have been put in place to comply and succeed. This assertion is supported by Cipriani et al. (2020), who in assessing business models in profit driven organisations identify the ability of charities to balance resource limitations with requirements for financial and social value determining a state of 'hyper-efficiency' supported by strong individual and cultural ethos towards social outcomes. Significantly relevant to this study, in their assessment of these organisational conditions, Cipriani et al. (2020), identify that the immediacy and short-term focus of manging such competing demands "may, in the end, go against the sustainability of the solution, as resources are primarily dedicated towards obtaining immediate results and prevent investments in the long-term growth of the organisation" (p.559). This point provides legitimacy for O'Reilly and Tushman's (2008), prerequisite for "a senior team that explicitly owns the unit's strategy of exploration and exploitation" (p. 9), able to manage the competing tensions of short-term survival versus sustainability in the longer-term.

Hence, the applicability of the concept of dynamic capability in the charity/NPO sector and the ability of these organisations to deliver on this well, is supported by research. Peric et al. (2020), positively suggest that social missions lead to ways and outcomes of delivering a charitable business that are "more complex and multifaceted than those in for profit organisations" (p.185). Looking forward however Peric et al. (2020), foresees changing social and technological conditions as necessitating a new approach from charities in how they lead and manage strategies, which deliver on social change. The authors view assets such as human capital, especially that with capacity for practical and creative outcomes, which aligns with explorative capabilities, as most important to social impact overall.

2.4.7 Charity and Social Mission – the literature in summary:

The evidential thread through all charity and social mission literature is that charities are unique and organisationally different in their constitution and practices in comparison to their for-profit organisational counterparts. As such, there is a requirement for attention on the strategies they use towards short-term survival and long-term sustainability to manage the internal and external drivers and requirements upon them. There is high level of correlation between the prior debates on charity and NPO and the dimensions that exist within the concept of organisational ambidexterity. This is evident through claims of need for more research in specified fields of social mission and charity/NPO survival. This includes recommendations for further research on areas of social mission (Laurett & Ferreira, 2018; McDonald, 2007) managerialism (Cannon & Kreutzer, 2018), professionalism (Marberg et al., 2019), business-like modelling and behaviour (Dart, 2004; Maier et al., 2016; Robichau & Wang, 2018), strategic management (Miller, 2018), innovation (Renjini, 2018; Svensson et al., 2020; Taylor et al., 2019) and competitive dynamics (Panda, 2019). It is only within the work of Maier et al. (2016), in contemplating further challenges for charities, that a more comprehensive approach is besought through "directing research toward less explored areas, broadening methodological approaches, and widening the horizon of analysis" (p. 79). However, thematic divergence within the literature towards specific areas of business and recommendations towards further research in these areas, without broader consideration of the means of survival and sustainability indicates the need for an overarching conceptual theory. This is supported by Maier et al. (2016), who consider refined theoretic explanation as of value going forward.

In conclusion, many valid and important lines of research enquiry have been undertaken in recent years, which add value and valid proposition to the debate concerning charity/NPO sector function and survival. Unfortunately, and due to the fact that all of these enquiries are narrowly focussed on distinct areas of subject or theory (Berlan, 2017; Bixler & Springer, 2018; Cannon & Kreutzer, 2018; Henderson & Lambert, 2018; Liao & Huang, 2015), whilst they have brought about new debate,

limited findings have been generated, which fundamentally shift the area of knowledge. This gives credence to the purpose of this research to investigate the correlation in practice to further advance the literature within both domains.

The section below, provides further understanding of the topics of charity/NPO and organisational ambidexterity through the review of five specific articles identified which consider the topics combined.

2.5 Review of relevant literature, Organisational Ambidexterity and Charity/NPO:

As noted above, an extensive review of the literature has produced the outcome of five articles relevant to public sector NPOs and organisational ambidexterity (Bryson et al., 2008; Cannaerts et al., 2016; Cannaerts et al., 2019; Palm & Lilja, 2017; Peng, 2019). In applying the concept of organisational ambidexterity to public, state run organisations, the articles offer some interesting and transferrable findings to both the private for-profit sector and separately, the non-profit sector. This section considers each article in turn prior to the correlations and gaps in research, forming the basis of conclusion.

Bryson et al. (2008), in considering strategic orientation in ambidextrous public organisations, begin from a predisposition that ambidextrous working through exploitation and exploration (March, 1991) in the not-for-profit sector, is a perquisite for success. The authors consider the conditions set by O'Reilly and Tushman (2008) noted above, and the requirements beyond organisational structure for senior leadership capabilities. Connected to this, they emphasise the value of Miles and Snow's (1978) strategy typology, significantly strategic leadership: "(1) the role of the organization's dominant coalition of decision makers, (2) the importance of their perceptions, (3) the responsibility for assigning (segmenting) portions of environment to different organizational subunits, (4) their need to scan the environment and choose whether to be proactive or reactive to changes, and (5) their need to address, and often work to change, the constraints facing the organization" (p. 20-21) as criteria towards public NPO strategic success.

In considering the extent to which strategy determines ambidextrous working, Bryson et al. (2008), draw on the work of Andrews, Boyne and Walker (2006), who identify the role of 'prospectors' (organizations that "continually search for market opportunities and…regularly experiment with potential responses to emerging environmental trends" (Miles & Snow, 1978, p. 29), as key to strategic success through the lens of exploration. This is in contraposition to 'reactors' who may view change but fail to respond to it due to lack of strategic direction or design.

Building on the limitation of reactor types, Bryson et al. (2008), consider the blockages to ambidextrous working, which are similar to 'mission stickiness' identified by Moore (2000), above. They describe Bettis and Prahalad's (1995), 'dominant logics;' as overriding beliefs about the way in which a business should work "stored in shared schemas, cognitive maps or mindsets" (Bryson et al., 2008, p. 9). These are determined by previous business experience and an internal environment conducive to the status quo, which prevent new logics needed for competing in emerging markets. Such logics are akin to 'core ridgities' (Leonard-Barton, 1992), which represent the tight maintenance of internal exploitative ways of working, which prevent proactive or reactive exploration and the emergence of new business development. The risk to maintaining this position has to be one of short-term survival, inertia and potentially decline.

In their findings, Bryson et al. (2008), name the characteristics of 'analyzers' who are able to "operate in two types of product market domains, one relatively stable, the other changing" (Miles & Snow, 1978, p. 29) as most ideal for ambidextrous working. Alongside this, they specify that success through the analyzer typology is incumbent upon "a highly effective leadership group, an ambidextrous organizational architecture, and relations with oversight bodies and stakeholders that allow and support ambidexterity" (Bryson et al., 2008, p. 18). They make nine propositions for increased success for public sector organisations through organisational ambidexterity:

1. effective relationships with oversight authorities (legislative, executive, and judicial), which includes that senior management teams must be given both the support and leeway to pursue ambidexterity.
2. responsive autonomy in relation to political oversight and influence.
3. a statement of strategic intent which justifies ambidexterity.
4. strong organizational culture, linked to mission.
5. effective strategic leadership.
6. strong planning and decision-making system.
7. ambidextrous organizational architecture.
8. effective relations with partners and suppliers, and
9. effective utilization of technology, which includes that sustaining and disruptive technologies will be managed effectively.

(Bryson et al., 2008, p.16-18)

Bryson et al. (2008), advocate for determined capacity for ambidextrous working in public organisation as a necessity to be effective. In recognition of the rarity of their field of research, they call for further longitudinal research into the impact of ambidextrous designs in the public sector to further the body of evidence in support of their findings.

Nearly a decade after Bryson et al. (2008), Palm and Lilja (2017), presented their analysis of key enabling factors for organisational ambidexterity in the public sector. They similarly endorse the standpoint of Bryson et al. (2008), that systemised and controlled work processes result in rigidity, which stifles creativity and innovation. Palm and Lilja (2017), draw on the propositions of Bryson et al. (2008), and the conditions set by O'Reilly and Tushman (2007), and combine them with quality value to frame their own investigation into two public sector organisations to determine a series of enablers for organisational ambidexterity as quoted, then explained below:

- "organize for good understanding of user needs and situation" i.e., explore and exploit in accordance with the needs of the beneficiary group to ensure a quality led and legitimate service.

- “A management team that realizes and can communicate the need for exploration” thus acting as the fulcrum for participants working together.
- “dialogue” to enable and communicate the interrelationship between the different elements of explorative and exploitative working.
- “ambassadors” to progress new explorations from the concept to delivery.
- “a culture that allows mistakes” which support exploration risk and tolerance.
- “Budget for exploration and exploitation”
- “A system view” for all employees to enable them to understand the interdependence and benefit of ambidextrous working.
- “Focus on implementing innovations” beyond conceptualising.
- “Incentives for both exploration and exploitation” through a measurement framework.

(Palm and Lilja, 2017, p. 14-16)

Concomitant to previous literature (Bryson et al., 2008; Leonard-Barton, 1992), which identify an exploitative leaning in charity/NPOs, Palm and Lilja (2017) recognise the necessity of developing explorative abilities and of the importance of quality value. Specifically, for organisational ambidexterity, they name placing the beneficiary at the heart of organisational design and having capable and committed leadership to orchestrate participation around that design as key.

Whilst the field of Palm and Lilja’s (2017), study is exceptionally narrow due to its contextual specificity, it does contribute towards building on the forementioned conditions and criteria for ambidextrous working in a public setting. The authors recommend future research, which considers the structural design of ambidextrous working and a deepened understanding of quality value in practice.

The third and fourth articles relevant to the research topic are those by Cannaerts et al. (2016, 2019). In their comparative case study research into ambidextrous design and public organisations in Belgium (Cannaerts et al., 2016), the authors used abductive methodology to explore formal and informal ambidextrous structural design. Through comparing two teams within the same public organisation, the authors found that decentralised structures resulted in greater emergent thinking and employee

participation at the team level, with variable results in the areas of formalisation and specialisation. They also found consistently high levels of differentiation between management who focused on exploration and other employees who focused on exploitative activity. Challenges were identified in integration of explorative and exploitative areas due to their specified tasks and effective communication was named a necessity to overcome this. No conclusive evidence was found in the area of contextual ambidexterity.

Due to a very limited sample size and context for the research, evidence enabling the testing of pure structural and contextual ambidextrous design based on previous definitions was not found with Cannaerts et al. (2016), declaring structural ambidexterity and contextual ambidexterity as "archetypical forms" (p. 718). Notwithstanding this, in combining design elements of these forms in their research, the authors propose 'team ambidexterity' as a new form of design "that differentiates on a team level of analysis, which stimulates specialized individuals, that integrates by including employees with T-shapes skills in every team, and that creates a supportive context" (p. 718). According to the authors, team ambidexterity has low centralisation and formalisation, which improves integration and the all-important requirement for communication across the workforce. It depends not on individuals in one functional domain but a mix of skill within the team including those with T shaped skills: "specialized, deep knowledge and thus analytic thinking capabilities, and problem solving competences in one discipline (vertical bar of the T), as well as capabilities of critical thinking, communication, perspective, global thinking, project management, and a network to interact with other disciplines and thus to cross boundaries of their own discipline (horizontal bar of the T)" (Cannaerts et al., 2016, p. 720). These elements, combined with a supportive environment form the theoretical propositions for ambidexterity in the public sector by Cannaerts et al. (2016).

Three years later, in their article 'Ambidexterity in Public Organisations: A Configurational Perspective,' Cannaerts et al. (2019) took the ideas of Bryson et al. (2008), a step further and through conducting primary data analysis into public centres, proposed six design and leadership conditions for organisational ambidexterity. Under structural ambidexterity, the authors identified conditions of differentiation, centralisation, and forceful leadership as key to success. Under contextual

ambidexterity, the authors identify individual autonomy, supportive context and enabling leadership as prerequisites for success through ambidexterity. Whilst Cannaerts et al. (2019), usefully identify conditions for ambidexterity under different structural arrangements, findings from the research could not determine how the asserted conditions impact in practice based on the organisations assessed. Instead, the authors found different combinations of conditions within differing structures with the only surmisable fact being that centralisation was not conducive to ambidextrous outcomes. This highlights the complexity of organisational ambidexterity in practice. Significantly, the authors note other limitations in their research including the application of measures from the ambidexterity literature on private sector firms to public sector organisations and how alternative methodological approaches may better serve the different sectors. For example, where in the case of the public sector, qualitative explanations may have helped towards improved understandings of complexity and conclusions (Cannaerts et al., 2019).

The final article within scope is by Peng (2019), who offers a precise framework through the lens of organisational ambidexterity to formally locate the required structures, processes, and behaviours of the sector towards strategic success. Peng's study took place in France and focused on one provider of job search and unemployment compensation provision. Writing from a premise that organisational ambidexterity is relatable to non-profit work due to its intent in relation to value creation, Peng (2019) identifies "increased demands for accountability towards stakeholders require PNPOs to optimize resources, mobilize for the evolution and transformation and simultaneously guarantee a regular production in order to contribute to the stability of the society" (p. 251).

Peng (2019), develops a framework for organisational ambidexterity in the public value process, which assimilates exploitation and exploration into the different types of ambidexterity (sequential, structural and contextual) in order to identify where the tensions and remedies exist and in testing this framework draws specific conclusion: "An ambidextrous vision favours the search for balanced solutions in organisational changes, even if, in some cases, it also becomes a source of new tensions" (p. 258). Peng (2019), offers potential strategic leads towards dealing with competing demands between sector stakeholders with specific consideration towards "public deliverance

and organisational transformation" (p. 248), thus supporting the validity of this research proposal as required. Critically, Peng (2019) provides a very limited piece of research in a niche area of public non-for-profit work, although the study does lead to conclusion of the similarity in strategy and innovation management, between profit making and not for profit organisations.

The subsequent section will build upon the findings from the two perspectives analysed above (organisational ambidexterity, and charity and mission) and will determine the correlation between subject areas and the specific gaps in research literature that this empirical research will seek to fulfil.

2.6 Summary of the literature: Correlations and gaps in the research area:

The research within the two subject areas of organisational ambidexterity, and charity mission demonstrates a high level of correlation between the prior debates on charity/NPO and the dimensions that exist within the concept of organisational ambidexterity. One the one hand, we have the concept of organisational ambidexterity predominantly tried and tested in 'for profit' organisations. The literature describes private, commercial, profit-making business with vision and values, which provides for customers. Challenges are explained through the terms 'exploration' and 'exploitation' (March 1991) and 'dynamic capability' (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013) to deal with 'market forces' (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). The research into organisational ambidexterity in the for-profit sector has clear margins for further development beyond the current research in relation to contextual and conceptual understandings. On the other hand, there is growing research in the field of 'not for profit' organisations with clear parallels between the challenges and competing demands inherent within profit and non-profit organisational types. This research describes public serving, not for profit, charity with visions and values like its private counterpart however in addition, it has a constituted social mission upon which, it must also abide. As a result of its social mission, the charity serves funders and beneficiaries, an important group of stakeholders. The language used in research in the explanation of challenges is one of 'survival' and 'sustainability' (Henderson et al., 2018) through skills of 'adaptability' and 'resilience'

(Young & Kim 2015) in 'environmental conditions' (Maier et al., 2016). Hence, there are two alternative forms of business, managing some of the same and similar competing demands, and yet the theoretical concepts and language applied to each is different.

The literature examined offers validity to this comparative analysis, as counterparts are found to exist in the field of 'business like' practices, which through the lens of organisational ambidexterity indicates stronger financial and practice investment in exploitative methods by charities due to their focus on resource and cost effectiveness (Miller, 2018; Peric, 2020). Likewise, the significance of setting appropriate organisational strategies, which for the charity sector includes legitimising its purpose and services to funders and beneficiaries as opposed to 'customers' in for profit business. Debates draw on parallels in relation to organisational and human capital (March, 1991; Turner & Lee-Kelley, 2013; Turner et al., 2013) particularly in relation to the achievement of vision and social mission through innovation (Miller, 2018). Significantly, research into both 'for profit' and 'not for profit' organisation types identify the requirement for capability and adaptability to manage the tensions towards short-term survival and long-term sustainability (Kaltenbrunner & Reichel, 2018) with prerequisites for senior leaders to set the contextual conditions for such capability at a human and organisational level.

Hence, organisational ambidexterity as an approach heavily resonates with the charity sector, and yet there is very little published consideration of social mission and strategy through this lens (Sinha, 2015). It appears from the literature to date that the sector of private business has led and dominated the field of study with consideration of other sectors, be they public or not for profit, being largely ignored. It is unsurprising therefore, that it has been recognised within the field of study into organisational ambidexterity, more research is required to understand the complexities in its operationalisation. This includes within larger ecosystems (Turner et al., 2013), where external governance and capital markets act as antecedents to its application (Koryak, 2018) and within the public sector (Palm & Lilja, 2017). At the same time, it has been identified in the not-for-profit literature that charities need "managerial concepts that will lead to implementation strategies for achieving their objectives" (Liao & Huang, 2015, p. 21). Such assertions support the case for empirical study using the approach

of organisational ambidexterity and charity sector business where the ecosystems are more complicated due to multiple stakeholders including donors and funders.

In reviewing the literature, three key scholars have emerged who endeavour to capture the design features of organisational ambidexterity through the creation of 'conditions' in a for-profit context (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008), 'propositions' in the context of a public NPO, (Bryson et al., 2008) and enablers to organisational ambidextrous working in a context of a public NPO (Palm & Lilja, 2017). These design features are outlined in Table 2.6.1 below and provide a useful conceptual basis from which, to satisfy the aim of the research to determine key components of organisational ambidextrous design in the delivery of social mission.

TABLE 2.6.1: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE CRITERIA ESTABLISHED IN RESPONSE TO AMBIDEXTERITY.

O'Reilly and Tushman (2008) **Conditions for leaders in ambidextrous organisations:**	**Bryson et al. (2008)** **Propositions for success:**	**Palm and Lilja (2017)** **Enablers to OA working:**
A "compelling strategic intent" that raises the significance of applying both exploitative and explorative means;	**Effective relationships with oversight authorities** (legislative, executive and judicial), which includes that senior management teams must be given both the support and leeway to pursue ambidexterity;	**"Organize for good understanding of user needs and situation"** i.e., explore and exploit in accordance with the needs of the beneficiary group to ensure a quality led and legitimate service.
"an articulation of a common vision and values," that support ambidextrous design and practice;	**Responsive autonomy in relation to political oversight and influence;**	**"A management team that realizes and can communicate the need for exploration"** thus acting as the fulcrum for participants working together.
"a senior team that explicitly owns the unit's strategy of exploration and exploitation;"	**A statement of strategic intent which justifies ambidexterity;**	**"dialogue"** to enable and communicate the interrelationship between the different elements of explorative and exploitative working.
"separate but aligned architectures" such as business models, structures, and cultures which operate at executive and front-line levels;	**Strong organizational culture, linked to mission;**	**"ambassadors"** to progress new explorations from the concept to delivery.
"the ability of the senior leadership to tolerate and	**Effective strategic leadership;**	**"a culture that allows mistakes"** which support exploration risk and tolerance.

resolve the tensions arising from separate alignments."		
	Strong planning and decision-making system;	**"Budget for exploration and exploitation"**
	Ambidextrous organizational architecture;	**"A system view"** for all employees to enable them to understand the interdependence and benefit of ambidextrous working.
	effective relations with partners and suppliers	**"Focus on implementing innovations"** beyond conceptualising.
	effective utilization of technology, which includes that sustaining and disruptive technologies will be managed effectively.	**"Incentives for both exploration and exploitation"** through a measurement framework.

Key:
Strategic Intent
Vision/mission/focus
Strategic leadership
Architecture/organisation/design
Culture
Systems
External Stakeholders
Technology

The role of vision, mission, and focus; strategic leadership and organisational architecture are consistent across the three scholarly perspectives (Bryson et al., 2008; O'Reilly &Tushman, 2008; Palm & Lilja, 2017), with strategic intent, culture and systems being identified across two of the three perspectives. Bryson et al. (2008) further offer responses to external stakeholders and technological advancements as independent relevant criteria.

A study into the application of organisational ambidexterity through the lens of social mission within charity will contribute towards a body of evidence, which seeks to respond to these questions in practice.

2.7 Summary:

The practice issue establishes a calling to develop empirical knowledge, which determines how charities and mission led organisations manage the competing demands of survival and sustainability. This chapter has presented the processes under which, the review of literature has taken place and the findings from it, which inform the approach to primary research.

A narrative appraisal of the two areas of organisational ambidexterity and charity/social mission offered inclusive interpretation of key literature in both subject

areas. An explorative and interpretative review of the key literature and its reference points enabled a more holistic understanding of the knowledge in each area and correlations between the two. There were no findings for the concept of organisational ambidexterity and context of charitable organisations together from the narrative review. Based on this finding, a comprehensive systematic literature review, which combined the subject of organisational ambidexterity and charity/social mission, took place, and similarly returned no finding of this application.

Significantly however, both areas of review resulted in two contributory and supportive outcomes. Firstly, five articles with a relevant and associated theme of organisational ambidexterity in association with *public* not for profit enterprises, funded by government were found (Bryson et al., 2008, Cannaerts et al., 2016, 2020; Palm & Lilja, 2017; Peng, 2019). Notably, the frameworks for the conceptualisation of organisational ambidexterity developed through these works identify the role of vision, mission, and focus; strategic leadership and organisational architecture as consistent evidence of organisational ambidextrous design, with strategic intent, culture, systems, external stakeholders, and technological advancements also being found. This evidence base whilst limited, has external validity in so much that it is generalisable beyond their specific research context of public not-for-profit enterprise (Bryman & Bell, 2015) to the closely associated research context of private not-for-profit charity. As such, it offers knowledge, which can inform the formulation of the primary research, and which can be considered in comparison against the research findings. Secondly, the reviews demonstrate a high level of correlation between the prior debates on charity/NPO and the dimensions that exist within the concept of organisational ambidexterity, which is significant to this research as it indicates clear scope for application of the concept and context combined.

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction:

The review of literature has identified significant gaps appertaining to organisational ambidexterity in the context of private charities delivering on social mission, the chosen topic of research. Notwithstanding this, the review has generated useful contributory and supportive outcomes in the form of literature on organisational ambidexterity in the associated context of public not-for-profit organisations, as well as determining a high level of correlation between the prior debates on charity/NPO and the dimensions that exist within the concept of organisational ambidexterity. Furthermore, there are clearly identifiable frameworks (Bryson et al., 2008; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008; Palm & Lilja, 2017), which begin to establish recognised criteria for the successful application of organisational ambidexterity in practice, in both private and not-profit arenas. As a form of methodology itself, the literature review outcome serves to justify the research aim and objectives, and influence the research paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) detailed within this chapter. Prior to this, and by way of outline, the research purpose, aim, objective and question is re-presented.

3.1.1 The research purpose, aim, objectives and question:

The overarching purpose of the research was to address the gap in knowledge; organisational ambidexterity applied in the context of private charitable organisations, and offer a new contribution to the organisational literature, which provides awareness and new knowledge to charity sector leaders.

The research aim was to determine key components of organisational ambidextrous design in the delivery of social mission.

The objective of the research was to produce new knowledge in the form of key components, which determined how social mission is achieved within charitable organisations through the lens of organisational ambidexterity. And based on the assessed parallels between the two areas of organisational ambidexterity concept and

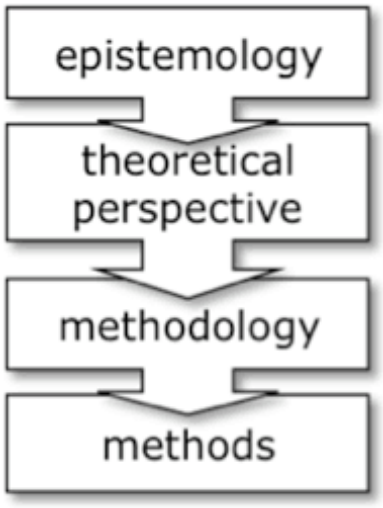
charity context, a subset of objective criteria to satisfy the overall research objective in the areas of:

1. Vision, mission, and focus, in the achievement of ambidextrous working in charity
2. Capability towards managing the dichotomies of the exploitative to the explorative
3. Charity architecture towards delivering ambidextrous outcomes

The research question was: what are the key components of organisational ambidexterity that are evident in charitable organisations, and what can be learnt from them?

3.1.2 Structure of the Methodology Chapter:

This chapter presents the methodology employed to achieve the aim and objectives of the research and delivers this in stages (Crotty, 1998). It connects the prior two chapters by commencing with an account of the professional background from which, the research has arisen, and a summary of findings from prior scholarly perspectives. The chapter is then structured in accordance with Crotty's (1998) four basic elements of the research process in sequence identified below in Figure 3.1.2i.



(Crotty, 1998, p.4)

FIGURE 3.1.2I: CROTTY (1998), FOUR BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Considered ahead of epistemology, Crotty's (1998) first element of the research process is ontology: the position on the construction of reality. As noted by Crotty (1998), "to talk of the construction of meaning, is to talk of the construction of meaningful reality" (p. 10). It is for this reason that epistemology and ontology are presented within this chapter sequentially. Both these positions inform the theoretical/philosophical perspectives, which are inclusive of ethical consideration and reflections on reflexivity, and which grounds the research process - the methodology. The research methodology, "the theory of how the research should be undertaken," (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 4) is then presented ahead of the choice of methods. Finally, deliberation is given to the research methods used including sampling technique, research process, analysis to assess the research findings and a critique of replicability, generalisation, and credibility. Limitations and recommendations for further research are then considered prior to the chapter concluding with a summary of the overall methodological approach.

3.2 The research in context:

Prior to considering Crotty's (1998) elements and the stages of the research process, developing narrative from within the Introduction (Chapter 1), the applied professional background from which, the research has arisen is first considered followed by a brief review of the scholarly literature.

3.2.1 The practice issue:

The beginnings of this research came from the researcher having over two decades of practical experience as a leader in the UK voluntary sector and the realisation of a void in charity specific organisational design. The location of 'self' in ethnological research has been given specific attention by Coffey (1999) who asserts that "we author texts from a perspective of having been to, and lived in, the field. Texts are often, written, crafted shaped and authored by a knowing subject who has experienced the field" (p. 17). As the origins of this research is personal to the researcher and inextricably linked to the research rationale, this discourse will temporarily depart from third person writing to partial autobiographical reflection to contextualise the research approach. This presentation is partially as opposed to fully autobiographical as the

'insider' experience of the researcher has informed the research concept and methodological approach, as opposed to being the subject of the research itself (Coffey, 1999).

3.2.2 The Researcher:

For over two decades, I have worked in senior leadership positions within the UK charity sector, where I have learnt in a professional capacity of the strategies, policies and processes utilised to deliver and sustain a philanthropic vision. It is from within this context that I have come to learn first-hand of the unique challenges and requirements needed to run an effective, successful, and long-term charity business. My experience of working in the charity sector has brought me to work with some of the most creative and determined people and at the same time taught me the methods by which parallel success and survival can take place within one of the most changeable, dynamic and competitive arenas in business. I use the term business with specific intent based on my belief that charities act as social businesses, delivering social outcomes as opposed to profit. Significantly, charities are challenged by the same socio-economic environmental conditions, which affect income and the same requirements for innovation to generate future sustainability as profit making companies. It is my belief that successful charities are equally as skilled as commercial businesses in managing complex conditions and environments, which facilitate their success, not least because social mission both anchors and scopes their development. That said, the business literature and professional educative sources in practice have not provided explicitly for charity sector leaders. I have never truly understood or had defined the prerequisites specifically for charity successes however I have contributed towards creating them, I have lived them, and I have seen other charity leaders live them too.

Due to the longstanding professional background that I occupy in the charity sector, my chosen field of research, is inextricably integrated with practice knowledge built over time, which has enabled me to determine the absence of business concept for the charity sector as part of the practice issue I seek to address. As such, I approach this research in acknowledgment of the fact that due to my professional background, teaching and position, I have an understanding of the practice problem and as such, I

come from an 'insider position' (Anderson and Herr, 1999) in developing research knowledge in this area. Whilst the matters of research philosophy and ethics in research practice are discussed later, the connection between research and practice is important to highlight as a determining driver for this research and its approach. As noted by Heikkinen et al. (2016), "the purpose of practical knowledge is to enable and foster a human's ability to produce material products (in the physical-material realm) and to act in the world in a meaningful way with other humans (in the social realm)" (p. 8). Hence, it is my intention to develop practice intelligence in the form of a new knowledge base for charity sector leaders through research, which considers the achievement of charitable mission through the lens of a strategic management concept: organisational ambidexterity.

3.2.3 Prior scholarly perspectives:

The practice issue establishes a calling to develop empirical knowledge, which determines how charities and mission led organisations manage the competing demands of survival and sustainability. As detailed in Chapter 2, a review of scholarly perspectives firstly took place though a systematic review, "a comprehensive pre-planned strategy to locate the existing literature, evaluate the contribution, analyse and synthesise the findings and to report the evidence to allow the conclusions to be reached" (Saunders et al., 2016, p .8). A systematic review method was determined through the utilisation of key questions informed by the work of Petticrew and Roberts (2006). Specifically, in the case of organisational ambidexterity in the context of charitable organisations, there is a lack of clarity about the concept and context combined, and there is a need for evidence in this area. As such, an extensive review was needed to gain accurate data as to the prior knowledge in this area to develop and inform future and new research (Saunders et al., 2016).

Both, narrative and systematic literature reviews, which combined the subject of organisational ambidexterity and private charity/social mission, returned no finding of this application determining a significant gap in the literature and an opening for new knowledge. Significantly however, five articles with a relevant and associated theme of organisational ambidexterity in association with public not for profit enterprises, funded by government were found. This evidence base whilst limited, is valid in so

much that it is generalisable beyond their specific research context of public not for profit enterprise (Bryman & Bell, 2015) to the closely associated research context of private not-for-profit charity. As such, it offers knowledge, which can inform the formulation of the primary research, and which can be considered against the research findings.

The review of literature also found a high level of correlation between the prior debates on charity/NPO and the dimensions that exist within the concept of organisational ambidexterity. This high level of correlation is significant to this research as it indicates clear scope for application of the concept and context combined, hence supporting the proposed research.

3.3 Research Ontology:

The research is undertaken from a relativist (constructionist) ontological position based on the assertion that social phenomena is produced through the evolution of reality within which, social actors construct meaning based on their relative position and interpretative understanding at any point in time (Bryman & Bell, 2015). This is in contraposition to objectivism, which asserts that phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent from the actors. Applying a relativist position to the proposed research, the research considers individual leaders, representing the charities identified as research subjects, and the strategy, structures, systems, shared values, skills, and style (Waterman & Peters, 1980) within each “as being created by the perception of the observer” (Stokes & Wall, 2014, p. 95). This is in polarity to a realist ontology and its predetermination of a definitive and fixed reality, which exists separately and objectively to the observer, and which would contrapose descriptive and explorative frameworks of design. As adeptly described by Denzin and Lincoln (2005), “because all observers view an object of enquiry from their own vantage points in the web of reality, no portrait of a social phenomenon is ever exactly the same as another” (p. 319). Hence, this research considers the interconnected nature of all constructed forms of phenomenon and determines descriptions from the object of enquiry, which relate specifically to the relative dynamics of the subjects in research.

3.4 Research Epistemology:

In accordance with a relativist constructionist ontology, the epistemology is that of interpretivism. Interpretivists separate the objects of natural science from the actors and determine the independence of the actors in 'interpreting' the natural world towards their own subjective conclusions. This contrasts with a positivist epistemology, which through natural sciences seek to determine a single truth to be found and objectified by all. In their consideration of interpretive paradigms, Denzin and Lincoln (2005), note that "all research is interpretative; it is guided by a researchers set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied" (p. 22). Four distinct interpretivist paradigms exist; positivist and post positivist; constructivist-interpretive; critical; and feminist-post structural (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Positivist and post-positivist, from a realist and critical ontology, whilst determining qualitative rigour through objective methodologies was not consistent with this research philosophy based on description and developing theory. Critical (Marxist emancipatory and feminist) paradigms concerned with a realist ontology and emancipatory outcomes, employing subjective methodologies with subjugated subjects was also deemed inappropriate for this research objective. The post-structural feminist paradigm, whilst offering consistent axiological considerations linked to reflexivity and written interpretation, was rejected as the chosen paradigm for the same reason as the critical paradigm. Relative to this research therefore is the paradigm of constructivist-interpretive which "connects action to praxis and build on anti-foundational arguments whilst encouraging experimental and multi-voiced texts" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 184).

3.5 Research philosophy:

The framework for the research design is inclusive of descriptive and exploratory research (Wilson, 2010) due to its dual focus. From a descriptive perspective, the concept of organisational ambidexterity is taken and adopted for the purpose of determining its reference to the charity sector. As such, the research expands the knowledge thus far developed on the concept. From a descriptive stance, this research builds on the applied research in the field. In doing this, it seeks to fill an

under researched area in academic literature; the limited application of organisational ambidexterity to the charity sector, thereby undertaking broad exploration to build knowledge and understanding in this area. From an exploratory perspective, there is very limited research using the theme of organisational ambidexterity in charity and social mission organisations. As such, this is a significantly under-researched area where there are gaps in academic and practice knowledge, which justifies further investigation.

As a senior leader within a charitable organisation delivering to a social mission, the researcher's axiological position was carefully considered. The very fact that the researcher has chosen to pursue this area of research demonstrates a predetermined view of the subject matter and a pre-existing emotional and physical connection between the researcher and the field of study (Coffey, 1999). As noted by Saunders et al. (2016), in their assessment of understanding research philosophy, it is important for the researcher to demonstrate axiological skill and explain values in the context of the themes that are draw upon and the generalisations made.

3.5.1 Ethical considerations:

From the outset, a universalist position was determined, which judges the breach of ethical principles as morally inappropriate and unacceptable in the research process. Utilitarian ethics were drawn upon on the basis that the proposed research would increase the sum of human happiness for general social good (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Principles were adopted based on Diener and Crandall's (1978) categorisation: "whether there is harm to participants, whether there is a lack of informed consent, whether there is an invasion of privacy, whether deception is involved" (Bryman & Bell, 2015 p. 134).

The researcher's professional 'insider position' (Anderson & Herr, 1999) and connection to the research audience either in person or through shared experiences, knowledge, and professional position within the charity sector, was also considered. This is because of the researcher's professional position within the chosen charity sector; the perception that due to that professional position, commercially sensitive information may be placed at risk; and underpinning this perception, that the research

has been funded by the researcher's employer who may seek to benefit. The ethical management of informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity were therefore critical to the credibility of the researcher and the research process, and in upholding ethical principles, preventing harm to participants through a lack of informed consent, deception, privacy, and confidentiality; and accuracy (Christians, 2005).

Consistent with Christians' (2005) assertion that "research subjects have the right to be informed about the nature and the consequences of experiments in which they are involved" (p. 144), full written consent was gained from participants prior to the research process. An informed consent form (see Appendix A) was utilised, which included agreement to having read the research information sheet, voluntary participation, and the right to withdrawal. An information sheet was also provided, which provided details of the purpose of the research, gave account of the parameters of information sharing including a commitment to the exclusion of commercially identifiable or sensitive data, explained right to anonymity, publication intent and limitations (see Appendix B). Of particular importance in the provision of the research information sheet was an explanation of the researcher's role and the distinction between this and her professional position, outlining this as entirely independent of the research. This written assurance was critical to the gaining of commitment and trust of participants in the research process.

Ethical guidance and considerations were framed by the University of Chester, Faculty of Business and Management, Ethical considerations: Guidelines for Tutors and Students (2022/23), and the Chartered Association of Business Schools (2015), and legally mandated through the Data Protection Act, 1998 (The National Archives, 2022) the General Data Protection Regulations, 2018, (ICO, 2022) and the UK Data Archive, (2022) specifically in relation to data processing, data ownership and safe storage.

See Appendix C for an assessment framework of the ethical risks identified at the outset of the research and how they were mitigated in practice.

3.5.2 Reflexivity:

In accordance with an inductive, interpretivist approach, historically, socially, and individually, human beings have been conditioned to perceive others in terms of differences and similarities in relation to themselves. Central to this, are "the origins of the definitions we use, the ways in which the separation between one category and another have been created and maintained; the extent of inequality that exist between groups; [and] how people come to think about their own identity" (Payne & Harrison, 2000, p. 1). In the context of research design and delivery, the way in which the researcher interacts and positions themselves with research participants, influences how the research evolves, and how the findings are interpreted and ultimately presented.

Cunliffe (2009) differentiates between self-reflexivity with its roots in phenomenology and social constructionism, traditionally practiced with and by individuals, and critical reflexivity, a method for unpacking assumptions, actions, and impact more broadly within an organisational context. Both forms of reflexivity were simultaneously applied in this research. Hence, the researcher continued to recognise her own historical, social, and cultural position, how it has shaped particular beliefs, and understandings and how they continue to shape responses to others; and at the same time apply this thinking to the organisational context represented within the research process. Questioning dominant assumptions, 'normalised' approaches, balancing competing perspectives, and encouraging others to respond in this way so as to deliver on a responsibility to the charity sector beyond individual perspectives, was fundamental towards enabling the possibilities for newly constructed change to be realised.

As noted above, due to the researcher occupying an 'insider position' (Anderson & Herr, 1999) and connection to the research audience personally or through shared experiences, knowledge, and professional position within the charity sector, necessitated personal and critical reflexivity at all stages in the research process. A self-reflexive position, "an intellectual orientation, involving curiosity, openness and a willingness to rethink one's position" (Alvesson et al., 2017, p. 15), aided access to and understanding of the research subjects however it required serious critical reflection; a "phenomenological way of understanding" (Cunliffe, 2009, p. 91), to

ensure the necessary ethical principles and standards of professionalism required. Deliberate consideration of identity in self-reflexive and critical-reflexive practice took place through the interview process as the researcher contemplated her characteristics of female, young (to the research subjects), white, and abled bodied. The matter of presentation in the form of dress, language and social etiquette also contributed to how the researcher was received, relationships were built, and dialogue developed. As noted by Coffey (1999), "the researcher identity is to be managed, amended and constructed in order to facilitate the research process" (p. 6). Beyond research subject engagement, the conscious engagement of 'self' in the writing up of the fieldwork was of central importance to the integrity of the data being interpreted. One the one hand, the researcher's emotional connection with the subject matter determining "the intellectual rigours of fieldwork scholarship" (Coffey, 1999, p. 5) towards quality in outcome. On the other hand, a commitment to remaining fully objective in the interpretation of the data to uphold full integrity and validity of the research in process.

3.6 Research methodology:

The chosen research approach was that of qualitative inductive research enquiry, which sought to determine the attitudes, thoughts, and views of leaders from within the charity sector. As noted by Heikkinen et al. (2016), qualitative research aims not to measure a reality as with positivist research but rather to make an interpretation of it. An inductive approach, predicated upon "collecting data to explore a phenomenon, and you generate and build theory (often in the form of a conceptual framework)" (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 145) is consistent with the research outcome, framework, and ontological position. Therefore, the research approach was inductive based on descriptive and explorative design in a new context to that of the traditional research literature. However, the research purpose was to examine the sector of charity through not a theory but through a recognised conceptual lens – organisational ambidexterity. Based on the development of the concept of organisational ambidexterity outside of its traditional context, an abductive approach was also considered in combination with induction. As noted by Saunders et al. (2016), "a topic about which there is a wealth of information in one context but far less in the context in which you are researching

may lend itself to an adaptive approach enabling you to modify an existing theory" (p. 149). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) identify abductive logic as presenting a compromise between deductive research with its negation of experience and purely intuitivism orientation, which can be often limited by generalisations. Indeed, in the context of this research, abductive logic supports the supposition that the emergent findings lead to the development of a new or adjusted model of organisational ambidexterity. However, after much contemplation, abduction was dismissed as whilst there is considerable research into organisational ambidexterity in the private sector, the theoretical conditions/propositions/enablers are so diverse, and there is significantly limited research in the charity sector, that a pure inductive approach towards the development of themes and new conceptualisations was identified as necessary.

The proposed strategy for enquiry was predicated on the criteria of credibility, trust, transferability, and confirmability (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) through ethnomethodology, a focus on applied natural practices, which enable individuals to establish and sustain their being in a given context (Prus, 1996; Tedlock, 2005). This correlates with professional leaders operating within a very specific organisational context with the purpose of achieving social mission as a social entity. Furthermore, Prus (1996) in his analysis of transcending ethnographic inquiry determined that "there is no better way of achieving a working understanding of substantive settings than through sustained ethnographic enquiry" (p. 141). Indeed, through exploring organisation ambidexterity in the charity sector, further to the substantive evidence applied in commercial-private organisations, enables possible contrast through trans-situational lines, which in turn supports the development of research debate and understanding in this area.

3.7 Research method:

The scholarly perspectives in the field of organisational ambidexterity and social mission organisations are divergent and diverse. From an extensive review of the literature relevant to organisational ambidexterity, as well as that relevant to charity/social mission, 34 out of 58 articles reviewed including 4 which formed the basis of the systematic literature review, contained primary research. The remainder were mainly literature review papers. Of the 34 primary studies, 24 (71%) had been

undertaken through inductive orientation and an interpretivist epistemology. These studies predominantly used qualitative mono methods or qualitative multi method methodology such as case studies, semi-structured interviews, or participant observation design methods. Five (14.5%) of the 34 articles were produced through an inductive orientation and utilised combined interpretivist and positivist epistemology employing mixed and qualitative multi method methodologies. The remaining 5 articles (14.5% of the primary research identified) used deductive orientation and positivist epistemology using survey design methods. There was no representative difference in research methods used between the two subject areas or organisational ambidexterity and charity/social mission. Hence, whilst a range of research approaches have been taken to evidence the two organisational areas over time, combined analysis into both areas, found predominantly qualitative, inductive interpretivist methodology as the most common utilised, which is consistent with the chosen research methodology.

3.7.1 Mono-method:

The research was conducted through a mono method qualitative methodology in the form of semi-structured interviews. This method was used, which combined aspects of structured interviews with several fixed and consistent questions, with non-standardised open conversation including steering questions to facilitate responses (Stokes & Wall, 2014). A semi-structure enabled consistency in questions to give the research integrity and comparability, whilst the flexibility to omit, adjust, add, or reorder the questions to support the participant in responding through discussion. This is in contraposition to the purely structured interview traditionally associated with a descriptive research approach, which prevents such flexibility and thereby risks limiting findings from explorative discussion. It is also different to unstructured interviews applied in general in-depth enquiry for which there are no guiding questions and thus less suitable for specific concept exploration.

An interview schedule was utilised to ensure consistency in opening introduction, the question schedule including main topic questions and associated themes, associated prompts to support the facilitation of appropriate further questions, and detail regarding interview closure (see Appendix D). The first interview acted as a proxy for a pilot

study however because the interview schedule and approach were appropriate and required no amendment, the interview was included in research study.

Consistent with a relativist (constructionist) ontological position, the context of a qualitative semi-structured interview method involved interpersonal participation between the researcher and the research subject in the evolution of the narrative. Open framed questions were used in relation to the key areas of enquiry using language such as ‘tell me’, ‘explain to me’, ‘describe to me’, followed by probing ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions and finally clarifying closed questions.

The research originally commenced using multi method qualitative methodology in the form of qualitative semi-structured interviews and interpretative qualitative data analysis of grey literature in the form of public accounts/reports to triangulate the evidence. As noted by Denzin and Lincoln (2005), “the use of multiple methods, or triangulation, reflect an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question” [and as a strategy] “adds rigour, breadth, complexity, richness, and depth to an enquiry” (p. 5).

In accordance with a multi-level approach, semi-structured interviews were triangulated with further methods in the form of document analysis with the aim of gaining knowledge and evidence pertinent to the specific research questions. As noted by Bowen (2009) who identifies five functions of document material, “the analytical procedure entails finding, selecting, appraising (making sense of), and synthesising data contained in the documents” (p. 28). Notwithstanding this, the process determined that whilst annual reports and strategic documents validated past organisational developments and plans, they did not reflect organisational developments reflected in the present time through the interview discussion. Indeed, some of the publicly available documents were several years old and no longer strategically aligned with the work of the charities within the research. It quickly became apparent that to triangulate data from significantly different timeframes would have resulted in a muddying of the data as opposed to a broadening of depth and understanding and as such the decision was made to adjust the research approach to that of mono-method methodology.

3.7.2 Sampling:

To empirically explore the concept for organisational ambidexterity in the charity sector, the target population was Executive Officers (Chief Executive Officers or Directors) from national, UK based charities in the provision of disability, health, and social outcomes. The theory behind selecting this research audience was that they would have accountability for the strategic objectives within the charity and an increased likelihood of leading organisational ambidextrous design including exploitative and explorative initiatives. Participants could have been chosen who were experts or located at an operational level to provide a contextual understanding of organisational ambidexterity in practice, however this may not at least in the first instance have supported strategic analysis, a significant factor in the concept and frameworks of organisational ambidextrous measurement.

Consistent with an inductive, interpretivist approach, the identification of a small number of national charities within the disability, health and social outcome, UK charity sector provided a concentration for the research. This increased the likelihood of comparability between organisational experiences within the organisational context and subsequent findings. Subjects were initially identified through theoretically relevant convenience sampling, “a type of non-probability or non-random sampling where members of the target population that meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate are included for the purpose of the study” (Etikan et al., 2015, p. 2). Building on the access, awareness and experience of the researcher and her professional network, convenience sampling, was selected not to simplify the research process but rather, it was consistent with the advantage position of the researcher as a professional in the specific location of the sector and the current knowledge of organisations held.

This approach to sampling was subsequently combined with priori purposive snowball sampling to enable participants who met the target audience criteria to be selected based on the proposed research questions. In priori sampling, “the criteria for selecting participants are established at the outset of the research. The criteria will again be the ones that are designed to answer the research questions, but the criteria

do not evolve as the research progresses" (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 430) as is the case with contingent sampling where the target population criteria evolve subject to the direction of the research. Hence, using the initial group of research participants identified through convenience sampling, contacts were then made with recommended subjects within the professional network who met the target audience criteria. Snowball sampling, like convenience sampling is not random, it is purposeful and therefore the frame of the sample cannot be determined in advance. Even if the frame could be determined, the size of the frame and the changing nature of the target audience would make it a questionable tool for validity.

Six participants were initially identified through convenience sampling resulting in five agreeing to take part in the research. A further ten participants were identified through snowball sampling with nine agreeing to take part in the research and one declining due to not having time to participate. The final sample consisted of fourteen research participants representing one charity each. Of the five participants identified through convenience sampling, two were Chief Executive Officers and three were Directors of a Senior Leadership Team. Of the further 9 identified through snowball sampling, all were Chief Executive Officers. From a total of 14 participants, six were men, eight were women. All had been within their existing job role for a minimum of 12 months with the longest served time in the sector by a participant being 27 years (See Appendix E for an anonymised table of participants).

3.7.3 The Research Process:

The research process was undertaken in three main phases: preparation, delivery and analysis. The preparation phase took place between July and December 2021 and was inclusive of the research design elements, notably the interview process and desk top review, as well as ethical agreement by the University of Chester, Research Ethics Committee. The delivery phase commenced in December 2021 through to March 2022 and represented the most intense phase of the research process with considerable organisation of research respondents and interviews taking place. Finally, the analysis phase took place between May and August 2022 with findings leading to conclusions in accordance with the research purpose, aim, objectives and question. Table 3.7.3i below outlines the research process and timeline in full.

TABLE 3.7.3I: RESEARCH PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Research Phase:	Action:	Timeframe:
Preparation	Ethical proposal	July-August 2021
	Ethical proposal considered by University of Chester Research Ethics Committee	September-November 2021
	Format and questions established for semi-structured interview process	October-November 2021
	Desk top review of publicised organisational documents completed	December 2021
Delivery	Approach initial cohort of research participants for agreement to participate	December 2021-January 2022
	Send research information sheet and consent forms	January 2022
	Pre-brief meetings/correspondence subject to response to information sheet	January 2022
	Undertake programme of interviews	January-February 2022
	Further research participants identified from initial research subjects	January 2022
	Approach second cohort of research participants for agreement to participate	January 2022
	Send research information sheet and consent forms	January 2022
	Pre-brief meetings/correspondence subject to response to information sheet	December-March 2022
	Continue programme of interviews	February-March 2022
Analysis:	Transcribing, coding and analysing data	April 2022
	Discussion and analysis written up	May-August 2022
	Implications for practice determined from conclusions	August 2022

3.7.4 Analysis:

A reflexive thematic narrative analysis method (Braun & Clarke, 2022) was chosen as the most appropriate means of organising and coding the narrative data within the research. This method has the advantage of being a prescribed method that is theoretically reliable for organised complex data and yet flexible enough to encompass ambiguity. It therefore sits comfortably in the context of constructionist epistemology

and mono-method research. Within this qualitative method, “the reviewer takes a closer look at the selected data and performs coding and category construction, based on the data’s characteristics, to uncover themes pertinent to the phenomenon” (Bowen, 2009, p. 32). This is in contraposition to grounded theory and interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) with their roots in phenomenological theory, and technological specifications consistent with that epistemology.

Template analysis as a form of thematic analysis was also considered. The use of a priori codes within this method was consistent with the research approach, which used a research analysis framework to determine initial higher-level codes. However, the process of template analysis did not fit with the research approach, which was to identify all codes prior to developing themes as is the case with thematic analysis. Furthering this position, all data items were fully coded in the development of the data set as opposed to only a proportion of data items used in template analysis to establish initial codes and themes (Saunders et al., 2016).

In accordance with the researcher’s axiological position, reflexivity was used in the thematic analysis process in the form of reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022). According to the authors Braun and Clarke (2022), adopting reflexivity in thematic analysis “recognises that valuing, a subjective, situated, aware and questioning researcher, a reflexive researcher, is a fundamental characteristic of TA” (p.5). This practice of critical reflection was also an intrinsic prerequisite for the researcher in occupying an ‘insider position’ (Anderson & Herr, 1999) within the chosen research environment.

Consistent with the chosen research methodology and ontology, an inductive approach was taken; “a process for coding data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame, or the researcher’s analytic preconceptions” (Braun & Clarke 2006, p. 83). The review of literature generated some key research topics appertaining to ‘charity’ and ‘organisational ambidexterity’, which were combined to create a semi-structured interview schedule. As such, these topics formed the analytical framework for discussion and formed a broad set of a priori, higher level codes against which, further induced data codes were mapped. These latter codes, driven by data, were

identified in name by the researcher or used terms from participants known as 'in vivo' codes (Saunders et al., 2016).

The narrative was analysed in accordance with Braun and Clarke's (2006), 6 phase guide in using thematic analysis as can be seen in Table 3.7.4i below:

TABLE 3.7.4I: PHASES OF THEMATIC ANALYSIS, (BRAUN AND CLARKE, 2006, P.87)

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarise yourself with your data.	Transcribing data, reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Getting initial codes.	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set, generating a thematic map of analysis
5. Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
6. Producing the report	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples; final analysis of selected extracts; connecting the analysis to the research questions and literature; producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

For phase 1, transcripts were automatically produced through the audio recording process via a Microsoft Teams software package. As noted by Heritage (1984), this served to provide an accurate account of the interviews not flawed by memory; it enabled comprehensive and repeated interpretation, secondary analysis promoting assessment of validity and it enabled the data to be reused (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Initial familiarisation took place through the cleansing of the recorded transcripts, which involved simultaneous playing of the recorded interview in picture and audio, and the transcribed words. This enabled the researcher to ensure accuracy in relation

the words used and silent communication, which was also recorded for detail. Once cleaned, every transcript was re-read to check for clarity and to further enable familiarity.

Phase 2 involved inductively generating new codes under the a priori codes used within the initial analytical framework (noted above). As each transcript was analysed, new codes were manually developed to give meaning to the data and as such, expand the data set. Sub-codes were identified at two levels beneath and across the initial a priori codes. With the development of new codes, previous transcripts were re-read, assessed for relevancy and re-coded as necessary. Every code was allocated a number and colour to enable clear identification and visual representation of the code as located in text within each transcript, which furthered familiarisation and the identification of emerging patterns.

Once all transcripts had been coded and recoded, themes were identified in accordance with Phase 3. As noted by Braun and Clarke (2022), “in reflexive TA, a theme captures shared meaning, united by a central organising concept” (p.11). Looking across the data set (vertically below the a priori codes and horizontally across them), areas which presented similarity in meanings or patterns or similarity in meaning were identified and clustered.

Themes were then reviewed against codes across the data set and in accordance with the research question as per Phase 4. Electronic visual mapping was used for coding and theme generation (See Appendix F). Braun and Clarke (2022) note the benefits of this form of analytical recording towards initial theme awareness, emerging patterns of themes and in generating a summary of the analysis.

The defining and naming of the themes inherent within Braun and Clarke’s (2022) Phase 5 took place within the preparation for writing and in writing the analysis and report section (Phase 6). The process of re-familiarisation and reinterpretation of the transcript enabled improved clarity of the themes identified in language and interrelationship to inform the structure of the findings and analysis section (Chapters 4-6). The act of writing as an embedded form of analysis determined the final presentation of the themes, which were supported by vignettes from transcripts and

contraposed with the previous literature to present a fully evolved picture of the research findings. Each main theme was linked to an area of research objective sub-criteria and are considered in turn within each of the subsequent analysis and findings chapters.

3.7.5 Replicability, generalisation, and credibility:

One of the main criticisms of qualitative research, particularly from a positivist standpoint is that it is very difficult to replicate, and this research is no exception to this statement. Because qualitative methodology is reliant upon interpretation of language or actions to reach research conclusions, it is never possible to replicate it exactly as the procedures followed are not objective, standardised, or measurable. As noted by Bryman and Bell (2015), "in qualitative research, the investigator him or herself is the main instrument of data collection, so that what is observed or heard and also what the researcher decides to concentrate upon is very much a product of his or her preferences" (p. 414). Notwithstanding this, it is this very weakness of qualitative research that in turn is also its strength from a relativist (constructionist) ontological position and interpretivist epistemology. The researcher's location within the research and the unique position in determining the significance of the data collected is what makes this, and all qualitative research inimitable and developmental in relation to under researched areas, and in the foundation of new knowledge.

In relation to the ability of the research to be generalised, it is recognised that the limited size of the research sample (fourteen research participants), inhibits the extent to which, the findings can be concluded as applicable to the charitable sector. Furthermore, due to the methodological approach taken, no statistical generalisations can be made from the research evidence. That said, given that the target audience of the research was Executive Officers (Chief Executive Officers or Directors) from national UK based charities in the provision of disability, health and social outcomes, it is argued that this segmentation provides data that is representative for this part of the sector. Furthermore, as this research has sought to apply a prior tested concept, in the form of organisational ambidexterity, with the aim of testing this concept descriptively and developing it exploratively, it is argued that this research widens the

research knowledge in this field, which is of new theoretical significance and can be retested through further investigations (Saunders et al., 2016).

It is asserted that the chosen research method of semi structured interviews, analysed through a thematic process, offers credible research evidence due to the questioning techniques employed by the researcher, which included clarifying and probing questions to ascertain descriptions and meanings. Within the reflexive TA process, meaning was predominantly coded semantically, to capture what participants overtly meant or were referring to in their use of language (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

3.8 Limitations and recommendations for further research:

This research offers new insights for theory and practice into the applicability of organisational ambidexterity in a sector, private charity, not believed to have been considered before. For this reason, it opens a new pathway for further research, which has the potential to inform professional organisational practice and with that, influence the success of social mission causes. Notwithstanding this, it does have several limitations.

Firstly, as noted above the generalisability of the research is limited because a small research sample taken from the disability, health and social segment of the UK charity sector has been used as the basis of this research inquiry. It is not possible to say as to whether or not the findings in this research are generalisable to the disability, health and social segment of the UK charity sector, other segments of the UK charity sector or indeed, the UK charity sector more widely.

Secondly, the sampling method used was that of convenience and snowball sampling, which for the reasons noted above were not random in their identification of research participants. The use of random sampling may have improved the generalisability of the data collected and the reliability upon the data found.

Thirdly, of the charities identified, these were predominantly funded through public fund-raising mechanisms as opposed to just a few who had private or local authority

contractual arrangements. Due to the significant difference in the conditions set by such funding arrangements, it may be considered that the findings from charities differentially funded would be dissimilar.

Fourthly, the framework of inquiry utilised, which built on previous theoretical frameworks of inquiry into organisational ambidexterity used within the public not for profit sector was predominantly internally focused. This thereby provides a partial view of the overall factors affecting the requirement for organisational change. For example, had external factors such as politics, the economy, societal changes, legal frameworks, and environmental conditions being factored in also, this may have generated a wider set of findings from which conclusions could have been drawn.

Finally, there was a limitation based on the transferability of the previous measurement frameworks adopted, all of which had been based across public sector non-profit organisations or private sector businesses. Given that this research enquiry focused on private charitable organisations where no previous research frameworks had been developed, the adoption of alternative frameworks was necessary however may have resulted in predisposed measurement criteria more suited to alternative sectors.

It is recommended that further research is undertaken, which advances empirical inquiry and evidence of organisational ambidexterity in the charity sector including a wider participant sample, which provides for a more in depth and fuller analysis. It is also recommended that external factors, which influence a charity's strategy around organisational change are incorporated into the analysis to bring about an improved balance in the factors, which necessitate the requirement for ambidextrous design and processes. Finally, this area of enquiry would benefit from further research predicated on a framework built for the measurement of organisational ambidexterity within the private charity sector, thus further developing the components presented in this study.

3.9 Summary:

This chapter has considered the contextual practice issue and prior scholarly perspectives, which frame the research aim and subsequent research question and

themes. The research design is described as qualitative mono-method inclusive of convenience and snowball sampling methods, and semi structured interviews using a priori qualitative narrative analysis techniques. The research methodology is aligned with the common perspectives in the chosen field of study, which follow a constructionist-interpretivist approach. Not only is this consistent with the work of previous academics in this area of research, but it was chosen to enable improved application of the research through the lens of organisational ambidexterity and analysed and interpreted comparatively on this basis. For example, the five works identified within the literature review (Bryson et al., 2008; Cannaerts et al., 2016; Cannaerts et al., 2019; Palm & Lilja, 2017; Peng, 2019), all applied a qualitative interpretivist approach consistent with the relativist-constructions approach of this research and from which, new inductive research findings can be compared and contrasted to determine the appropriateness of the scholarly lens applied in an alternative context. Hence, the orientation of the methodology has been inductive, and the research philosophy is primarily that of descriptive research with exploration of the research theme to fulfil the gap in the research area. The researcher's axiological position is rooted in a universalist ethical standpoint, with measures in place within the research process to uphold ethical principles and legal requirements for producing research information. Values and skills in reflexivity are determined as enablers in upholding the integrity of the research practice throughout. Finally, the research ontology is that of relativist (constructionist) in considering the interconnected nature of all constructed forms of phenomenon and the underlying epistemology is that of interpretivism. Figure 3.9.1 below represents the research approach undertaken in summary, based on the research onion by Saunders et al. (2016).

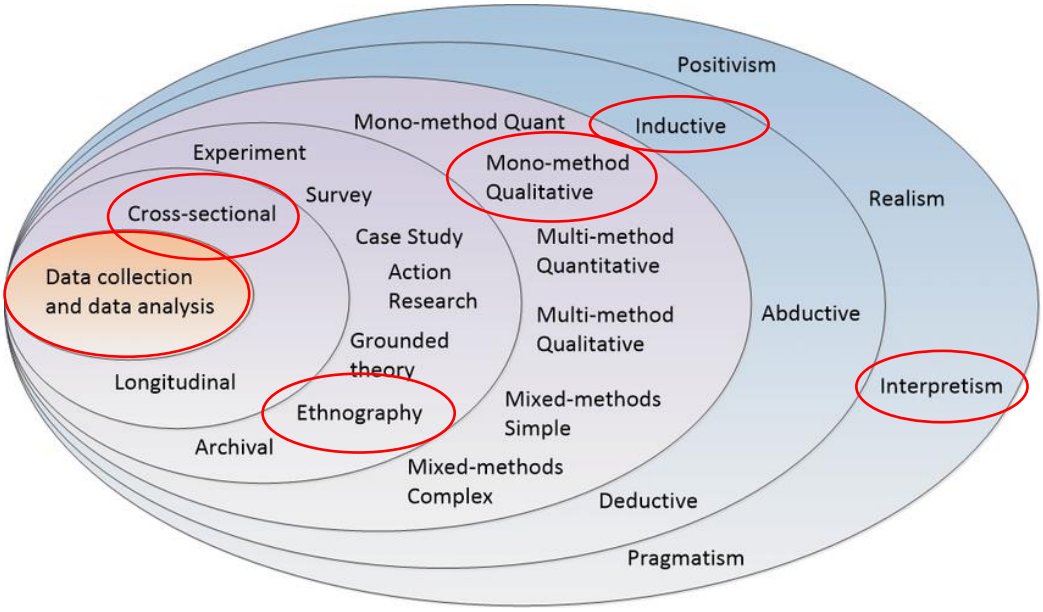


FIGURE 3.9.1: RESEARCH ONION (SAUNDERS ET AL., 2016) ADAPTED TO REPRESENT THIS RESEARCH IN SUMMARY

CHAPTER 4: Delivering a Social Mission

4.1 Presenting the analysis and findings:

This chapter and the following two chapters, provide an analysis of the three overarching themes and their sub-themes from the research and present the findings. Each chapter introduces the theme from the research taking the primary subthemes by section and exploring the secondary and tertiary subthemes within. Every primary subtheme is considered in accordance with the previous literature in response to the research objective sub-criteria set. A summary for each, provides an overview of the gap in knowledge that the chapter addresses.

This chapter presents the theme and sub-themes emerging from interview discussions relating to *delivering on social mission*, the primary themes of which were, the role of beneficiaries, the shape of operations, and influence on strategy. Chapter 5 presents the theme of *culture and capability* and covers the primary sub-theme areas of the role and composition of the senior leadership team, factors affecting strategic capability and conditions for performance. Chapter 6, the final of the chapters, present the analysis and findings relating to *structure and design* inclusive of primary sub-themes; strategic requirements, organisational structures and being business-like.

4.1.1 The Thematic and Sub-thematic Framework:

Table 4.1.1i below represents the thematic and sub-thematic framework in full, which was developed through the analysis of coded narrative, in accordance with Braun and Clarke's (2020) qualitative method of thematic analysis, discussed in Chapter 3. There are nine primary themes in total, each with three or four secondary themes. Some but not all contain tertiary themes developed through reflexive interpretation of the discussions held. Hence, whilst some of these themes drew significant commentary and have been selected, others drew less commentary but were significant to the analysis and thereby considered relevant and important to include.

TABLE 4.1.1I: THE THEMATIC AND SUB-THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

Overarching Theme: Delivering on Social Mission		**Chapter 4**
Primary theme	**Secondary theme**	**Tertiary theme**
The role of beneficiaries	Mission diversification	
	Needs linked to organisational design	
	Influence on Culture	
The shape of operations	Influence on organisational design	Beneficiary need
	Mission enablers	Financial income
		Beneficiary need
	Allied Working	
Influence on strategy	Lessons from Covid	
	Strategic periods	
	Strategic intent	
	Inhibitors	
Overarching Theme: Culture and Capability		**Chapter 5**
Primary theme	**Secondary theme**	**Tertiary theme**
Role and composition of senior leadership team	Leadership Approach	Strategic leadership
		Imparting awareness
	Diversity and Culture	Team diversity
		Subcultures
	Managing ambiguity	Operations/strategic
		Long-term/short-term
		Delegation
		Freedoms
		New capabilities
Factors affecting strategic capability	Emergent requirements	External Changes
		Inhibitors
		Commercial competence
		Trustees
Conditions for performance	Cultural Conditions	
	Workforce incentivisation	Practices
		Limitations
	View of mistakes	Culture
		Limitations
Overarching theme: Structure and Design		**Chapter 6**
Primary theme	**Secondary theme**	**Tertiary theme**
Strategic requirements	Innovation	Drive
		Design
		Trustees
	Governance and accountability	Decision making systems
		Trustees
Organisational Structure	Innovation	Incremental/transformational
		Linked to data and insight
	Structural design	
	Structure for long/short-term	
Being business-like	Business-like practices	Business language
	Business-like models	
	Competitors	
	Systems and technology	

4.2 Introduction to Social Mission:

Linked to research objective sub theme 1, vision, mission, and focus, in the achievement of ambidextrous working in charity, social mission as an anchor and a dominant driver in the achievement of charitable outcomes was an overriding theme throughout the interviews. For every research participant the vision, mission and values of the charity were upfront, central, and integral to their workings as an organisation. As one participant put it, “the mission is really important because that actually is the unifying purpose. That’s why we’re all here. It’s what everything stems from” (Participant A). Three primary themes, linked to the achievement of mission emerged from the discussions: beneficiaries; the operating model; and strategic change. Table 4.2.1 shows these primary themes and the associated subthemes, which emerged from them, which form the basis of the structure of this chapter.

TABLE 4.2.1: SOCIAL MISSION THEMES AND SUBTHEMES:

Overarching Theme: Social Mission		
Primary Theme	**Secondary Theme**	**Tertiary Theme**
The role of beneficiaries	Mission diversification	
	Needs linked to organisational design	
	Influence on culture	
The shape of operations	Influence on organisational design	Beneficiary need
	Mission enablers	Financial income
		Beneficiary need
	Allied working	
Influence on strategy	Lessons from Covid	
	Strategic periods	
	Strategic intent	
	Inhibitors	Workforce resistance
		Strategic direction

4.3 Social Mission: Primary theme – The role and requirements of beneficiaries

The role and requirements of beneficiaries, past, present, and future was the dominant factor influencing mission integrity. This was above any other factor including income source and political context. Where charities had historically diversified their mission, it was due to three main reasons; expansion because the existing beneficiary requirement had grown due to increased demand or lack of social provision; due to new evidence-based insight linked to the condition or cause; or because the charity had adopted similarly associated causes consistent with their mission at the time. As several participants noted:

> *"I don't think it's [the mission] diversified, I think in some respects what I've said is a crystallisation actually. I think we've been… we've been pretty eclectic in running a variety of things, you know, often for very good reasons. I mean we've got some great services, which you can understand why we've done them, because society didn't. (Participant D)*

> "*I think whilst the overall mission and vision hasn't changed, and we set this particular set of framing in 2010 and that was built on something that was not a million miles different previously, but I think what we've seen is as you start to see the progress that you make, you start to see the true scale of the challenge." (Participant I)*

> *"…as the portfolio has expanded, so has our mission expanded because each of those areas has slightly different requirements and therefore there's been a need to broaden the mission." (Participant P)*

In the main however, for most represented charities, the mission had been broad enough to encompass changes to the beneficiary group over time and was anticipated to be future enduring based on the assessment of the social cause. What participants commonly reflected by way of changes however was a variation to the operating model linked to strategy, which is discussed further on in this chapter. Linked to beneficiaries, this change enabled the charity to respond to the mission through a particular set of strategic deliverables or organisational design to ensure the relevancy of the organisational offer to the present beneficiary group. Two participants articulated this well:

"I think for a long time, you know, 20 to 30 years, [name of charity] has been this sort of change organisation and so the transformation there was less about changing the mission, but was absolutely about changing objectives and interventions, because actually the organisation wasn't doing those things or if it was, it was doing it, you know to sort of 10% of its capacity." (Participant K)

"There are times when charities do either need to change their mission or their operating model to fit with that… with that context, but also, you know, to be really close to the beneficiaries and to really understand from their beneficiaries what their needs and preferences are so that they can, you know, really deliver on their mission in a way that feels most relevant to the people who we're here to serve." (Participant O)

Central to this way of working was mission led behaviours and cultures where charities were committed to being led by the circumstances, needs and voices of beneficiaries and their families in their approach. In nearly all cases, participants reflected being 'user led' by way of consultation, engagement, co-production or led by intelligence appertaining to the beneficiary requirement to determine their priorities and direction of travel, as described below:

"…it's that nature of our work means that our staff and volunteers have a real intimate connection that people we support, because we're taking time to understand the individuals different view of the world that opens up a new world to you." (Participant H)

"…it's about listening to the voices of [name of disability] people and seeing what they want. That's absolutely fundamental, as our strategy needs to listen to the voice of [name of disability] 'cause we, if we are going to make any big decisions, we have to be able to back it up with [name of disability] people told us this is what they think." (Participant J)

"…one of the big drivers has been engagement, insight, conversations, co-production with our communities to understand actually where….do you want [charity name] to focus? What…. should [charity name] be doing to make a bigger impact on your life?" (Participant K)

Indeed, a strong connection to the beneficiary was represented in many cases as being morally and ethically the right way to be organisationally led, linked to social mission however the drive to satisfy the requirements of the beneficiary group

particularly where their voices were strong, needs diverse or urgent, also created a degree of challenge for some charities.

Many charities had within their governing boards, management, and staff, those with lived experience who maintained the needs of beneficiaries at the heart of the organisation. This enabled continued relevancy however it also required strong leadership and decision making around what to include in and out of scope in the organisational response. Some charities had learnt that without careful parameters, service diversification was a real risk, as the following research participants described.

> *"I think culturally there is a paternalistic nature in our work where we are here to serve our [beneficiary name] and almost there's no boundaries or there has been no boundaries around that (…) because the culture we've created with our beneficiaries, because we operated previously under the banner of [name of strategy], we will do anything for you, that's the expectation, that they ask for something and they receive." (Participant B)*

> *"It's hard for us to continue as an organisation trying to be all things to all people, and we need greater focus. We need to be able to talk more consistency about what we do other than kind of like all things [disability reference]." (Participant M)*

Linking these findings back to the theoretical knowledge, and based on the elucidations of the research participants, the mission represented the "compelling strategic intent" identified by O'Reilly and Tushman (2008, 2011), as raising the likelihood of ambidextrous working through exploitative and explorative means. Mission stood as the central, collective raison d'etre, which firmly located each charity towards its purposive outcome. In many cases, the mission was characterised by success over a condition or cause. Fundamentally though, what participants articulated was an overwhelming ambition to achieve the mission for a section of people in society suffering affliction, harm, illness, or inequality because of a condition. This is consistent with research undertaken by Palm and Lilja (2017), who in identifying nine enablers to organisational ambidexterity in the public sector located understanding beneficiary needs as the first enabler. In this research, participants articulated the driving force as life changing or life saving through the charitable mission.

Concomitant to the work of Hovarth et al. (2018), who considered the purpose and survival of social mission organisations, participants spoke to the requirement for their charities to exist beyond that of continued preservation for the purpose of being financially self-serving. Success was perceived to be the accomplishment of mission not the sustainability of the charity as an entity in itself, and success as an outcome was perceived to be a long-term accomplishment for every participant interviewed. Hence, the requirement of adaptation, reinvention and change to maintain support from key internal and external supporters proposed by Cannon and Kreutzer (2018), was not represented in the findings, except for beneficiaries in the form of external stakeholders. Furthermore, participants confirmed that charities may seek to diversity to continue to meet relevant social demand over time. However, unlike Horvath et al. (2018), who specified the mission as changing, research participants alternatively spoke to the mission remaining largely the same but the operating model or strategy being the dynamic factors in meeting social need. This finding connects to the second theme, the shape of operations, which shall now be discussed.

4.4 Social Mission: Primary theme – The shape of operations

From the interviews, it was apparent that several charities had been through significant visioning exercises to truly determine what the achievement of their social missions would mean for the beneficiary/society, and in turn what this meant for the shape of their operations now and in the future. For some of the larger charities, significant strategic adjustment had taken place to enable improved impact and outcomes for the beneficiary group, evidenced through the description of new operating models taking effect, as described below:

> *"I just don't think the organisation was sustainable doing what it was doing before, which was this sort of quite nice set of social care services, which are important and need to happen, but we were sort of, you know, doing it at a very small scale, geographically dispersed and, you know, I think in that market you need to have scale to make it sort of economically stack up." (Participant K)*

> *"[Name of charity] provided a lot of regulated services and it was considered that those didn't fit well with the mission of* [*mission name*] *because we were effectively seeking to identify areas where there were gaps in the existing system, not, I guess, supporting the*

existing system and so quite a brave decision, I think, was made at the time as to divest all those services." (Participant N)

Significant to this adjustment and evident in several cases, was the transition from the provision of social care services to the position of driving social change. This represented a change in the charities' function from one of service provider to that of campaigner, influencer, and researcher with and for the chosen beneficiary group. Inherent within this approach was a utilitarian approach where charities appeared to be looking to maximise social impact on the greatest number of beneficiaries either through changing the way in which they delivered direct services or taking broader actions to bring about infrastructural change; hence changing society's ability to respond to the issue rather than treating the issue to fit an exclusive society.

"the questions we need to ask again, are probably even bigger because of the context of the social care crisis that's happening at the moment, uhm, and I talked about going to the House of Lords and influencing, you know, would we be better actually to be doing more of that and try to transform the lives of millions of people through our policy work or are we better to try and deliver, you know top quality adult services to a small number through a few hundred or few thousand particularly within the funding constraints?" (Participant J)

"I think we're taking the organisation on a bit of a journey from being an organisation where the kind of point of gravity is around the provision of social care, to being an organisation where the point of gravity is about driving social change (…) we're trying to work out mid-flight, how do you turn this thing around from being a sort of big oil tanker that sort of reaches a small number of people to being a kind of nimble, you know, speed boat or something, I don't know, and is modern and contemporary and driving social change in the areas that matter to people." (Participant K)

However, these transitions in practice were not without their challenges with many participants reflecting being inhibited by beneficiaries or funders who valued traditional ways of working, such as the types of services they were receiving, and were fearful of them being removed. This placed some charities in a position of compromise given their commitment to being beneficiary led but at the same time intending to change their delivery models to offer improved impact and outcomes for a greater number of beneficiaries in the long run. Two participants describe this tension well:

"Our [name descriptor] service, our helpline, our [name descriptor] service, welfare services, employment services, you know, they're all things, which if we didn't do that, there would be a real hole and people would suffer, or just have a worse life because we weren't providing them (…) because we can't sort of pull the rug from under people, you know, in the short-term and all focus on this sort of now higher sense of purpose, higher calling to try and get society to change." (Participant D)

"…but how do we help the people that we support? How do we help identify the fact that they still want this type of service, and therefore should we be doing more lobbying and campaigning on behalf of those individuals to say yes, this may be the government agenda, but actually, we talk about choice. We have to give people that choice." (Participant P)

One participant from a charity with a large service portfolio funded through local government contracts, reflected complex challenges in this area where the commissioning agenda is different to the preferences of the beneficiary group.

"…we've had to close services which in some instances it's because of financial drivers and financial, because actually, the commissioning strategy has evolved and changed, and the priorities are now shifting. For example, from large residential services, large remote residential services wanting more supported living services in the community where people are able to integrate. And there's a real push pull between those two because the individuals we support or their families, particularly families we found, they're very happy actually to put relatives or their loved ones to live in secluded residential services even though they are larger and that's not the current strategic direction of the government." (Participant P)

Indeed, in this case and several others, the commissioning and contracting of service provision by charities acted as a significant inhibiter to the achievement of social mission through progressive operating models. Some of this was allied to highly prescribed service specifications, which determined service modelling with little or no room to diversify in line with the beneficiary requirement due to the financially led nature of the provision (Henderson & Lambert, 2018). The participant quoted above also identified the short-term focus of commissioners due to financial restriction, which acted in contraposition to the need for a long-term focus on outcomes for the beneficiary group in question. They articulated this in a specific example, below:

"…we were able to demonstrate that by these interventions, that we were able to provide over the long term, it saved the national purse about one million pound per person because

of the improvements that we'd been able to introduce, and individuals were able to maintain and therefore ongoing support needs being less. Great stuff, absolutely fantastic. But of course, financial pressures come in and the commissioner is not, they say to us, they're not interested in lifelong savings. They've got a budget to manage over a year and that's all they're interested in." (Participant P)

Therefore, the nature of the operating model was heavily influenced by the current beneficiary group and their response to historical and current service provision as they experienced it, as well as where they were funded from. Where charities operated through unrestricted fundraised income, transitional change although difficult, was less complex than for those charities restrictively funded through contractual arrangements for whom specific and short-term deliverables were commissioned. Hence, the execution of social mission was anchored heavily through beneficiaries and in some cases, funders, which meant that charities had to balance and maintain certain deliverables in the process of achieving long-term sustainability for its beneficiaries.

One significant way in which this was emerging successfully was through allied working to achieve social change. Indeed, many participants shared stories of successful work linked to collective endeavour regardless of their beneficiary group, operating model, size, or income sources. Several participants named specific alliances of charities that had collaborated to politically advocate for or lobby around a particular beneficiary or social need. Others, referred to partnership arrangements where charities operating in similar segments of the charity sector had come together to pool expertise, knowledge, and resource towards achieving shared outcomes.

"I think we've all seen strength in numbers and actually there's a lot of synergies and a lot of benefit of coming together. You know that critical mass you can mobilise, that sense of the whole being greater than the sum of the parts." (Participant D)

"I think it's very easy if, uhm, you know, I've got quite close relationships with some of those [named] Chief Execs and we want the same things for disabled people and our voices are better if we work together. It's more powerful, we're louder and we can make change happen." (Participant J)

"…in the charity sector, there aren't really any of those natural forces other than, you know, like minded people recognising they're trying to achieve many of the same things and

agreeing to work together. So, the thing that I said to my team when I came to [charity name] is we are going to be the most open organisation to engage with, you know, will constantly seek to work with others. If someone else can do something and we can help." (Participant N)

The review of literature identified a limited body of works, which recognise that several competing demands exist for charities/NPOs in dealing with the maintenance of mission integrity; changes in external market forces, notably funders and stakeholders; and meeting internal and external drivers for change. Participants in this study affirmed these competing demands in their discussions. Notwithstanding this, the 'mission drift' identified by authors Berlan (2017), Moore (2000), Suykens et al. (2019), and Young and Kim (2015), as compromising mission integrity by moving away from traditional services and methods found in the literature, was not identified. In fact, findings were quite the opposite, with participants deliberately moving away from traditional services and methods towards operating models, which maintained the integrity of their mission in the present and for the future. Hence, new knowledge that charity leaders were using the social mission to drive changes in their operating model to remain relevant, viable and capable of sustaining the charity over time, for as long as it is needed.

The difference in this finding may be because of the types of charities researched between the literatures with previous studies taking place with charities/NPOs who were traditionally financially commissioned with greater dependency on external market forces. The participants in this research, whilst many spoke of contracted services with local government, predominantly benefitted from public fundraised income, meaning reduced external stakeholders to place constraints on their operating models. Of the few participants who shared experiences of delivering commissioned services, their experience was indeed consistent with the work of researchers Henderson and Lambert (2018), McDonald (2007), and Robichau and Wang (2018), who identified the demand for services and funding to meet social and welfare needs as often stipulated by the funder. Henderson and Lambert (2018), in their study into the survival of UK charities, identify drivers in the form of high financial dependency on grant funding and associated service specifications as both creating pressures in charities linked to future survival.

Significantly, allied working in the context of social mission received exceptionally limited attention in the review of previous literature with only Svensson et al. (2020) noting that competitors in Charity are also allied collaborators with social outcomes in common. In this research, allied working was represented as strongly developing with potential to achieve considerable outcomes for shared and common beneficiary groups and society more widely. This emergent finding offers new knowledge connected to the behavioural and cultural requirements linked to organisational success within the charity sector and shall be considered in Chapter 7.

4.5 Social Mission: Primary theme – Influences on strategy

Alongside the primary themes of the role and requirements of beneficiaries and the shaping of operations, influences on strategy linked to mission was explicitly and implicitly discussed by participants. Emerging out of the Covid pandemic, many charities had put their strategic plans on hold and created interim strategies to manage the impact of the external market on their beneficiaries. Of note, was the arresting effect of the pandemic on charity strategic objectives, and in turn their planned operational deliverables. Such a strong external market force resulted in some charities developing new and agile ways of working to remain true to their purpose and they were looking to sustain these into the future. Two participants described this in practice:

> *"...the pandemic drove new ways of working, removal of silos, uh, different departments coming together to deliver new, innovation services in a different way that common purpose has been strengthened. The common purpose we're now trying to extend that into our strategy in the way we work, to recover from the pandemic." (Participant H)*

> *"…we were sort of coming out of COVID last summer and we said, you know, we really stressed our strategy, let's do a formal strategic review to see whether there are any bits of our strategy that need to change in response to what we've learned through the pandemic. And we wrote a paper which, went to the board of trustees, and we reconfirmed that actually, what COVID had just done, was just demonstrate the strategy is even more relevant, and even more fit for the future." (Participant O)*

Beyond these examples, where participants were revaluating their strategic objectives post Covid, several specifically noted the transition from longer set strategic periods to shorter timeframes for strategic review, to enable improved agility moving forward. Of note, given the academic roots of organisational ambidexterity in private sector business, is the third quote by Participant N, who likened this practice to that of the commercial world:

> *"…it was a 10- year vision we had set initially at the beginning of COVID but in reality, life has changed so much that we are in this we've kind of adapted to the COVID way of being and we are doing very much more of a rolling. So, we're setting the bigger north stars and a few other, I don't know how anyone is describing it. Those stars that we think are nearer to us than our north star, so with a few planets in between but the rest is quite agile really." (Participant G)*

> *"…historically, lots of people did a 10-year strategy. There's no way we could do a 10-year strategy, things have changed far, far, far too quickly in today's world. Five years is pushing it, but three years is probably a little bit too short 'cause otherwise you're doing it again before you know it, so at the moment we haven't even pinned down how long our strategy will be for." (Participant J)*

> *"…what I've seen in the commercial world is that there are very few organisations now that plan very far ahead unless you're, I don't know, unless you're building some piece of infrastructure or something, you know, the world changes so quickly but trying to have, you know, I when I started in business, you know, people would talk about maybe having 10-year plans, certainly five-year plans. That became three-year plans and then in many cases rolling one-year plans." (Participant N)*

Although several participants had described the transition to shorter-term strategic review periods, this did not conflict with consensus between most participants around the requirement for charities to be looking far out in the context of achieving their social mission. There were many examples provided including service user consultation and consultancy support to enable charities to create a longer-term vision appertaining to mission success, which were described as beneficial. Significantly, in considering the strategic changes required for this, some began to speak of the distinction between short-term outcomes representative of exploitation, and long-term deliverables representative of exploration (Duncan, 1976) as noted below:

"I think people do get that tension between short and long-term, between BAU and development. I think people have different levels of comfort with attention that produces, and I think some people want to be beautifully mapped out three-year road map and I'm kind of like well the world outside the [name of Charity] is complex, dynamic, it's fast changing. You know let's just keep the longer-term in mind be clear about the long-term outcomes, take some short-term steps and then review and then we can take some more steps. So, it's about agility for me." (Participant O)

"…there will be people within the organisation who are focussing on the here and now, the short-term and so that is their focus. They will be dealing with the commissioning of today, they will be dealing with the occupancy, the day to day running of the business. There'll be others in the organisation, myself, the board, some other members of the team who are actually then looking beyond the here and now and looking at the future and looking at actually trying to envisage difficulties in this ever-changing world, trying to envisage what the sector will look like in 10 years-time and therefore what we need to do today to get ready for that future." (Participant P)

Strategic intent was commonly described through communication of vision/values or about changes to the operating model in the context of the mission as opposed to an overarching statement (Bryson et al., 2008), which was explicit in any method or design such as ambidexterity. There were many examples of participants working hard to be visible, accessible, and regularly questionable in relation to strategic change and the examples provided personalised the proposed change to the staff group seemingly to reconcile the strategic direction with what it meant for staff in practice:

"… we want [name of organisation] to fulfil its mission to be a social change organisation. There's a whole load of stuff we need today, we do it brilliantly well, but we're not going to do it in the future, and this is the plan for you guys, this is what we're going to do, and this is how we're going to do it, and you get involved in it. But for everyone else, that point of gravity is now shifting over here and this is what we do." (Participant K)

"I think when the vision was set, they (the organisational goals) were described in quite emotional language which, I think we're good for, you know, sort of engagement in new direction, but maybe lacked a bit of clarity on what actually the organisation was going to do." (Participant N)

Hence, the strategic intent in the form of the mission was articulated by all participants as well understood across their respective charities however the strategy towards its

achievement and especially how the organisation would operate to achieve that mission (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008) was frequently described as absent or lacking as several participants reflected:

> *"I think they (staff) would be able to articulate what the strategic intent is. I don't think they're able to understand how things will be delivered at this point in time." (Participant B).*

> *"So, it was one of our lowest scoring areas of our staff survey in October. Uhm, about people kind of really understanding like the direction of travel and how their role fits, (….) people wouldn't probably be able to do that significantly. I think senior leaders would, but probably on the ground, not so much." (Participant M)*

> *"Everyone knows our three strategic goals. So, they're very present in all of our conversations. They are long-term goals, their 10-year goals so, I'm not so confident that everybody understands how we're going to achieve them." (Participant O)*

Subsequently, participants reflected some challenges within strategic change, which had the potential to slow the transition or make it more complex to manage and resolve. Two secondary themes emerged from this thematic area, which spoke to some of the reasons as to why this was the case.

The first secondary theme was the positioning of specific staff and services in relation to traditional delivery models where the effect of communicating the strategic intent could be destabilising for the exploitative elements of the charity. Here, several participants acknowledged a short-term positioning for staff delivering current services and the requirement for a balance in communication change to support safe transition of services into the longer-term future design for the charity:

> *"…for us, you know, in a perfect world, you'd have made society work and you don't need a lot of those sort of services and support that we provide. But you know if, if you're saying that and saying 'hey we're here to change society and all this stuff we're doing over here, it's going to go out of business. That's great. We don't need it, you know.' You wouldn't say that and, you would realise that actually, you know we need to say to people working in our [service names], look, you know, it's absolutely bloody vital we've got these services, you know, they give us traction. They give us insight. They give us customer connections. You know, they give us a platform to go and talk about stuff and, you know, for the medium term, but for some considerable time, we will absolutely need those and so you're not*

frightening people, you know you're trying to be realistic. So, I think that is being balanced." (Participant D)

"…how can you be open and transparent and not disingenuous, and give people the wrong messaging, but equally you don't want to scare the horses and make them worry about their future, if there's no need to." (Participant J)

"…it takes time,' cause it's quite different to what people have been used to and the transition generates all sorts of emotions. You know people who think they have sold out and you know, 'my care home is outstanding, and you should come down and see what we do and the difference we make.' And you know, people feel very proud of the work they do, and I think it can be hard for people to sort of detach themselves a little bit from the immediacy of what they're doing or their service, or their campaign, or their thing and step back and look at it and say dispassionately, okay now I can, I can see it." (Participant K)

The second of the secondary themes from the theme, influences on strategy were lack of strategic direction, which manifested itself through aspects of poor governance and leadership. Hence, whilst considerable efforts were reflected in driving the work of the charity forward both in terms of short-term projects and longer-term developments, the absence of Board or Executive level direction or governance had meant that a number of organisations identified that they had lost their way, having to retrace their steps or take remedial action to regain their strategic direction:

"We have not driven forward because of a set of circumstances where we've not been forced to because of money, because money is always the factor really but also a disconnect as well, I think between how the organisation is governed and the operational activity on the ground." (Participant B)

"I think we ballooned into a number of things, but I think we're now trying to wrestle it back into fewer things and actually more focusing around supporting the delivery of sort of a more thoughtful strategy." (Participant D)

"You've got to have the strategy to anchor the organisation and what happened was lots of bits of the organisation just started doing what they'd always done or doing a little bit more of what they'd always done, and it just diffused the whole impact probably for the organisation. Had we been tighter, and more commercial and really nailed their organisational strategy, we would have been better, I think." (Participant F)

When relating the theme, influences on strategy to previous literature, several consistencies in findings can be found to exist. In the first instance, the organisational behaviours many participants described in emerging out of the Covid pandemic demonstrated alignment with the definition of 'dynamic capability' offered by O'Reilly and Tushman (2011). The requirement for senior leaders "including decentralisation, differentiation, targeted integration, and the ability of senior leadership to orchestrate the complex trade-offs that the simultaneous pursuit of exploration and exploitation requires" (p. 6) were evident in the descriptions which highlighted the removal of silos, different departments coming together, as well as new, innovation services to respond to emergent beneficiary need (Participant H). Consistent with Kaltenbrunner and Reichel's (2018) assessment of dynamic capability in Refugee Aid services, charities could be seen to adapt to align with the dynamic external environment, dialling up or down their exploitative/explorative (Duncan, 1976) practices to respond appropriately to new market conditions in the short-term. Beyond the pandemic, and through the resolution of transitional strategic change, participants talked to the challenge of maintaining the right balance between short-term services representative of exploitation and long-term plans representative of exploration (Duncan, 1976). The move towards more developmental, and experimental future adaptation articulated by many of the participants, was reflective of Peng's (2019) acknowledgement of "duality in terms of resource allocation, (and) change rhythm" (p. 253) and the tension that this can create.

The articulation of strategic change and how this was managed at an organisational level suggested a number of areas of development for charities, some of whom were finding ways of articulating the strategic direction and others who had instead chosen to focus on the vision and values and retain the detail at the senior management level. Every participant reflected a mission consistent with "a compelling strategic intent", a condition identified by O'Reilly and Tushman (2008, 2011) and most identified that the mission was broad enough to encompass changes to strategic timeframes and subsequent operating models over time. However, no participant spoke of having a mission that explicitly "raises the significance of applying both exploitative or explorative means" or having "an articulation of common vision and values that supports ambidextrous design and practice" (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2011, p. 9), or a statement of strategic intent which justifies ambidexterity, as noted by Bryson et al.

(2008). Examples shared, demonstrated that vision, mission, and values were well embedded within organisations however any differentiation between short-term exploitative design or practices and the means by which, longer-term deliverables were to be achieved were not evident. The closest examples to this were where organisations were articulating moving away from social delivery models to that of social change models (such campaigning or researching) however these transitions were in their early stages with common articulation still emerging.

Some of the challenges anticipated by participants in delivering strategic change were consistent with previous research findings. For some charities, examples of the requirement to retain exploitative practices for immediate short-term gain and to enable safer transformation were consistent with the findings of Moore (2000) in his identification of 'mission stickiness', and Leonard-Barton (1992), in his definition of 'core-ridgities'. Indeed, there were several examples of traditional cultures, or designs anchoring the commitment of the organisation, be it through beneficiary, funder or staff claim on the status-quo, which had the potential to prevent explorative gains. In this research, examples of poor strategic direction linked to leadership or governance at the senior level is consistent with O'Reilly and Tushman's (2013) statement that "to be successful at ambidexterity, leaders much be able to orchestrate the allocation of resources between the routine and new business domains" (p. 18). Indeed, examples talked to a lack of direction leading to a lack of clarity as to where to invest resource, and a lack of process to ensure investment leading to effective and efficient impact. Themes of strategic leadership, and governance are discussed further in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6.

4.6 Social Mission in summary:

The research confirms that Charity mission is representative of the "compelling strategic intent" (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2011, p. 9) coined by O'Reilly and Tushman (2008), except for charities it is outcomes for people in society that compel their commitment. Whilst vision, mission and values were strongly evident, architecture, design or deliverables linked to ambidextrous working were not evident in the examples provided. Participants identified allied working as a key enabler to mission

success, which sits in contraposition to the traditional literature which considers organisational ambidexterity in a competitive commercial environment. In this research, mission maintenance through the adaption of strategy or operating model was evident with charities moving away from traditional services to remain relevant in the long-term. Charities offering primarily services or funded through commissioners appeared more constrained in explorative development due to the short-term requirements of beneficiaries and funders for traditional service provision. Aspects of dynamic capability (Duncan, 1976) in response to external market changes were evident through the examples analysed, with findings demonstrating senior leadership capability in balancing the tension in short-term gains and longer-term development for the benefit of the beneficiary, charity, and its staff. The focus on the shorter-term was also presented through examples of traditional cultures and designs serving to anchor charities in the past and present. Finally, the importance of effective strategic direction and governance as a pre-requisite for effective resource allocation in ambidextrous working (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013), was supported through reflective examples of what would have enabled improvements in strategic development.

CHAPTER 5: Culture and Capability

5.1 Introduction:

The second of the overarching themes emerging through the discussion and linked to objective sub criteria 2, is capability in managing the dichotomies of the exploitative and explorative relating to people; specifically, the culture of people in organisations and their capability to deliver against the organisational requirement. Alvesson et al. (2017) suggests "culture may be seen as a system of shared meanings, understandings, and values. As such it constrains and guides leadership at the same time as leadership is about influencing cultural meanings" (p. 64). Indeed, the cultural requirement of the organisation emerged as a cross cutting theme from participants who linked cultural considerations to a priori codes of social mission, strategy, innovation, and the theme of leadership. Closely connected to culture were opinions on capability, notably leaders and staff being able to meet the strategic requirements of the charity. In this section, culture and capability will be considered through three primary themes: the role and composition of senior leadership, factors affecting strategic capability, and conditions for performance. Table 5.1.1 below shows these primary themes and the associated subthemes that emerged from them, which form the basis of the structure of this chapter.

TABLE 5.1.1: CULTURE AND CAPABILITY THEMES AND SUBTHEMES

Overarching Theme: Culture and Capability		
Primary Theme	**Secondary Theme**	**Tertiary Theme**
Role and composition of senior leadership	Leadership approach	Strategic leadership
		Imparting awareness
	Culture and diversity	Team diversity
		Subcultures
	Managing ambiguity	Operational / Strategic
		Long-term / short-term
		Delegation
		Freedoms
		Post pandemic capability

Factors affecting strategic capability	Emergent requirements	External changes
		Inhibitors
		Commercial competence
		Trustees
Conditions for performance	Cultural conditions	
	Workforce incentivisation	Practices
		Limitations
	View of mistakes	Culture
		Limitations

5.2 Culture and Capability: Primary theme - Role and composition of senior leadership

Secondary themes of leadership approach, culture, and diversity; and managing ambiguity all arose from discussions connected to the role and composition of senior leadership. Over half of participants interviewed identified the importance of leaders raising strategic awareness across their charities and using inclusive practices to link the organisational intent as a success factor in their development. Two participants articulated this well:

> *"…our responsibility now is to actually follow through and to reinforce, to have that consistency of message, so that staff can see how what we're saying in terms of intent is now being carried through (…) it comes back to the line management practice and how we can best encourage and support our staff going forward, the sorts of conversations that we're wanting to be having, how we focus and frame those conversations, how we link them back to our charitable purpose." (Participant A)*

> *"… we engaged all staff to develop the strategy. We recruited what we called our future champions with our staff workforce, our volunteers and then they went out and ran workshops with other staff members asking key strategic questions, so everybody had a contribution to make with those wider strategic questions." (Participant B)*

There were many examples of how this was achieved from creating visual aids and regular internal reporting mechanisms, through to cross organisational staff engagement in regular communication meetings, and focused workshops. There were some interesting conversations about the extent to which, front line staff were made strategically aware and the challenges of this. Some examples demonstrated

accessibility to strategic information for all, and others cited cultural barriers to the effectiveness of this, including two participants who questioned the necessity and requirement for this at front line levels.

Challenges in communicating change as part of the task of creating strategic awareness was discussed by just over a third (5) of participants. Some of this linked to senior level capability around communication and being able to land bigger picture thinking within a predominantly front-line workforce. For others, the challenge linked to the task of explaining strategic change due to resistance or status quo cultural thinking.

> *"…you've got to do the hard yards of actually getting in front of people and really making them try and understand it. I think new concepts are quite difficult for people to grasp. People don't like change and I think the charity sector again is worse for that than the commercial sector (…) but I mean I think, you know, people don't like the fact you're standing up talking about new things because they got personal vested interest in a service that's always run." (Participant D)*

> *"I think the trouble is, is people always like change when it happens to somebody else. So, it's alright while it's all in a different directorate." (Participant J)*

> *"I've always sought of felt like, you know, our job as leaders is to try and work out where the future is and position your organisations there and quite firmly, and I see lots of people who are quite nervous about the future and want to kind of stay where they are." (Participant K)*

Further to strategic leadership and creating awareness, effective team composition as a strategic enabler was another theme drawn upon by just over a third (5) of participants. Many talked to the importance of team diversity (Beckman, 2006) in particular, the need for differentiated professional experience, capabilities, and stylistic preference to manage the organisational requirements.

> *"You know in any team, you do need that mixture, and if its only one or two, only one person who is S (Myers Briggs Sensing type) or one person that is N (Myers Briggs Intuitive type), then it's never going to work, so for me, when you're setting strategy and when you're in SLT (Senior Leadership Team), the one letter in MBTI that matters more than any others is the N and S." (Participant C)*

"I think, you know, our strategy is to, you know, try and affect societal change across the UK. So how do you get a team that is best able to reach across the UK and it is a team that doesn't all come from one starting point." (Participant D)

"… I've always believed that the strength of the top leadership team is in its diversity and I know in the charity sector we talk a lot about diversity in terms of, you know, gender, race or things like that and that's equally important but actually, what I mean by diversity is just diversity of thought, diversity of background, diversity of perspective, all those sorts of things and if you get that right, it leads to lots of innovation and it leads to great problem solving solutions." (Participant N)

Noteworthy comments arose appertaining to senior leadership culture from three participants who raised the risk of sub-cultures in diverse teams due to differentiation in task requirements (Peng, 2019), funding variation and a cultural draw on historical working styles and practices. Combined, these areas of impact appeared to have the potential to create competing demands for senior leaders in delivering on an enabling culture. For example:

"I think there's a cultural difference in that, I think you always see fundraising/marcomms rushing faster and the results are measurable, so you can see where things are going well or it's not working. Pull it back. Go over to here. On the other side of the organisation in Impact your results are slow, you know, we're not going to see the results for things for years." (Participant G)

"National programmes is funded via fundraised income and charitable trading income, whereas everything else is funded through statutory funding, so I think we have got sub-cultures within there and I think to some extent that does mean that you have silo working as well… (…)… it sort of brings diversity and strength in one hand, but on the other hand it brings silo working and that can prevent, and it can cause conflicts as well." (Participant J)

"…I think there's still this natural overt type of, you know, I run this area, I run that area and I'm being asked to do too many things, or this area doesn't properly understand what I'm trying to do." (Participant N)

Significantly, the examples given in relation to diversity and differentiation in culture, related to the requirement for the senior team to be able to combine their skills to deal with the competing demands of day-to-day business and longer-term developments at

the same time (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008). Indeed, just under a third (4) of participants talked to the challenges for senior leaders in effectively balancing operational and strategic requirements in their role, particularly in consideration of the external environment and the need for alignment in design and practice to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. This represented a consistent challenge across the charities represented. For example:

> *"…what I'm always conscious of, you know, I've been a service manager myself in everyday life is that if you're delivering services you get sucked into operational activity and your time gets sucked away and that time that you always put for innovation or developing new things just gets taken (…) you end this strategy and you had all these good intentions, and you know on a personal level they haven't happened because the immediate day to day stuff is consuming." (Participant B)*

> *"… there's a balance between dealing with the emergency and the issues at hand and sometimes the crisis and the firefighting, whilst carving out time to reflect and learn, and then carving out time to build for the future and be strategic, and that all happens at all levels of the organisation, but for a senior team, it's really important that they try to carve out that time." (Participant J)*

> *"…good leaders are ambidextrous. Good leaders do both. Good leaders both drive for transformation and continuously improve your business as usual. Uhm, I think you need to be able to do both (…) my team need to signal collaboration an integration in the way that we work as the top team, you know, the capabilities we need are to be outward facing, be really strategic, forward thinking, you know, and kind of creating the conditions for other people to kind of manage the day-to-day operations." (Participant O)*

The above quoted participants when discussing the challenges of operational versus strategic management all talked in the present time. Five other participants identified this challenge in the form of a reconciliation between short-term and long-term focus. The examples given demonstrate well the challenges of managing risks and opportunities in the short-term and delivering towards direct survival versus the ability of the organisation and to engineer itself against a longer-term direction (March, 1991). They include representations of short-term priorities versus longer term concentration being disconnected in planning and the challenge of finding the time to adequately deliver on an exploration agenda linked to future strategic aspiration.

"I think you've still got to be able to juggle, you know, managing the here and now and having a sense of sort of, you know, delivering this week and this month and managing your team and coping with a whole ton of tactical stuff that goes on, you know, day in, day out as well as also trying to make sure you're trying to deliver for the overarching plan for the year, or the strategy for three years." (Participant D)

"…I heard somebody say the other day that you've got to fix the boat and also sale off at the same time and I think that's true. It feels like there's some immediate stuff and some big decisions that need to be made now because you've got to have a sustainable business model. There's no point, you know, writing a 10-year strategy if you're going to be out of business in two years 'cause you've run out of cash." (Participant J)

"I think people do get that tension between short-term and long-term, between BAU and development. I think people have different levels of comfort with the tension that that produces. Uhm, and I think some people want a beautifully mapped out three-year road map and I kind of light will the world outside the [name of charity] is complex, dynamic, it's fast changing. You know, let's just keep the longer term in mind, be clear about the long-term outcomes, take some short-term steps and then review and then we can take some more steps. So, it's about agility for me." (Participant O)

Significantly, one participant (Participant O), used the language of ambidexterity (quoted above) in explaining the requirement for managing the challenge of short-term long-term balancing (Birkinshaw & Gupta, 2013). In developing the point further, Participant O went on to describe the leadership challenge when managing the intrinsic organisational nature of dual agendas:

"that's just organisational life so we've just got to live with it, and I think it plays to a capability that senior leaders need to have, which is about being comfortable with ambiguity, yeah, comfortable with uncertainty (…) I'm not convinced that all of our senior leaders are comfortable with ambiguity. I'm not convinced that all of our senior leaders see the bigger picture and are able to make connections between things." (Participant O)

In speaking to this challenge, many participants offered solutions. Just over a third (5) of participants talked about the importance of senior leaders delegating responsibilities for reasons of empowerment and enablement, to reduce authoritarianism, and better utilise organisational resource. This was in the context of the necessity for senior leaders to be able to assume higher level, broader strategic functions, and responsibilities, with delegation acting as an enabler to this.

"…we've been through a heck of a lot, and I think one of the key lessons that's emerged from this, is the power of devolving, delegating tasks, requirements, particular to lower levels of staff who have expertise, have the relationships, and have the willingness to actually take on responsibilities." (Participant A)

"…it's quite a top-heavy organisation. It's quite authoritarian, so we're really wanting to break that over the next five years of the new strategy, push decision-making down the organisation and just increase agility in the organisation." (Participant M)

"…the power doesn't just sit, just with the senior leadership team. We have to be prepared to embrace and share that power, share, embrace, the uhm… to tap into the huge resource we have across all our people, across and you know, that stopping into we talked about, coproduction, bringing people in and giving the power away, but still leading us in the direction that we need to go into thrive, to be outwardly focused, to not be afraid to do something different." (Participant P)

Connected to this, two participants (A and I) specifically used the phrase of giving 'freedoms' within a framework; the idea that there is strategic leeway within which senior leader was give delegated authorities to lower-level managers. Furthermore, four participants specifically talked to the requirement to build strategic leadership capability with examples of changing external requirements acting as a driver for new competency, as these examples show:

"… we need to do more to invest in that leadership, who is charged with the delivery of this strategy, and I think we haven't taken a cohesive, coordinated approach about how we can really support that group to incentivise them to deliver the strategy and I think that's the area I've talked about that certainly needs more focus." (Participant H)

"… my team need to signal collaboration and integration in the way that they work as the top team. You know, the capabilities we need are to be outward facing, be really strategic, forward thinking, you know and kind of creating the conditions for other people to kind of manage the day-to-day operations." (Participant O)

The review of literature contains findings in the form of requirements for leadership against which, many of the above themes are consistent. The secondary subtheme of senior leadership, specifically the creation of strategic awareness is linked to the work of Bixler and Springer (2018) who identified the association between social capital

and performance linked to mission success. Indeed, the authors determined that the "propensity to share information, share a vision, and trust others has a substantial impact on the non-profit boards capacity to provide oversight, strategic planning and leadership" (p. 4). This sharing of organisational information and vision coupled with the engagement exercises described by participants with organisational teams, demonstrated evidence of influencing and trust building to enable strategic success. Participants in this research described the content of these engagements as being about vision and strategy, which is consistent with two of O'Reilly and Tushman's (2011), conditions for leaders "a compelling strategic intent [and] an articulation of a common vision and values" (p. 9), as well as Bryson et al.'s (2008) proposition for public sector success in the form of a statement of strategic intent. Original evidence in this research however is that participants went beyond the production of an articulation or a statement of strategic intent to a process of engagement to deliver on the strategic message over time. This reflected a significant commitment towards inclusivity, participation, and empowerment of the workforce in leadership practices towards social mission success. Notwithstanding this, the extent to which this process raised the requirement for ambidexterity (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008) and whether this was implicit or explicit in the engagement process was less clear. Participants did provide examples of connecting mission to strategic and operational practice however there was no definitive explanation of describing ambidextrous practice, particularly the need for exploitation and exploitation to achieve mission success as determined by O'Reilly and Tushman (2008), and Bryson et al. (2008). Indeed, participants reflected conversations about why the charity was undertaking its work, and what that encompassed but not necessarily the detail of how it was to be achieved.

Challenges to the strategic engagement process involving workforce resistance to change and to maintain the status quo described by participants is supported by the work of Bettis and Prahalad (1995), and Bryson et al. (2008). These authors state that 'dominant logics' play a role in creating overriding beliefs about the way in which an organisation should work "stored in shared schemas, cognitive maps, or mindsets" (Bryson et al., 2008, p. 9). In this research, examples of change initiatives being disliked or unsupported where it meant traditional services were under threat or ceasing were evident. This was often strongly linked to the impact on the beneficiary and their outcomes, meaning that change messages were often difficult to deliver and

receive creating greater challenge for leaders. Paradoxically, social mission as an anchor in this respect, could be considered to inhibit organisational change, as well as necessitate it.

The theme of effective team composition, notably diversity as a strategic enabler was consistent with the work of Beckman (2006), who determined the diversity of the leadership team as influential in ambidextrous design, particularly exploitation and exploration. Examples in this research, identified individual capabilities within specialist functions and how this correlates with the ability to work in the shorter-term and longer-term. The diverse capability identified in this research is consistent with O'Reilly and Tushman (2013), who recognised the requirement for leaders to manage the organisation between day-to-day and developing business needs. Sub-cultures and differentiation in practices relating to the requirement for the senior team to be able to combine their skills to deal with the competing demands evident in this research is consistent with O'Reilly and Tushman's (2008), condition, "the ability of the senior leadership to tolerate and resolve the tensions arising from separate alignments" (p. 9) in ambidextrous organisations.

Competing demands in the balancing of day-to-day operational business versus strategic development and in the management of short-term and long-term priorities was a strong theme in this research and is consistent with the requirement for dynamic capability (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008), identified in the literature. Participants noted changes in the external social environment as driving internal change towards survival in the short-term and sustainability in the long-term, and how this linked to managing risks and opportunities within the two separate timeframes. This is consistent with the work of Kaltenbrunner and Reichel (2018), who considered that dynamic capabilities "support organisations to adapt to changing conditions by contributing to an environment-organisation fit and hence support organisations to compete in dynamic environments" (p. 995). Significant to the charity sector and presented as new knowledge within this research, the overriding consideration of social mission linked to beneficiary outcomes in the short-term could be seen to be an overriding priority, particularly due to the nature of some of the social causes, some of which were lifesaving and immediate. This was conveyed as a natural part of the charitable organisation and recognised as an inhibitor to longer-term progression. This is

consistent with the work of Cipriani et al. (2020), who identified that the immediacy and short-term focus of managing competing demands may work against longer-term achievements due to the requirements to prioritise resources in the short-term thus preventing the longer-term growth of the organisation. This is also supported by the work of Peric et al. (2020,) who positively suggest that social mission leads to ways and outcomes of delivering a charity business that are “more complex and multifaceted than those for-profit organisations” (p.185).

Hence, the idea of the ambidextrous organisation originally introduced by Duncan (1976), with dual functions needed to manage activities with varying capacity and time requirements (Birkinshaw & Gupta, 2013), can be identified within this research through the theme of leadership culture and capability. The tensions and opportunities inherent in the ongoing management of competing demands, the exploitative operational delivery requirements in the form of research outcomes, service delivery, financial management, income generation versus the explorative developments required to satisfy longer-term outcomes were evidenced by participants through the examples they described. Some of the solutions to these tensions chimed with the work of Peng (2019), who saw the paradoxical relationship between the need to resolve tensions and opportunities and ambidextrous design as creating tension “because of the duality in terms of the resource allocation, change rhythm, decision process, structural design and management culture” (p. 253), which differentiate the dual requirements within the organisation. Strategic and structural organisational design will be considered further below. The next section considers emergent requirements and capabilities linked to achieving the reconciliation of longer-term and short-term priorities in practice.

5.3 Culture and Capability: Primary theme – Factors affecting strategic capability

The theme of factors affecting strategic capability arose from conversations linked to the reconciliation of short-term and long-term priorities for senior leaders noted above and was set in the context of social mission success. Participant K eloquently articulated this in their consideration of strategic responsibility:

"… I do feel that part of our job is to think about the future, work out what the future is both for our communities and for the organisation and, you know, quite deliberately position the organisation over the hill where we think the future is. Like that's our job, it isn't just to run the thing today and then pass it over to somebody in a few years' time when we get a new job, like I think there is a sort of leadership responsibility to think medium to long-term." (Participant K)

Also, linked to the sub theme of senior leadership, just over a third of participants (5) talked to the requirement for strategic capability to engage with the external environment (Horvath et al., 2018). The driver for this was predominantly linked to the size of the social mission and the requirement to draw on allies, and supporters in its accomplishment. Several participants also referenced the recent Covid pandemic as an example of a significant external driver for change, which had resultantly challenged traditional ways of working against the new and emerging needs of their beneficiary base.

"…if we are thinking bigger, if we're thinking about how we can make the world a better place as it relates to our charity and our charitable purpose, then we absolutely should be thinking about all of the actors who can help make that so (...) So, they will be our partner organisations, they will be commercial entities because there are a number of reasons why it can be good for them to be seen to be working constructively with the likes of us and it absolutely will be civil servants and politicians because they are responsible for the legislative framework within which we operate." (Participant A)

"…because we have a policy team and an information team, we always have half an eye on what's going on out there, what's coming up next so that I think helps to keep us, you know fresh and on the ground. Uh, I think we've augmented that with a, so we sort of have an insight team that kind of processes and organises some of that stuff." (Participant I)

"… I think we are trying to create space where everyone is encouraged to look outside the organisation to spot what others are doing, what we can learn from that, what are the trends, what's going on in the world that directly or tan gently relates to our cause and mission and purpose that we can piggyback on." (Participant K)

In describing the requirement for strategic consideration and capability, just under two thirds of participants (9) cited some of the challenges in place that were preventing or inhibiting effective delivery in this area.

"…we haven't recruited to that skill set of being able to translate strategy into operational direction (…) I think there's something, you know, about are you capable of doing this? and therefore come on the journey and we can take you along, or is it like that there isn't the capability within the organisation that we need to bring different people in or whether that's in addition or in exchange for, but we know there needs to be more accountability down the chain as it were." (Participant B)

"… I think one of the greatest, or the most interesting areas or whatever or where we flourished is that capability around responsiveness and that innovation. So, I think that speed of action of responding, and that's been our saving really and that's across the board in the impact side and in the income side and engagement, so that front facing part. I would say what we haven't got, is that we haven't been able to grow that ability behind the scenes to have that same quick lightness of foot and be as responsive." (Participant G)

Two participants cited this challenge linked to the benefit of integrated working to ensure strategic success (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; Sinah, 2005; Swart et al., 2019). Bringing about whole charity organisation and integration to harness expertise was seen as necessary and beneficial however delivering on this for some, seemed like a sizeable and complex task to achieve.

"I think one of the challenges that we have is understanding and corralling the experience that we do have across the charity. We've got in any number of different areas, we have a wealth of talent and expertise, but lives are busy with geographic dislocated and corralling that, getting it together in such a way that we can really bring those minds together to help consider and then shape particular issue is not straight forward." (Participant A)

"…we have had to learn and are learning now is that whole business model, so that's the bit that we're not… is new. Like we all know what we should be doing but actually putting it together seems to be harder than we envisaged and it's strange because I came from an organisation, so I've had years of running really efficient and effective organisations." (Participant G)

Further examples of inhibitors to strategic capability were cited in the political arena. Two participants, (J and P) raised the challenges of external funding management and the short-termism nature of that (Henderson & Lambert, 2018). The impact of this as described in practice included that short-term funding contracts were disconnected with longer-term governmental strategic objectives, and investments in the short-term to save in the long-term weren't supported compromising the strategic ability of the

charity. The capability requirement to broker and resolve these tensions in the long-term (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008) were represented in the examples given:

> *"…we need somebody to do that, to have the vision to see the long-term view and some of them do it. There's an NHS ten-year plan but its rhetoric and in reality, as well. It's alright writing it in a paper but you've got to adequately fund it and support it." (Participant J)*

> *"… in our case, you know, we might have to pivot to deal with COVID, then way, you know, pivot to deal with extra costs an energy costs and, you know, we know from just what's happened this week the world can dramatically shift so quickly. So, I think what does bind us together in the long-term is the long-term goals, that there are gaps that exist in society and were 100% committed to closing those gaps and we will have a full focus on that, you know, for probably as long as you look out in the future." (Participant N)*

Further considerations connected to strategic capability identified by four participants fell into an area of commercial competence linked to business-like behaviours. The sub theme of business-like practice will be considered in the next chapter however the cultural considerations are relevant to this analysis. Indeed, the requirement for different skill sets aligned to more transactional ways of working towards mission achievement (Peric et al., 2020) was articulated well along with some of the challenges in achieving that balance as a charitable organisation. Again, participants spoke into the requirement for diversity in approach and the need for effective management of differentiated parts of the organisation towards the collective goal. For example:

> *"… we now have to become the much more business-like organisation. Culturally, that's a harder thing for young or younger organisations to go through 'cause we really basically spent ten years not being able to get beyond 3 million. So that next step is a big cultural transition as well and we've now got to bring in all those processes. So, we've never invested properly in people, culture, processes, infrastructure." (Participant G)*

> *"… I guess the charity sector attracts people that really care about what their cause is and obviously from an emotional intelligent point of view, that's really important. It doesn't necessarily mean that you bring in a range of people with, you know maybe more sort of commercial or business-like skills, and I think that the challenge is how you can blend those two together to get the best of both really." (Participant N)*

The final area to emerge as a challenge to strategic capability and linked to the cross-cutting theme of Board Governance was that linked to the role of Trustees associated with strategic performance. In the examples given, concerns were highlighted in relation to Trustee risk appetite and the extent to which, Trustees were able, be it through ability or capacity to support a more risk orientated strategic plan.

> *"…we're going to do a risk appetite exercise with our trustees 'cause we know that we've got to have that open discussion about have we got the appetite to make these big decisions or not? And what does that mean if we haven't? I mean it puts us in a tricky position if we haven't. But what is our risk appetite as an organisation?" (Participant J)*

> *"…I think there's a lot of risk averse sort of thinking and behaviour and leadership around. In fairness not always from management, quite offer from board members but you know organisations I think who, you know, or sort of dining out on their reputation from 20 years ago who really are just sort of managing this sort of rated decline. I find that a bit depressing really. I feel like charity should be really radical and different and you know, prepared to take risks, sensible risks but prepared to take risks and to be different in the way they achieve their social purpose." (Participant K)*

> *"… there is a bit of a challenge when I guess you blend, uhm, people from an organisation who've been in the charity sector for a long time, and I've had a, I guess, a leadership which, is very much focused on risk and avoidance of risk because, you know, one of the biggest challenges I think as a trustee as you take on a lot of responsibility and therefore you know, by the time you finish going through governance, safeguarding all those sorts of things come the question is how much bandwidth you've got for a more sort of, I guess business orientated commercial orientated discussions." (Participant N)*

These observations result from participants leading some of the biggest and forward learning charities in relation to strategic ambition and spoke into the requirement for conditions which support explorative approaches beyond shorter-term strategic achievement (Palm & Lilja, 2017).

Previous literature appertaining to organisational ambidexterity in the context of private and public organisations supports many of the findings within this research linked to strategic capability. The importance of strategic responsibility articulated by participants in the context of their social mission is consistent with the narrative of Cipriani et al. (2020), who determine the functions of charities in having clear moral

purpose in the form of socially impactful objectives. The interrelationship with the external environment described by several participants as part of their strategic decision making, is consistent with the work of Hovarth et al. (2018), who highlight the dynamic nature of social mission over time and how it may change to meet social need depending on socio-economic conditions forcing necessity and timeliness of demand (Hovarth et al., 2018). Many participants demonstrated that continuing to meet relevant social demand over time in line with emerging or renewed environments was part of their strategic capability requirement.

Consistent with the work of Henderson and Lambert (2018), McDonald (2007), and Robichau and Wang (2018), the impact of funding sources as an external variable was noted by participants within this research as creating pressures towards strategic achievement. This was due not least, to the disconnect between short-term funding contracts and the longer-term strategic outcomes deemed necessary for the beneficiary group and wider society. For those charities who received funding through commissioners or contracts, they spoke to the requirements for crisis intervention, performance management and operational prioritisation as slowing explorative developments in line with their long-term strategic ambition. This finding is consistent with the work of Henderson and Lambert (2018) in their study into the survival of UK charities who found grant funded organisations to be vulnerable to mission drift or failure due to the high dependency on short-term tactical outputs.

Discussions on capability and capacity within this research talked to the inherent tensions in managing internal organisational differentiation and integration. Whilst structural forms of organisational ambidexterity will be examined in Chapter 6, from a cultural perspective, participants in this research articulated different departments using different capabilities though internally aligned through the strategic intent of the social mission. Consideration of business-like cultures and practices emerged in these discussions and a recognition by some participants of differentiated skills sets, which talked to an incorporation of process and commerce alongside people orientated practice. This is consistent with the premise determined by O'Reilly and Tushman (2008, 2013), that each sub-unit works to a "common strategic intent, an overarching set of values and targets [and in doing so use] different competences, incentives, systems, process and cultures come each internally aligned" (O'Reilly &

Tushman, 2008, p. 192). Notwithstanding this, a number of participants talked to the importance of the integration of the whole organisational model and harnessing expertise from across the charity towards particular challenges. This is consistent with ambidextrous practice beyond organisational and strategic design towards multi-level integration (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; Sinah, 2005; Swart et al., 2019). Whilst participants were not explicit in their description of ambidextrous practice within the whole business unit in describing cultural and capability requirements, their consideration of behavioural capability at the business unit level and the role of human capital spoke to a recognition for an integrated organisation, thus signifying contextual ambidexterity in practice.

This research identified the cross-cutting theme of Board capability, particularly regarding risk appetite connected to diversification in operating model linked to strategic success as well as the development of business orientated commercial discussions. Bryson et al. (2008), in considering strategic orientation in ambidextrous public organisations identified that ambidextrous working through exploitation and exploration (March, 1991) in the not-for-profit sector as a prerequisite for success. Participants in describing the need for board effectiveness in relation to risk appetite and big decision making spoke into the requirement for explorative behaviours at the Board level. Indeed, this is consistent with the work of Miles and Snow's (1978) strategy typology and the requirement for strategic leadership through "(1) the role of the organization's dominant coalition of decision makers, (2) the importance of their perceptions, (3) the responsibility for assigning (segmenting) portions of environment to different organisational subunits, (4) they need to scan the environment and choose whether to be proactive or reactive to changes, and (5) their need to address, and often work to change" (p. 20- 21). Related to this research finding, the dominant coalition of decision makers are the Trustees of the Board and participants highlighted their importance and role in key strategic decision making including in managing external risks and opportunities and their need to confront and deliver on change. One participant identified the limitation of Trustees becoming lodged in the history of the organisation and the strategic disablement this can cause. This is consistent with the 'dominant logics' described by Bettis and Prahalad (1995), regarding traditional overriding beliefs about what the organisation should be and do.

Through all the identified requirements and challenges, participants spoke to the need for ambidextrous capabilities to balance the inherent differences across the organisation and reconcile towards a common purpose. This again reinforces participants were demonstrating practices consistent with the term 'dynamic capability' (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008), particularly how they were managing differences between departmental needs, and external variables against operational and strategic timelines. This is consistent with the description of ambidexterity offered by O'Reilly and Tushman, (2011), as "a complex set of routines including decentralisation, differentiation, targeted integration, and the ability of senior leadership to orchestrate the complex trade-offs" (p. 6), as well as their final condition for ambidextrous organisations, "the ability of the senior leadership to tolerate and resolve the tensions arising from separate alignments" (p. 9).

5.4 Culture and Capability: Primary theme – Conditions for performance

The theme of conditions for performance arose from conversations linked to capability to meet the emergent requirements of the organisation and were connected to themes of business-like practices (Chapter 6) and culture. Three secondary themes emerged from the theme of performance linked to culture and capability. These were conditions for a performance culture, workforce incentivisation and handling mistakes, which shall now be discussed in turn.

The matter of conditions needed to support a culture of high performance drew various consideration from 4 participants who contemplated the necessary requirements. Participant D, identified a cultural difference between the charity and commercial sector in relation to performance appetite and drive in the context of developing a business-like culture:

> *"… You know, we shouldn't try and bite off more than we can chew. But the flipside of that is if you were working in one of the, so the grocers and you've got your Christmas trading, you know, massively competitive, you know, you got to report your data in January. You know that you don't want to be in this sort of, you know, down the bottom of the achievement table. You know, because questions will be asked, and the share price will take a hit and*

whatever. So particularly in food, food, grocery and yet, so that massive competitive focus in Christmas trading and yet when they come back in January, it's not as if the grocers can say we've had a tough quarter, you know what, we just sort of take our foot off the accelerator in quarter 4 or just soft pedal till the end of March, you know, because we're all a bit knackered from Christmas. You sort of get ALDI starting a price war and someone, you know, someone comes and buys Morrisons and whatever and, you know, it's just, it's just, you know, cutthroat for 12 months of the year and I think for us, the charity sector, people don't…. that sort of hot breath of competition, that hot breath of constant evolution isn't, I don't think there as much as it is in a commercial sector." (Participant D)

Notably, Participant G reflected upon the success of charitable growth and the requirement that this brought for an improved performance culture of accountability (Peric et al., 2020) Interestingly, they draw upon the tension between explorative experimentation which was "fun" and "exciting" and the requirement for efficiency, which felt counter opposite to this in cultural terms:

"…we went from a relatively small organisation to an explosion of where [name of disability] became like the subject, you know, the cause celebre really and we benefited greatly. So, we had that flurry of activity, and it felt like that moment of chaos where we were experimenting with so many different things and we have more money than we could spend, and it was really exciting. And then you have to become much more efficient organisation 'cause you were responsible for it and that shift was a massive cultural shift, and at times it was painful cause you lost some of the fun and the excitement from before." (Participant G)

Consistent with the identification of explorative versus exploitative cultural behaviours, and findings under sub theme one, strategic capability, Participant M reflected upon cultural differentiation between departments operating within a short-term and longer-term focus.

"…the tensions we see in this organisation are probably from those who work in kind of risk, compliance, and insurance roles versus those who work in areas like service delivery in fundraising that needs to be much more dynamic and driven and need a much higher risk appetite. So, we've got a kind of part of the organisation with quite a high risk appetite who wants to be kind of just get on and do it and see how it goes and live with the consequences, and then we've obviously got parts of the organisation that are relatively risk averse and wanting to, kind of, put more process and procedure and kind of slow those

things down but keep us safe and I think we wrestle with finding the sweet spot between those." (Participant M)

The theme of workforce incentivisation is the next secondary theme under the theme of conditions for performance and was a topic within the interview framework under the a priori code of human capital. This topic generated comments by just under half of participants interviewed. Participants shared many examples of workforce incentivisation from benchmarking salaries against external charities including offering median values; events with leaders, offering flexible and home-based working packages; a high focus on celebrating success; as well as investing in personalised training and development programmes.

Two of the participants spoke specifically to having staff who identified with the organisational purpose or cause and incentivising them to work for the charity around this, whether this is through working packages or recognising achievements.

"I think we're trying to incentivise those people around flexibility, incentivise people around learning and development. Uhm, we sort of pitch ourselves in terms of pay at kind of charity sector medium point. I think we want to attract people who are into our purpose, who want to work at home, who want to work in an organisation who is going to invest in their own professional development and growth. So that's what we do." (Participant K).

"a lot of motivation comes from the fact that people absolutely get our cause and understand our cause and have a direct family experience with that you know, so talking about the importance of their work and their positive… and the benefits there making and the impact they're having is really important because it's very motivating, 'cause that's why a lot of people come to us." (Participant M)

Indeed, the theme of reward and recognition in the context of performance success was cited by two participants who articulated the value of a recognition culture linked to achieving organisational outcomes:

"…you're trying to, you know drive, trying to encourage, you know, the right sort of generic behaviours in the organisation of not fearing failure, trying things, working collaboratively across the organisation, not just sitting there in your functional silo, uh, you know, really feeling you're trying to make a difference, being driven by some sort of customer insight to drive your ideas and although things are really important elements of this, irrespective what

your idea is and I think you know being able to reward and encourage those things, I think it sends out a positive message about what types of performance sort of aspects matter around here." (Participant D)

"…yearly, we recognise performance across the organisation, which is very inclusive, and we put a lot by reward and recognition. Charities are generally better in terms of investing in developing their skills of their staff and offering them opportunities. Usually, it isn't financial that's the downside. We don't have that incentive that's financially rewarded and we do have opportunities. We do encourage people to shadow each other, volunteer, link to our cause." (Participant H)

Notwithstanding this, one participant identified that recognition particularly seems to work in some areas of the organisation better than others notably departments with quantitative outcomes such as fundraising as opposed to qualitative achievement delivered by beneficiary services. This aligns with the findings above appertaining to differentiated subcultures and the need for 'dynamic capability' (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008) in the management of this.

"There's something all the culture of services that doesn't sometimes relate itself very well to incentivisation whereas in fundraising when I worked in fundraising or supported fundraising it's been like "I want you to know I've raised this amount of money", "well you know you're the best fundraiser of the year." It's a different culture so I think that with services you just have to balance it." (Participant B)

Finally, and not unexpectedly given the previous discussions on the impact of funding constraints and short-term funding contracts, incentivisation in the form of pay and reward linked to affordability was identified as an issue for several participants. Indeed, the competing demands of being an attractive and competitive employer against the tension of limited contractual funding or demands on services was a real pressure for some participants to resolve:

"… I think there's pressure on us now. I think the current climate is really difficult to recruit and I think that's going to shape things and we got to make a decision, what can we afford? Cos if we go going to do it for all the staff here, it means we can't get any more staffing we can't afford anymore so it's that sort of balance isn't it? And that's the hard one." (Participant G)

"…as a charity who obviously has limited funds available, I'm looking at today at the here and now, the environment we're in today where, you know, cost of living is increasing all the time. We're looking at pay awards and wanting to provide something there's equitable and affordable for our staff but at the same time we know that we're under pressure from my funders to keep the costs down. I think it's a real challenge for us. We are finding it a real challenge to keep our really good staff motivated, involved." (Participant P)

The theme of handling mistakes is the final secondary theme under the theme of conditions for performance and was also a topic within the interview framework under the overarching theme of human capital. This topic generated comments by just over a third (5) of participants interviewed who focused their conversations on creating the right cultural environment for organisational development including innovation. These included explanations of how this was being achieved in practice as well as the limitations to developing a culture of promoting mistakes in practice (Palm & Lilja, 2017).

Several participants focused on the requirement for the right cultural environment citing the importance of testing and allowing for failure in practice towards achieving the right outcomes. Discussions within this topic led to a finding that many participants supported a culture of risk taking as part of an explorative agenda towards change and development demonstrating confidence building, agility, and role modelling as important in this process:

"I don't think that matters whether you got things that fail, or people fail at certain things. I think it's about that trying and constantly, you know, for every eight different ideas or new ways of thinking or doing things, it might be that two only ever work so you'll always have the majority that don't so it's about building I suppose, that confidence again within the workforce about how you operate, what are the boundaries for operating to let that happen but to give people the freedom I suppose and that space to do that." (Participant B)

"Test and learn, test, and learn, test and learn. And because our culture is about speed, it means we take more risk, and I certainly am very comfortable in that environment. It does mean that sometimes things don't work and maybe you had put three months' work into it beforehand to plan everything out, maybe do all your checks and blah, blah, blah, then maybe they wouldn't have happened but who's got three months in terms of time, money and effort, we don't." (Participant C)

Four participants, including one cited above also demonstrated the limitations in practice of successfully transforming into an organisational culture, which supports risk and failure. Much of this was linked to previous organisational cultures and authoritative leadership styles which, prevented risk taking and condoned mistakes in practices.

> *"I think people historically have kind of kept their head down because, you know, there's been a real command or control dictate sort of culture. People have been used to getting their head chewed off, you know, for getting things wrong or expressing an opinion, which I think is really unhelpful. So, we don't do that now, but actually getting the organisation to understand that's okay, is good." (Participant D)*

> *"… people who had been with the organisation in its old incarnation, and still with us in the new, I think, are the ones that are struggling most to shift to this, you know, fail fast type environment. So, you know, I think people who are coming in 'cause they're attracted by this new strategy and being social change orientated and like, you know, recognising that there is no one thing we have to do to make our theories of change a reality, like it's going to be experimental. There's going to be things that work, things that don't work, things that land well, things that land terribly and that our tolerance for that has gone up." (Participant K)*

> *"It's part of this piece of being a learning organisation which, we need to drive on culturally. So, it's not as good as it should be. And also, we're an organisation that kind of two years ago had a systemic bullying problem. So, the reality is that's going to culturally take a long time to change." (Participant M)*

These examples indicate organisations, which historically operated in predominantly exploitative practices with limited focus or understanding of the cultural requirements needed for exploration. This will now be considered within the review of literature against the above findings.

The review of literature draws upon various topics of culture and capability in delivering upon organisational requirements. Indeed, Bryson et al. (2008), determined a "strong organizational culture, linked to mission" (p. 16) as one of their nine propositions for increased success for public sector organisations through organisational ambidexterity.

Consideration of culture in the context of achievement and performance has been considered by many writers through the subject of business-like practice adaption (Cipriani et al., 2020; Dart, 2004; Hovarth, 2018; Maier et al., 2016; Panda, 2019; Peric et al., 2020; Suykens, 2018; Svensson et al., 2020; Robichau & Wang, 2018). Within the research, several participants with commercial sector experience made comparison between commercial and charitable practices. In this case, a specific example was given which highlighted a lack of performance appetite in the charity sector in comparison to the commercial sector. In his study of 58 articles written over the last two decades into not-for-profit use of strategic management, Miller (2018) identified not only the role of stakeholders in driving efficiency and effectiveness but also the NPOs desire to scale and grow and be adaptive to changing beneficiary requirements. For reasons appertaining to previous leadership and management cultures and practices, representative of exploitative working, participants in this research identified barriers to workforce achievement due to fear and staff feeling safe in known territory. This speaks to the 'core rigidities' identified by Leonard-Barton (1992), which are said to cause an internal environment conducive to the status quo which prevents new logics needed for competing in external markets. Whilst this did not present itself as a theme in this research, it is certainly an area worthy of further investigation due to the potential impact, risk, and performance appetite, may have within charitable organisations. There is also an important connection here between centralised rigidity as a barrier to the creatively and innovation inherent within explorative practices (Bryson et al., 2008, Palm & Lilja, 2017), which are explored in Chapter 6.

Significantly, one of the examples provided by Participant G, alluded to the tension between balancing explorative and exploitative priorities. As noted by March (1991), "exploration includes things captured by terms such as search, variation, risk taking, experimentation, play, flexibility, discovery, innovation. Exploitation includes such things as refinement, choice, production, efficiency, selection, implementation, and execution" (p. 71). Participant G's experience was one of financial stability, which brought opportunity for explorative practices versus the requirement for efficiency and accountability, which necessitated a more focused exploitative attention. The cultural implication of exploration and exploitation in practice was also drawn upon by Participant M who spoke to the cultural differentiation between functional departments

where fundraisers could hold a greater risk appetite towards performance than their service delivering colleagues. This tension supports Peng's (2019) assertion that organisations may look to implement organisational ambidexterity for reconciliatory, mutually beneficial, and balanced solutions as a mechanism to resolve inherent differences in their design. Indeed, Participant M referred to the "sweet spot" that they were seeking to find between to the two, thereby talking to "the ability of the senior leadership to tolerate and resolve the tensions arising from separate alignments" (O Reilly & Tushman, 2008, p. 9) as a condition for organisational ambidexterity.

Connected to this condition, the importance of showing value towards employees by way of incentivisation and the forms of this given by participants in this research, were consistent with the findings of Kaltenbrunner and Reichel (2018). In considering dynamic capability, the authors drew upon the importance of senior leadership participation and empowerment at the contextual level of the organisation. Indeed, examples of opportunities for leadership led events, celebrating success and personalised training and investment programmes demonstrated workforce empowerment.

As noted in Chapter 4, charity social mission and the achievement of social outcomes was already a heavily motivating factor for those choosing to work within the sector even without wider benefits. Notwithstanding this, the impact of financial restrictions upon charities to pay their workforce well due to funding constraints and matters of affordability was highlighted by two participants within this research. This finding is consistent with the work of authors such as Henderson and Lambert (2018), McDonald (2007), and Robichau and Wang (2018), who in their consideration of pressures and survival on charities note the impact of external market forces in the form of termed contracts and unreliable funding sources. Hence, the alignment of the organisational position to that of the external environment as dynamical capability noted by Kaltenbrunner and Reichel (2018) not only relates to responding to external market opportunities towards development but also maintaining internal consistency and relevance with the external market position to sustain human capital. Concern for the workforce and approaches described towards empowerment, enablement, recognition, and reward were frequently referred to by research participants as an important requirement for the charity's success.

Notwithstanding this, incentivisation towards exploration and exploitation set within a framework of measurement as an enabler for organisational ambidexterity suggested by Palm and Lilja (2017), was not supported by findings in this research. Similar to the applied situation of O'Reilly and Tushman's (2011) "compelling strategic intent that raises the significance of applying both exploitative and explorative means;" (p. 9) evidence of incentivisation was found as with the case of the compelling strategic intent however there was no indication that this was explicitly linked to explorative or exploitative practice.

The findings within this research show that participants viewed enablement, trust and giving freedoms towards staff as important to enabling capability and confidence in the development of key areas. This is consistent with the work of Palm and Lilja (2017), who defined as an enabler for organisational ambidexterity "a culture that allows mistakes which support exploration risk and tolerance" (p. 14-16). It is also consistent with the work of Cannaerts et al. (2019), who proposed that under contextual ambidexterity, factors of individual autonomy, supportive context and enabling leadership where a prerequisite for success through ambidexterity. Indeed, many participants within this research talked to developing a supportive culture of management be it through leadership styles, incentivisation and promoting safe risk in practice consistent with a growing understanding of the need for explorative behaviours and practices inherent within the organisation's development. This relates to the prerequisite for capability discussed above, to meet the emerging requirements upon the charity and the ability of its leadership to resolve the tensions between the short-term day to day focus and the longer-term sustainability of the charity. It also supports the work of Peric et al. (2020), who in assessing human capital as the greatest asset toward social impact identifies the value of capacity for practical and creative outcomes, which aligns with explorative capabilities.

5.5 Culture and Capability in summary:

This research supports the significance of capable senior leaders able to effectively engage a workforce around strategic intent, whilst at the same time serving to resolve the tension between short-term deliverables and long-term strategic direction and

change (Bryson et al., 2008; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008). However, there was no explicit finding of such engagements being inclusive of ambidextrous design or practice with the differentiation between the functions not being explicitly raised in the discussions. Consistent with previous research (Beckman, 2006; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013), team diversity as a strategic enabler was identified by participants as important towards managing differentiation. This included operational versus strategic and short-term versus long-term organisational priorities, with evidence of the need for caution appertaining to subdivision reconciliation. The requirement for the senior team to be 'dynamically capable' (Birkinshaw & Gupta, 2013; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008) of resolving such differences internally and in connection with the external world within varying capacity and time requirements was representative of previous research (Hovarth, 2018; Kaltenbrunner & Reichel, 2018).

Findings within this research highlight the primary need of the present beneficiary group as having a significant impact. Not only do they influence the resolution of competing demands, but they require leadership capability in resolving complexity in outcomes linked to social demand (Peric et al., 2020). Funding sources were found to have greater impact on charities where these were through short-term contractual or commissioned means with participants reflecting challenges to strategic capability consistent with previous research (Henderson & Lambert, 2018; McDonald, 2007; Robichau & Wang, 2018). Findings were made in relation to differentiated cultural behaviours within departments and the need for centralisation consistent with O'Reilly and Tushman's, (2008) "common strategic intent, an overarching set of values and targets" (p. 192). Further to this, participants spoke of the importance of higher-level integration of the whole organisational model and harnessing expertise from across the charity thus suggesting multi-level integration at a contextual level (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; Sinah, 2005; Swart et al., 2019). Board capability emerged as a cross cutting theme, identified by participants as an enabler for success with risk appetite and the requirement for exploitive behaviours as prerequisites in the enablement of ambidextrous working. Across the theme of strategic capability, this research found clear evidence of dynamic capability and ambidexterity in practice in line with the definitions of O'Reilly and Tushman (2008, 2011).

The theme of performance resulted in comparative analysis with the commercial sector and the identified need for increased risk and performance appetite consistent with the work of Miller (2018). “Core rigidities” (Leonard-Barton, 1992) were identified in the form of workforce fear and siloed working promoting status quo attitudes and in preventing explorative behaviours. This research identifies a range of cultural tensions in the delivery of explorative and exploitative practices. These were due to governance, risk appetite and opportunity. Evidence of attempts at reconciliation between alignments were consistent with the findings of O'Reilly and Tushman (2008). This research found that workforce incentivisation around human values such as enablement, recognition, engagement, and trust were highly present although monetary recognition a greater challenge, resulting in external market positioning under financial constraints. Potentially linked to this finding, there was no outcome in relation to incentivisation linked to ambidextrous practice, specifically exploitative or explorative functions as found by Palm and Lilja (2017). Further consideration of this will be offered in chapter 6. Finally, it was found that freedoms in the form of enablement, trust and empowerment were emerging within the charities under consideration indicating a more autocratic, and supportive approach developing towards a culture, which enables explorative development (Peric et al., 2020).

CHAPTER 6: Structure and Design

6.1 Introduction:

The overarching theme of structure and design responds to the objective sub-criteria 3, Charity architecture towards delivering ambidextrous outcomes and came from responses linked to business practices, strategy, capability, innovation, and systems a priori codes and as such was cross cutting within the research. Combined, participants generated primary themes relating to strategic requirements, organisational structure, and being business-like, all of which, generated a number of secondary themes shown below and which shall be discussed within this chapter. Table 6.1.1 shows these primary themes and the associated subthemes that emerged from them, which form the basis of the structure of this chapter.

TABLE 6.1.1: STRUCTURE AND DESIGN THEME AND SUBTHEMES:

Overarching Theme: Structure and Design		
Primary Theme	**Secondary Theme**	**Tertiary Theme**
Strategic requirements	Innovation	Drive
		Design
		Trustees
	Governance and accountability	Decision making systems
		Trustees
Organisational Structure	Innovation	Incremental/transformational
		Linked to data and insight
	Structural design	
	Structure for long/short-term	
Being business-like	Business-like practices	Business language
	Business-like models	
	Competitors	
	Systems and technology	

6.2 Structure and design: Primary theme – Strategic requirements

The primary theme of strategic requirements arose as a cross cutting theme in relation to social mission where themes of beneficiary led organisation design and strategic time periods were considered (Chapter 4). It also arose in relation to culture and capability specifically emergent strategic requirements and the strategic awareness of the workforce as can be seen in Chapter 5. In this chapter, the responses of participants are considered in relation to secondary themes of innovation and, governance and accountability.

A significant number of participants referred to new organisational strategies either being in development or implementation following the Covid pandemic where old strategies had been put on hold or superseded by new circumstances or ways of working. Evidence of newly realised agility, dynamism and creativity had occurred for many in response to recent external market forces and named as practices to sustain. Linked to this, were responses to the a priori code of innovation, which also emerged as a secondary subtheme in discussions on strategy as well as structure, to be discussed as a primary theme below. Indeed, participants spoke to different types of drivers predominantly linked to long-term financial sustainability, which were acting as a catalyst for innovative solutions towards strategic success:

> *"… we can't standstill. Standing still is actually moving backwards, and I think there's a recognition that because of the changes, there's so many changes in society, in demographics, in expectations, in resources that we can't but embrace innovation because we can't just keep doing things the same old way. So, we have to think about how we can use innovation to reduce costs, we have to think about how we use innovation to improve outcomes, we have to think about how we can use innovation to increase personalisation and increase people's options and choices." (Participant P)*

> *"You know, building up a supporter base takes a while. We didn't have a good case for support. We didn't really have a brand. All of those things they take time, don't they? And a lot of organisational energy and I could see that would take time and I could see it would take a lot of money so I thought actually what might be quicker, and I was a bit naive at the time, would be to look at a commercial income stream, so finding assets in the organisation whether that was actual products or programmes or organisational know how or something would be easier to commercialise and bring in a financial income that way." (Participant F)*

Hence, the role of innovation as part of a strategic solution was apparent in the discussions by participants and with that came a range of organisational design considerations inclusive of the adoption of business modelling, funding models and recording models to enable the effective management of explorative projects.

> *"So what I'd like us to do here, and the world changed, is that we bring in our business model much more closely, we have those financial controls, which we haven't been great at recently because we've run out opportunities and we haven't looked further enough ahead at projecting, but still allowing us, to give us the scope, to still do that experimentation, innovate, see what works, pullback and have that agile way of running." (Participant G)*

> *"… we developed an innovation fund where different parts of the organisation could put business cases together to develop new ideas that were not business as usual, that were either showing proof of concept to scale up an offering, or about new ways of delivering services. So, their strategy process, if that's answered your question, has highlighted some gaps in new ways of working and how we can harness the organisation more widely in delivering on new priorities." (Participant H)*

> *"… there's a lot of…. those kind of factors are helping us to kind of discern what we should be doing, and we really struggled to get ahead of that curve though, so one thing we think we're going to be able to do this year is to try to have something that we're calling on opportunities register, which is the opposite of a risk register." (Participant I)*

Some participants in drawing on their experience, however identified areas of risk inherent within organisational design in failing to appropriately manage innovative practices naming consequences of such as layering on services, and mission creep. This topic was associated with secondary theme of governance and accountability in the oversight of exploration within the organisation.

> *"… you've got to be very disciplined, you've got to be quite focused and timely, so you've got to put a time frame on it otherwise you're just going to be wafting all over the place, and I think that's what we did. So, we tried a lot of things and really, we should have been much stricter about saying that works, that doesn't, that's going, that's adapting or whatever and we didn't." (Participant F)*

> *"I think if I'm honest, I think that's probably something where we haven't been as strict as we could have been over the years, and I'm talking about decades here. I think, like lots of*

charities things grow organically and you get that sort of mission creep, and you gradually start doing more and more and that's why in a way it's good to do a strategic review every now and then and bring it back and say why are we doing this?" (Participant J)

"… we've had some, gosh, very amusing uh, attempts at doing that where, you know, I think again, there's such passion in the organisation for what we seek to do that everyone is very passionate about the interventions they're making, and so when you start to run a stop, start, continue process, nothing stops, everything continues, and other things want to start." (Participant N)

Indeed, a tertiary theme relevant to both the secondary theme of innovation and the secondary theme of governance and accountability was the requirement for governance and monitoring systems to support decision-making in the management of organisational development. Indeed, this topic drew comments from 10 out of 14 (70%) participants linked to their experience of the implications of getting this area of development both right and wrong.

"… how can we make decisions about what is impactful when we don't have an impact framework in place? How can we make decisions about what's working if we haven't got the evaluation process in place to actually say is this financially viable? Is this impactful? How does that then influence things going forward? So yes, we got the short-term services that we want to develop, the innovation ideas that we want to test but we have to have the framework to then make sure that long-term, these things can be assessed as being something we can embed within the organisation." (Participant B)

".. We have visible transparent project boards where we are constantly moving things around. So right from SLT, all the way through the organisation. So, when we're setting up sort of strategy elements and deciding on which projects go forward or not, we are constantly moving them from you know, "are we going to do it this quarter? No, we're going to move it on. or are we going to dump it?" right. It goes into the, you know, "we're not going to proceed with that", but we still leave it there because we need to see it, because it just might not be right this year." (Participant C)

"…it's got to be timely; it's got to be timed and it's got to have a finite amount of resource and budget put behind it. It can't sort of start to bleed, because there's nothing like having lots of innovation projects to knock an organisation off its mission. It's very distracting and then I think what I've taken from that is that you've got to bring it back." (Participant F)

"…through COVID (…) we allowed ourselves to experiment and innovate, which was great, but we now need to bring the systems in because we can't just keep at that rate of expansion or trial, we've got to actually have much more of those decision-making structures come in that do not restrain too much. So, it's like getting that balance." (Participant G)

Two participants with specific experience from within the commercial sector drew comparisons in relation to the requirement for decision making systems (Bryson et al., 2008), identifying the transferability of business-related methods between private and charity sectors:

"… what charities and what we have not, I don't think, do scrutinise, which businesses do is a real sense of what's really working. You know, when should you really carry on? You know, you don't have the equivalent of like, a Monday morning trading meeting you'd get in retail or hospitality industry, you know, pouring over last weeks' data. So, what's worked? What hasn't? You know what should you do about it? So, I think we're not as sharp as the commercial sector at looking at, are we really spending our money wisely? are we getting value for money? are we getting return on our investment?" (Participant D)

"... This is just basic stuff I used to do in the commercial sector, let's just introduce it here. So, we are starting to introduce frameworks for how we make decisions, you know start having some very clear outcomes, looking at things like the size of the opportunity and the complexity of executing that opportunity, building matrices of, you know what others affectively, the major projects with, you know fantastic opportunities, but also quite potentially, quite complex to execute, some real quick wins where there's some big opportunities that are easy to execute, somethings that are, you know, lower opportunities, easy to execute which we might uh certainly streamline those, and then there are others that we will just completely eliminate. (Participant N)

The primary theme of business and emerging from that, business-like practices is considered further below.

Two participants (Participant B and D) also identified inhibitors to strategic innovation resulting from Trustees:

"... The only other thing that I was thinking of is that relationship between the Trustees and the senior managers and about the push and pulls of what you present them and what they demand of you and how that can limit innovation for me (…). Conversations need to be

correct between the senior managers and the Trustees to then create that culture of innovation, and to move things forward and to be constantly advancing, not be focused constantly on the numbers or the operational output." (Participant B)

"I just think we've got the balance wrong a bit and I think therefore when you get to things like, if I talk a bit about innovation and setting up more [name of charity] enterprises, whatever it might be, as a vehicle for being agile, you know, real nervousness is, can we set the governance up so, you know, when you get to the point whereby there's a risky idea or something fails or whatever, you don't suddenly get 11 trustees wanting to jump on top of it and get involved." (Participant D)

The role of Trustees within the governance of the strategic direction of the organisation is discussed further under the secondary theme of governance and accountability, which was evidenced within the secondary theme of innovation (above) and also emerged in relation to organisational behaviours, being business-like and strategic capability discussed in Chapter 5.

Indeed throughout, governance arrangements and structures as an enabler to strategic achievement was considered by participants with an emerging theme from half of the participants interviewed linked to the feeling of overregulation in this area predominantly from internal boards or processes, but also external regulators.

"I think charity governance is generally a bit overbearing, honestly. I mean, and you'll take this the right way, I know, but if I look across [organisation name] with 11 Trustees and about 15 active Independents, it's a lot of people who have a view. If you started with a blank piece of paper and said how many non-execs does [name of organisation] need, you wouldn't say get to 26, you'd get to 10, probably 8 (…) it's too big." (Participant D).

"…we are over-regulated compared to corporate businesses in terms of multiple stakeholders, Charity Commission, CQC, Ofsted in the delivery and accountable to our board of trustees so you know, we put a lot of rigour on financial management, risk management oversight." (Participant H)

"I sort of feel like, you know, we sort of got this sort of, you know Victoria factory owners coming in to be trustees of the [organisation name], unlike, it's just, you know, it's 100 years out of date charity governance and I think if you look at the NHS or housing associations or other bits of the kind of non-profit world, they've been real advancements in terms of

governance and I think charity governance is lagging a long, long way behind." (Participant K)

Within these discussions participants described the tension between ensuring effective accountability and governance linked to the delivery of charitable objectives and spending fundraised/public income in comparison to the need for agility, new discovery, risk taking and innovation.

The review of literature in this area demonstrates that participants identified with the requirement for exploration named by March (1991) as "things captured by terms such as search, variation, risk taking, experimentation, play, flexibility, discovery, innovation" (p. 71), within a strategic development framework. Much learning had been taken from the recent external environmental forces of the Covid pandemic, which had resulted in increased and beneficial explorative practices, which were endorsed by participants as positive. Also, examples provided demonstrated the inherent tension that existed within charities between an explorative agenda and more exploitative methods of regulation "such as refinement, choice, production, efficiency, selection, implementation and execution" (March, 1991, p. 71), also identified by March (1991) in the management of ambidextrous design and functions. The latter as disenabling exploration if not appropriately balanced is consistent with the work of many writers on organisational ambidexterity who have drawn attention to the complexity in the duality of organisational ambidexterity and the risk of failing to maintain the right balance between the two at the right time (Andriopoulos & Lewis, 2009; Judge & Blocker, 2008; Koryak et al., 2018; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008; Peng, 2019; Posch & Garaus, 2019; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008; Turner & Lee-Kelley, 2013).

The secondary theme of innovation was endorsed by participants in this research as representing progressive practice whilst also remaining strategically relevant. This is consistent with the work of Miller (2018) who identified that "non-profit organizations often develop innovative, unique, or purpose-built products or services to fill a social need" (p. 34). In his study of 58 articles written over the last two decades into not-for-profit use of strategic management, Miller (2018) identified not only the role of stakeholders in driving efficiency and effectiveness but also the NPOs own desire to scale and grow and be adaptive to changing beneficiary requirements. In this

research, innovation as a means of attracting new and diverse income, as well as solutioning against an evolving social mission position, chimes with the work of Renjini (2018), and Svensson et al. (2020), who make the case for the necessity of innovation as part of a charity business model. This research supports the requirement for "strong planning and decision-making systems" (Bryson et al., 2008, p. 17) a proposition for increased success through organisational ambidexterity identified by Bryson et al. (2008). Examples of the positive effective of such systems adopted from the corporate sector and the lessons learnt for charities who did not have adequate systems for strategic decision making reinforces the above point relevant to the need to balance exploitative and explorative elements to be effective (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008).

A further secondary theme of governance and accountability drew findings about the role of senior charity personnel namely trustees and their ability to influence the balance between exploitation and exploration within a strategic framework. In this research, examples identified a lack of balance in favour of an exploitative focus at the top level, which was felt to limit exploration practices to support longer-term sustainability. This speaks to the point made by O'Reilly and Tushman (2013) that "to be successful at ambidexterity, leaders must be able to orchestrate the allocation of resources between the routine and new business domains," (p. 18), supporting the interface between what is and what may be. It also connects to the typology framework produced by Miles and Snow (1978), the first and second of which is "(1) the role of the organization's dominant coalition of decision makers [and], (2) the importance of their perceptions" (p. 20-21) towards strategic success. Findings within this research pointed to Chief Executives and other Senior Leaders feeling constrained by their Board Trustees with some dedicating significant capacity towards influencing their position to ensure effective strategic leadership (Bryson et al., 2008). Hence, this research finds that the senior team referred to by O'Reilly and Tushman (2008) that "explicitly owns the unit's strategy of exploration and exploitation" (p. 9) needs to also encompass the Charity's Board representatives.

6.3 Structure and design: Primary theme – Organisational Structures

The primary theme of organisational structures was a sub code within the research framework resulting from the a priori codes of strategy, capability, and innovation. Participants talked about structure as an enabler for innovation, in the context of organisational design, and in relation to short-term and long-term organisational time periods. Continuing with the theme of innovation discussed under the primary theme of strategy above, this section begins with participant accounts of how innovation is structured for and managed within their respective charities. This is then followed by a consideration of structural design including description of the dualities of exploitative and explorative functions, which encompasses participants views of the requirements for balancing dual structures.

The function of innovation was identified by all participants as a necessary enabler to strategic success within this research (Miller, 2018). This was the case for charities that were delivering on innovation in a focused and structured way and had been for some time, through to those who were supporting innovation at a grass roots level, establishing, and developing innovation in practice. Innovation was described by participants as happening in a variety of ways from focused designated departments or project teams through to emergent areas of thought involving practices such as co-production with beneficiaries and incentivisation programmes with staff as the examples below show:

> *"We also innovate by creating sort of tactical teams or focus teams, so if there's a particular area of interest for us where we wanting to bring minds together to find some ideas or some answers, then we can create project teams to look into those things." (Participant A)*

> *"…we have an innovation team here. We have part of our research team is purely based on innovation. They work on formal innovation models. We do a lot of things called things like accelerator programmes. Here we take a lot of... we work with a lot of communities for people with [health condition] to take really kind of knotty problems and put them through a kind of formal innovation space." (Participant M)*

"so, what we do is, and I've introduced this from my private equity days, we do what we call investment on a page where we just… it's a very light touch assessment where, you know, 2 pages where you just set out what you want to do, why you want to do it, why it's aligned to our outcomes and what you expect the learnings to be from it and then we run it for the period of time, we put some money into it and then we'll come back and review it." (Participant K)

Many of the participants chose to make a distinction between types of innovation through explaining what they were doing. In the examples given, innovation was described at two distinct levels. At the first level, small innovations taking place at a micro level within the organisation for the benefit of incremental improvement. Often described as taking place by staff within front line job roles or functions, this type of innovation appeared to be optimising existing services. At the second level, innovation was described as sizeable, strategically planned, delivered in a focused way, at a macro level with the potential to transform the organisation, subject to the success of it as tested in practice. These participants describe this well:

"… so, a lot of what we're doing is both micro innovation and macro innovation. So, the macro innovation basically happens in local [charity name stores] where people do have great ideas, get a little bit of money from somewhere, test it out, find it works. We then sort of sweep around in not a very systematic way and pick up some of these ideas and then think hmm, that's interesting. Uhm, could we then get some money to test it on a slightly broader basis. And so, we do quite a lot of what I call proof of concept programmes." (Participant I)

"It's innovation that's for transformation or innovation that's for incremental improvement. In my head there's two distinctions that I make. So, I think we do the incremental improvement. We're getting better at that, but I think now we're at a place where we've got a clear strategy, we've got a healthy culture, we've got a lot of the right people on the bus now, and we've got an operating model that has created the foundations for growth. Now we've got an opportunity to kind of go for it, so that's exciting but, you know, transformation doesn't, you know it, it's not a big step, it's lots of tiny steps that add up at the end in a transformation, so you just have to kind of give it time." (Participant O)

Within the interviews, some participants in describing the distinction between this new finding of incremental and transformational innovation, talked to some of the challenges of delivering on both agendas. The following quoted participants, talked to the challenge of moving into transformational innovation but also keeping incremental

innovation under control and appropriately resourced where the workforce was empowered and encouraged to engage in innovative practices.

> *"The area where we're not so good links into the deeper, the more complex areas or idea of innovation, so, for example, if we're wanting to, rather than take small steps along an innovative path, make a giant step, we're not very good at, at least we haven't got much practice I don't think, at identifying, freeing up the resource to do the thinking to lead us through the… to present the case and the evidence to allow us to think yes, that's exactly what we want to do, and then make that big step." (Participant A)*

> *"…we're working on a framework model, cause I think we need to put some boundaries around innovation, but we want to do that in a way that doesn't discourage it and so for me, that's about creating boundaries and try to keep those boundaries and those kind of frameworks as consistent across the entire organisation as you can cause then you're driving similar sorts of entrepreneurial behaviour." (Participant M)*

> *"… cross team working is improving all the time and I'm very optimistic that that's going to really continue to improve in terms of uhm, frontline staff contributing to some of the bigger development activities, that's absolutely our ambition. Uhm, And I think it's part of the culture change that we want to create, that we allow our frontline staff who have so much experience and expertise and so many insights to contribute more to that shaping of our big transformational work." (Participant O)*

Linked to this, there was evidence of business like thinking from some research participants who were recognising the relationship, even tension, between innovation and the function of data and insight linked to their beneficiary groups in the analysis of performance and future social mission achievement. These participants both had strong financial backgrounds from within commercial sectors and represented an understanding of business modelling appertaining to innovation markets and end users.

> *"I think we've got increasingly, a carder of people who really see the opportunity and actually understand generically how innovation should be sort of taken to the market. So, I think I benefit now from a slightly impatient group of people who want to get on and do some stuff, which is, which is great. Uhm, I think you know, with my customer focused hat on, the insight we're increasingly using, and this is a critical point, I think, you know, really understanding what people, what people want." (Participant D)*

"We want to grow our Commission income, partly through planned growth and partly through tender growth. There's enough there to cover all the bases for now but yes, we do… this impact insight function will draw that together so that we continuously learning to inform what next, as well as how well we're performing and drawing some of the separate data together." (Participant H)

From a structural perspective, participants gave examples of their organisations comprising of formal designated innovation teams operating within areas of fundraising, research, data, and insight, through to innovation right across the organisation and at every level. Innovation was referred to using words such as ideas, thought development, testing and learning, creativity, pilots, risk taking and incubating. Hence, innovation as a capability across the organisation was commonly recognised as a requirement.

Concomitant to this, participants identified a secondary theme of structural design in reflecting upon how their structures would meet the needs of the organisation moving forward. Participants demonstrated a consciousness in relation to the structural design of their respective organisations, some relating this to strategy and others in relation to aspects of leadership and culture. Several participants identified the requirement for flatter, less hierarchical, control and command type structural arrangements that were serving to create too many layers or disconnection across the organisation and preventing effective alignment and integration. Maximising the collective value of the charity to exploit its effect against the social mission, was an overriding intention in the conversations held.

Notwithstanding this and furthering the findings in relation to the first primary theme; innovation, there were diverse examples provided of how charities were structuring for aspects of innovation with evidence towards separate alignments for day-to-day business, and innovation for developmental activity (Asif, 2017; Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008, 2013; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008). Half of the participants interviewed (7) described areas of their organisation that had dedicated oversight or resource towards these functions, as the following examples demonstrate:

"… it was designed that way really to give time to both and making sure that the operating model… service delivery model, the process and systems weren't left behind and our

aspirations in terms of innovation were possible and feasible and the two were able to run in parallel with each other so, you know, we, you know, we are linking them very, very closely." (Participant B)

"… we've got the headroom on the funding, actually the money to actually go and drive innovation and we're looking at [commercial arm] as a vehicle to do that, bringing in and taking talented people we've got actually, but also realising that in terms of tapping into different sources of funding, you know, how do you take, you know, new projects to the market, how do you implement, how do, you know, different skills we might have." (Participant D)

"So, we introduced a director of transformation and alongside that we introduced a projects and programmes little office or directorate and brought in people who were specifically experts in project management/programme management so that was a really good thing that brought a disciplining and a toolbox and a under framework to be able to run these projects." (Participant F)

A further noteworthy example given by participant K, was the most extreme example of a charity applying differentiated structures to transition into a new operating model in line with its strategy. Whilst this participant predominantly talked to differentiation between different organisational models as opposed to types of organisational function as is the case with organisational ambidexterity, the method of differentiation and ambidextrous working could be deduced from description provided:

"I more deliberately, consciously set-up two things. I mean they weren't entities but like you know we had an executive team that was about care and support, and we had an executive team that's about the wider charity, and at the point at which we completed our safe transfers, you describe it then, that management team dropped away most of them in the TUPE pool. Some of them came back over here to the new world, some of them left the organisation and went elsewhere but structurally, they were two separate things, and we'd make different choices about, you know, pay awards and L&D and technology investment and whatever it might be, recognising that we've made a strategic choice to do two things." (Participant K)

Whilst the above quoted participants did point to having functions or teams that were innovation leaders, most participants, including three of those above spoke to the requirement for innovation to be embedded horizontally and vertically within the

organisation (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; Sinha, 2015; Swart et al., 2019) to maximise its potential and fully embed a culture of emergent developments and ideas.

> *"… we've got some amazing unheralded pockets of insight and knowledge actually often from people, unsung heroes and heroines you have been with us for donkeys years who, you know, have quietly established a niche in technology or welfare or, uh, you know, aspects of fundraising and we don't, you know they takeover and they get the odd little triumph and yet we've not stitched that together in any sort of, you know process that is not meant to try and smother it, it was meant to try and give it the oxygen to, you know be optimised." (Participant D)*

> *"… we have one capability, which is called digital and innovation, which is supposed to be the kind of innovation hub for the, for the organisation. So, it's not buried away in fundraising, which you sometimes see in organisations, this is about how the organisation is innovative in their delivery of its strategy and how we support all of our other capabilities to be innovative. So, it's a kind of hub and spokes model really." (Participant K)*

> *"I think as an organisation we used to think innovation sits over here, out on the limb. It's over here. It's largely driven by tech and there are few people in the organisation who were interested in technology and change and innovation and that's that over there. Now we are very much working towards, and it's becoming much more embedded in everyday life and what we do." (Participant P)*

These examples provided by participants of delivering on innovation within the context of the organisation suggests that participants viewed innovation as a key function, which needed to be embedded not only within structures but within organisational culture and practice.

As well as considering structures in relation to managing business as usual and developmental areas of work, several participants considered structures in relation to time periods, specifically in meeting the demands of the short-term but also positioning for the longer-term:

> *"…we should understand I think, as a charity, that we may need to structure more deliberately for some change initiatives downstream and if we've got a defined resource structuring deliberately, do something, means stopping or reducing something deliberately, in other areas as well." (Participant A)*

"… last summer, uh, we sort of started to think about how we build a machine that can deliver our theories of change in our strategy, given that we think the mission is broadly correct (…) our design, future culture, looking at new values, organisational design, back to my kind of less hierarchical point, but also, what are the capabilities that we need to become a social change organisation? (…) so, I think we spend time thinking about organisational structure and capability in order to be able to deliver." (Participant K)

The final finding to present in relation to the primary theme of organisational structure relates to comments made by participants who in their explanations were often unknowingly describing competing demands of ambidexterity and the 'dynamic capability' (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008) required in the leadership and management of charity organisations. The level of complexities and transitions associated with ensuring social mission survival and sustainability but also the dual management of areas of exploration and risk within functions of control and discipline inherent within charity governance. These participants describe this well:

"I would say we are ambidextrous constantly unnaturally but we haven't probably ever really understood that that's how we work to be honest, I think (…) you always get people arrive and they think we're going to be simple to work within and the complexities of which, the complexity in the world that we work with, out there and then internally, how we have to be responsive to that in the short, medium and long-term, all at once (…) It shaped the way that we work in a very different way, and we live more hand to mouth as a result of it, and that that encourages us to think differently." (Participant G)

"I sort of feel that we sometimes under report or under acknowledge, whatever the right language, just how many constant transitions organisations are doing all the time. Some of them are big and some of them are small and some of them are long-term and some of them are short, but like I think organisations are constantly sort of living and evolving and changing, and sometimes you want it to go quicker and just get into the new state sooner, which I think is understandable but at the same time you're managing a whole load of risk and you know, reputation, all sorts of things in the state that you're wanting to exit from." (Participant K)

"… one of the challenges has been trying to blend that sort of, I guess, very structured approach, which can take quite a bit of time to get things to happen because you've had to do all the research, do all the insight, do all the, you know, governance, put all the planning process in place, you know, many of which are there to design, to avoid taking on undue risk in this charity, but blending that with the desire to maybe be a bit more agile, a bit more

open to risk, uhm, and trying things that might not work and being prepared for them to fail and learn, all those sort of things, that's quite common, you know, at the extreme you're putting two very different ways of working together." (Participant N)

"…we've got to both maintain the discipline around financial control and the discipline around continuous improvement, which is one mindset and then another mindset, which is think big, take risks, imagine the art of the possible, go for it. And they're not…. they don't have to be, but not polar opposites but they do require different mindsets, different capabilities and sometimes that can be tension." (Participant O)

Consistent with previous literature (Miller, 2018; Renjini, 2018; Svensson et al., 2020), the interrelationship between social mission, innovation and performance was clear in the accounts provided by participants with the former acting as a driver, sometimes an enabler for innovation practice. The review of literature correlates the terms used by participants to signify innovation practice with the descriptors for exploration used by March (1991). Within this research, participants used descriptors of ideas, thought development, testing and learning, creativity, pilots, risk taking and incubating to describe innovation akin to March (1991) who stated that "exploration includes things captured by terms such as search, variation, risk taking, experimentation, play, flexibility, discovery, innovation" (p. 71). Hence, there is a clear finding that charities were delivering on both exploitative and explorative agendas. Furthermore, it was evident that senior leadership innovative capability existed or was understood as a requirement, consistent with the conclusions of Posch and Gauraus (2019), and that management were promoting innovation practice (Palm & Lilja, 2017).

Significant to this research, is the identification of innovation types and how this connects to Duncan's (1976) early determination of the ambidextrous organisation, specifically the dual structures needed to manage activities of varying capacity and timeline. Findings within this research determine two forms of innovation; incremental innovation predominantly linked to exploitative requirements and transformational innovation linked to explorative requirements. This is a noteworthy finding that has not been identified within the literature reviewed, which more generally talks about transformational change requirements (Svensson et al., 2020) but does not distinguish differentiation explicitly in this way. Taking this analysis, a stage further into the theme of 'structure', findings show that the dual structures primarily debated by Duncan

(1976), March (1991), and O'Reilly and Tushman (2008), were consistently apparent within the charities represented within this research. However, where there was evidence in relation to separate alignments for innovation, participants related this to transformational innovation within exploration as opposed to incremental innovation, which was described as taking place contextually within the charity.

This connects to structural forms of ambidexterity. There is no evidence within this research of sequential (temporal) ambidexterity with the functions of exploration and exploitation managed separately and consecutively over time (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008, 2013; Peng, 2019; Sinha, 2015). Reflections by participants in relation to an exceptionally fast changing external market and consequential transformation agendas combined with strong internal drivers to operate efficiently and deliver on performance in the short-term, meant that this form of structure was not feasible. This is consistent with the supposition of O'Reilly and Tushman (2008) who identify its feasibility within organisations with slower paced predictable market factors.

There was clear evidence within this research, of organisations developing separate alignments consistent with structural (simultaneous) ambidexterity (Asif, 2017; Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; O'Reilly &Tushman, 2008, 2013; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008) including the premise of O'Reilly and Tushman (2008), of each department working to a "common strategic intent, an overarching set of values and targets" (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013, p. 9). Indeed, the role of senior management in effectively communicating the vision, mission, common values and strategic intent of the organisation were apparent as noted previously, however in the case of transformational exploration, departments or functions working in areas of insight, marketing, product innovation and research were differentiated albeit interconnected with the rest of the organisation. This is consistent with the findings of Swart et al. (2019), who identify a hierarchical separation of long-term flexible problem solving at a senior management level in comparison to the short-term task resolution, which occurs at a tactical level. It is also consistent with the work of Cannaerts et al. (2016, 2019), who in the comparative case study research found high levels of differentiation between management focusing on exploration and other employees who focused on exploitative activity.

Therefore, notwithstanding the dual and differentiated structures most notably determined at the transformational level representing exploration, in the area of incremental exploration often for the benefit of service or product optimisation, contextual ambidexterity was evident within this research. Indeed, concomitant to the work of March, (1991) and Turner et al. (2013), participants identified the behavioural capability of incremental innovation at the business unit level where exploitative processes and practices were also taking place. Hence, organisational ambidexterity was integrated in practice across multiple organisational units and levels (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; Sinha, 2015; Swart et al., 2019).

Therefore, this research supports the condition for leaders to ensure "separate but aligned architectures such as business models, structures, and cultures, which operate at executive and front-line levels" (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2011, p. 9) named by O'Reilly and Tushman, (2011) as one of their five conditions for leaders of ambidextrous organisations. It is also consistent with Miles and Snow's (1978), strategy typology, the proposition for "ambidextrous organisational architecture" by Bryson et al. (2008, p.17). However, significant to this research is that the forms of structural organisational ambidexterity within the traditional literature were not clearly delineated in practice. This research finds examples of hybrid models of structural and contextual ambidexterity, subject to the requirement for differentiation of the explorative function. This speaks to claims made by Renjini (2018), who in making the case for innovation within non-profit organisations identifies the requirement for flexibility in structures as opposed to bureaucracy, which supports greater innovation towards social objectives.

Continuing with the theme of hybridity in structural models of organisational ambidexterity, the complexity of this requirement justifies the finding of dynamic capability (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008). Whether active brokering of short-term or long-term strategic agendas, or exploitative and explorative functions, the approaches conveyed by participants clearly demonstrated "decentralisation, differentiated, targeted integration, and the ability of the senior leadership to orchestrate the complex trade-offs that the simultaneous pursuit of exploration and exploitation requires" (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2011, p. 6). Indeed, findings by Peric et al. (2020) that the challenges of delivering on social mission are "more complex and multifaceted than

those in for profit organisations" (p. 185), as well as the requirement for 'hyper-efficiency' noted by Cipriani et al. (2020) were all evident in this research. Thus, organisational ambidexterity was evident in the structures, designs and processes of the organisations represented, with the capability requirement to manage the unique, complex, and multifaceted nature of this within a charity delivering on social mission.

6.4 Structure and design: Primary theme - Being business-like

The primary theme of being business-like was an a priori code within the research framework having been identified as a key topic relevant to organisational ambidexterity in the previous literature. This area of discussion resulted in secondary themes of business-like practices, business-like models, competitors and the use of systems and technology.

All participants without exception, supported the use of business-like practices in their organisation citing methods of efficiency in processes, value for money, governance and accountability, professional standards and financial transparency as means of delivering in a business-like way. All were applying business-like approaches, and some were aspiring to develop their approaches further. The drive around this practice wasn't just about operating well for reasons of financial efficiency but because of the donated funds for social purpose, and the need to use this in the best possible way for the beneficiary group.

> *"…from the business sector I think we take, I mean I think we take a lens on value for money because our donors don't give us money to waste, they give us money for purpose, so it's incumbent on us to make sure that our processes are efficient, our, you know, our model is, so, you know, is well run, you know, we're transparent about our kind of use of finances, you know, and the way that we adopt our… the way we engage and communicate with our supporters I think is pretty customer like. It's not the same but it's quite customer like and, you know, certainly when we're working with corporate partners or businesses who are using our workplace well-being products, then we are essentially operating in a B to B, uh, environment, so we are a social business." (Participant I)*

> *"… we're not running HSBC or something, but I think there is something about efficiency that matters in terms of, you know, supporters' money and, you know, being an organisation that uses money efficiently and appropriately, and its resources efficiently an appropriately,*

but also just making sure that, uhm, the sort of support functions are nimble and agile and professional and based on the very best kind of sector standards. So, like is that business like? I don't know but there's something for me about, you know, having good professional standards in an organisation, really clearly defined operating model about how things work and where responsibilities and accountabilities lie and I think you typically tend to see some of those things around efficiency and accountability in commercial organisations, so yeah maybe business-like is a good way of describing it." (Participant K)

"… we explicitly state that we want to be business-like. You know, we do that because we want to make sure we're spending every pound wisely and well, but also because there are practices from other sectors that are good practices that we want to adopt and fund raising (…) you've got to be very business-like in the way that you approach that discipline. You got to have science, you got to have data, have you've got to have tech, you've got to really be very business-like in how you approach it and if you're going to get a good return on investment and we do talk about return on investment in fundraising, talk about profit, net profit, return on investment, the way we manage our finances is very professional" (participant O)

Significantly, one participant challenged the distinction of such practices between business and non-businesses, indicating that it wasn't appropriate to differentiate between profit and non-profit arenas. This participant argued convincingly that the distinction be removed to generate equality between commercial and charity sectors.

"… I don't see a difference between the practices. So, I don't see something influencing my decision to say, shall I make a charity decision, which is a woolly, silly decision that's not right, or a business-like decision that is going to be hard edged and cutting edge? I mean, I just don't see that distinction. In the moment, I would say, what is the right decision to make here in this organisation for this activity in the best interests of people with [disability]? and that would be the same decision that my friend who works in a massive corporate would make." (Participant M)

Just over a third of participants (4), in supporting business like practices highlighted the need for balance between the charitable role and culture of the charity, particularly the relational nature of the organisation and the requirement for a business-like approach, which brings about a transactional need (Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Peric et al., 2020). In doing this, the examples below reinforce a differentiated requirement that exists around exploitation functions in the context of delivering on a social mission:

"I think there's a balance to be struck where you can bring in sort of some good and relevant business practices and sort of mindset, which doesn't sit at odds, you know, with this in a more charitable purpose of a charity." (Participant D)

"… I guess the charity sector attracts people that really care about what their cause is and obviously from an emotional engagement point of view that's really important. It doesn't necessarily mean that you bring in the range of people with, you know, maybe more sort of commercial business-like skills and I think that the challenge is how you can blend those two together and get the best of both really." (Participant N)

". If you over professionalise it then you risk disengaging your key stakeholders, your supporters, so you have to use their language, but you know we have a responsibility to make sure we're spending donors' money wisely and well and that for me, it means being professional and part of professional is being business like." (Participant O)

The use of language connected to business culture was highlighted by three participants. Combined, they indicated a consciousness in using business like terms such as profit and income whilst in one case, removing the distinction of the organisational mission being for social purpose. Combined, these examples demonstrate the shift in charitable culture towards business-like language that reflects the organisation as a business entity separate to, but notwithstanding its charitable purpose.

"I think from my perspective, I come from a business world. My job is to drive profit. I'm really comfortable about that. I don't even mind calling it profit, you know, because ultimately, I am driving profit as hard as I can 'cause I know damn well where it's going." (Participant F)

"*I tend not to use the word social. I talk mission because I think the social element is an inherent part of what charities do. I always think it's companies that use the word social to distinguish the corporate side from the value-based side or to show that they're able to do both. So, I don't use the word social mission because everything throughout drive is around change for the individual we support, not the dividend or the profit we make." (Participant H)*

"…we've introduced some really useful sort of management consultancy tools and we do use the term customers. It is controversial internally. You know, some people prefer

stakeholders. We use the term 'customers,' and we distinguish between [beneficiary name], supporters, partners, volunteers and so we do segment customers." (Participant O)

Also, throughout the course of the discussions in relation to this code, participants gave examples of different types of organisational model being utilised in the delivery of its charitable purpose. It was clear from these discussions, that many organisations were using additional vehicles in the form of enterprises, ventures, and subsidiaries in the development of commercial explorative projects to further their strategic objectives.

"… [name of business], is a social venture and were set up very much to deliver a social impact, but also to run a business." (Participant F)

"… next year will be an 86 million organisation. You know something like 55 million of that is operational services. We have relationships with 120 local authorities. We need to run those services as a business. It may be a social business to use the word earlier, but you know we need to develop, deliver high-quality person-centred services that are financially viable and return a margin to support the work of the organisation. We run a 12 million trading business. We run 121 shops (…) charity shops or businesses, each one of them, so we need to monitor that, you know, so 100% we are a business." (Participant H)

"…there's several areas where we are extremely business-like and our retail, you know, our retail, our charity shops are run, you know, it's a trading company, it actually is a business, but I mean, you know, it's a very ethical business but the people who run it, you know, the board, the retail boards or a mixture of, uh, you know, commercial retail people who bring commercial expertise but also charity, retail people and charity people." (Participant I)

Aligned to being business-like and organisational business models above, the subcode of 'competitors and allies' was identified under the a priori code of business-like practices within the interview framework. The theme of allied working was considered under the primary theme of Operating Model in Chapter 4. All participants interviewed, endorsed the requirement for allied working in the furthering of their social objectives, which distended their own charitable purpose and into the wider charity sector. In relation to competitors, due to the allied nature of charitable working many participants didn't consider their partners as competitors however there were some exceptions to this. As described below, competition was identified between commissioned charities

dependent upon winning funding bids to deliver specific work in line with their social mission.

> *"I think we are businesses that, you know, particularly those more contract-based charities, you know, they are fighters. They are looking to expand, they are looking for the contracts, they were going to geographical areas, they will parachute into areas. That I've seen this with the bigger charities where they sort of choose the geographical patch and parachute in and prime pump that whole innovation, you know will do a sort of model of excellence within an area and the little guys on the ground that have been there for years are just wiped out." (Participant B)*

> *"…the Commission framework and tendering is very much about driving competition between organisations, but I think charities are very territorial and very defensive generally although the shift has come in the last two years." (Participant H)*

> *"Really, I think we're really mixed as an organisation internally about this. So, I think if you spoke to people in the fundraising team they would say 'they are all competitors' because you know, they're tapping into the share of pocket and they're going after the same funders and all the rest of it. If you spoke to somebody in the support side, they'd go 'it's our responsibility to look after them and make sure we signpost to them'." (Participant F)*

Three of the participants interviewed demonstrated some interesting insight and perspective in relation to the dichotomy between allies and competitors. Indeed, by re framing the relationships between charities within the same market, away from competition and into a more cooperative and mature space, these leaders were demonstrating success in the effective delivery of charitable objectives beyond the confines of traditional business conceptualisations.

> *"… we're all trying to get the same fundraised income and all sorts of stuff in the same supporters, yeah maybe, but I sort of feel there's so much untapped potential, so it is not as if it's about cannibalising from [name of charity] or [name of charity] or from [name of charity] or from [name of charity] or whatever. Actually, go out and tap more commercial partners, go and get some more customers, go and get some more beneficiaries. There's a whole world out there that doesn't engage with the charitable sector." (Participant D)*

> *"… I have a phrase which I used from time to time, which is the relationship of 'co-opetition.' so I think when we're at our best actually, uhm, and by which I mean when we have the most sort of mature relationships and then it needs to be at the most senior levels, then we*

both cooperate on the things where we think that either these issues are too big or to make sense for us to cooperate (…) now in a mature relationship, you cooperate on those things knowing full well, that you're also competing with each other." (Participant I)

"… I think if you then step across to something like fundraising, we are absolutely directly competitors and there's no point in pretending we're not. And actually, I find that kind of collaborative working, works better if you acknowledge where you are competitive versus where you need to be an ally." (Participant M)

The third and final secondary subtheme linked to the area of business-like practices was that of systems. 'Systems' was an a priori code within the question framework based on previous models for organisational ambidexterity (Bryson et al., 2008; Palm & Lilja, 2017) applied in 'for profit' organisations. There was a collective finding that the charities represented were engaging in data insight and intelligence to inform their decision-making, particularly around explorative practices. However, progress in this area had been quite challenging for some, due to a historical underinvestment in data and digital. This was due to limited strategic awareness, or affordability linked to income and organisational size, as these examples show.

"there's a recognition that we need to move forward and have better insight into the information that we have or need to collect to make informed decisions. It's not there. We don't have a…. our finance system is falling over and only available to the finance team for example. We can't analyse and interrogate. We put in a series of KPIs at the moment to track performance management, but we are aware that we don't necessarily have the system to report against the KPIs, so it's really difficult." (Participant B)

"… I would say that's our least effective area really and that is your classic point of where we were so much smaller, it was all easier to make all of those decisions and the planning and that's the transition that we're in." (Participant G)

"So, you know, we've got a lot of people doing quite transactional processing because our systems haven't been invested in for such a long time. So, we're making quite a sizeable investment in better systems that join up, that give us automated reporting, and which removes the need for, you know, headcount essentially and then thirdly on technologies around kind of digital skills and confidence." (Participant K)

Indeed, where organisational systems and processes were reflected by participants to be functioning more effectively, were in the larger sized charities with more diverse

portfolios, including business models which support exportations, beyond a singular charitable entity.

Within this theme were conversations in relation to the use of technology, in particular information and digital technology. Like the discussions in relation to the use of effective systems and processes for decision-making, technology was identified by many participants as an area of previous underinvestment due to affordability and knowledge from outside the sector, which may have inhibited the respective charities ability's to strategically advance.

> *".. Up until now, we haven't done enough, and we have very limited investment in… we have our old Razors Edge that we've had forever that's creaking, but what we're doing, so we're putting a lot of time and energy into sorting out data, getting our systems right in our processes there right, before we go and do a large investment in a new database." (Participant G)*

> *"I feel like we're probably a bit behind the curve on that. Our data production and insight is really poor, so we're putting quite a bit of investment into trying to improve some of that stuff at the moment." (Participant M)*

> *".. We're doing a big investment in CRM at the moment (…), But you know, we'd have probably struggled to make that sort of systems investment in the past because we'd have looked at the price tag and said we're not going to spend it. So having more commercial trustees on board helped with that as well, I think." (Participant N)*

Within all the primary and secondary sub themes to emerge, systems and technology were identified as the areas where participants reflected least competency and capacity against the required organisational capability into the future. Where knowledge and understanding have been brought from non-profit areas, the respective charities represented by the participants could be seen to have made greater progress in these areas thereby demonstrating the benefit of commercial acumen within charity.

The review of literature identifies various scholarly interest in relation to business-like behaviour and practices in the not-for-profit sector (Cipriani et al., 2020; Dart, 2004; Hovarth, 2018; Maier et al., 2016; Panda, 2019; Peric et al., 2020; Robichau & Wang, 2018; Suykens, 2018; Svensson et al., 2020). Consistent with the work of Dart (2004),

and Peric (2020), findings support that both motives for and methods of business-like practices exist within the charities represented within this research. Practice areas identified, namely efficiency in processes, value for money, governance and accountability, professional standards and financial transparency are aligned with the descriptors for exploitation; “refinement, choice, production, efficiency, selection, implementation and execution” (March, 1991, p. 71), determined by March (1991).

Further to this, this research finds a direct link between business-like practices and social mission consistent with the work of Peng (2019), who considered organisational ambidexterity to be relatable to non-profit work due to its intent in relation to value creation. Like Peng (2019), this research finds that “increased demands for accountability towards stakeholders require PNPOs to optimise resources, mobilize for the evolution and transformation and simultaneously guarantee a regular production in order to contribute to the stability of society” (p. 251). Indeed, it was the very location of beneficiaries as stakeholders, and the commitment in social mission towards them that meant charities were looking towards business-like practices to maximise their potential output and outcomes. This was evident in the short-term through plans for digital services, as well as the longer-term with new enterprise vehicles being developed towards sustainable social solutions. This supports that organisation for a “good understanding of user needs and situation” (Palm & Lilja, 2017, p. 14-16) is a factor for charities in its organisational designs and practices.

The representation of maintaining the right balance between the charitable role and culture of the organisation and delivering in a business-like way, directly relates to the requirement for dynamic capability, (O Reilly & Tushman, 2008). There was further evidence of this capability being exercised by participants and their charities through their articulation of business processes in the form of information and intelligence, which enables them to sense change as well as the structural solutions being implemented through business type models to respond to openings and threats (O’Reilly & Tushman, 2011).

The matter of competitors, like those in the not-for-profit sector was noted as an external factor resulting in a drive towards exploitative practices. As was the capability required to manage the tensions of a competitive environment in delivering on social

outcomes identified by Taylor et al. (2019). This was evident in the main, for those charities competing for commissioned or contracted funding, which is consistent with the findings of Henderson and Lambert (2018), McDonald (2007) and Robichau and Wang (2018). However, unlike, Henderson and Lambert (2018) who found charities becoming business-like was risking mission drift, this research found that charities were using business like practices in their transformation from being social care providers (reliant on commissioned contracts) to becoming charities for social change, thus changing their operating models, and engaging in exploitative and explorative practices to maintain mission integrity in the long-term. This research also finds that the level of allied partnership working between associated charities also served to maintain and strengthen social mission at the same time as those charities developing their business-like methods and models towards longer-term sustainability.

Hence, findings within this research offer an alternative and new perspective to previous literature, by Robichau and Wang (2018), who highlight the risk to charitable identity because of adopting private sector practices to meet business, financial and performance measures linked to social outcome. It also contraposes concerns raised by Eikenberry and Kluver (2004), and Peric et al. (2020), in relation to the risk of loss in social principles for charities in the engagement in business models and techniques, and the consequence of moving away from long-term chronic problems towards a focus on short-term survival.

The finding that many charities were using additional operating vehicles in the form of enterprises, ventures, and subsidiaries in the development of commercial explorative projects to further their strategic objectives was consistent with the work of Henderson et al. (2018) who identified increased levels of commercialism as necessitating changes to organisational constitution. Indeed, this finding reinforces the high level of dynamic capability charity leaders require to manage dual and complex structures (Peric, 2020). It also serves to reinforce that structural (simultaneous) ambidexterity (Asif, 2017; Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008, 2013; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008) was present where those vehicles were being used distinctly towards exploration or innovation. In all examples given the operating models were furthering social impact whilst delivering on diversifying income streams, with examples being described as 'businesses' in their operation.

Whilst the previous literature offers limited contribution in relation to the role and function of systems and technology in organisational ambidexterity in the not-for-profit sector, Bryson et al. (2008), identified “strong planning and decision-making systems” (p. 17) as one of nine propositions for increased success through organisational ambidexterity. The authors also named the “effective utilization of technology” (p. 18) as another. Palm and Lilja (2017), also identify a “systems view” (p.15) for the workforce to assist them in the understanding of organisational ambidexterity in practice. Whilst the latter enabler was not found within this research specifically, the use of systems and technology as a strategic enabler was recognised and examples shared of systems being used or developed in practice. Notwithstanding this, in accordance with the thematic methodology used (Braun & Clarke, 2022), systems was an a priori code and did not result as a theme from the research as with other a priori codes. Technology was referred to in few cases also. As such, the analysis is exceptionally limited in this area indicating systems and technology investment as a potential future area of capability development. This is noteworthy, given the previous literature (Bryson et al., 2008), where systems and technology were identified as propositions for success in ambidextrous public sector organisations.

6.5 Structure and Design in Summary:

This research finds that the charities represented were delivering on both explorative and exploitative functions of organisational ambidexterity identified by March (1991), with leaders demonstrating their endeavours to resolve the inherent complexities and challenges of the dualities in these functions with an underlying social mission (O’Reilly & Tushman, 2008).

Innovation as a form of exploration was commonly identified along with the requirement for effective decision-making systems to inform strategic progression. The importance of appropriate governance and accountability and its role in enabling appropriate balance between exploitative and explorative functions within a strategic framework was found. Notably, the favouring of exploitative functions at the Trustee level, was felt to be limiting explorative practices towards long-term sustainability, thus reinforcing the requirement for all levels of leader to “be able to orchestrate the

allocation of resources between the routine and new business domains" (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013, p. 18).

Social mission was identified as a driver and enabler for innovation in practice, examples of which correlate with March's (1991) explorative descriptors. Notably the research finds two forms of innovation operating differentially: incremental innovation predominantly linked to explorative requirements operating at a contextual level within the charity, and transformational intervention linked to explorative requirements, which was typically separated in structural design.

In relation to forms of organisational ambidexterity, the research finds no evidence of sequential temporal ambidexterity however there was clear evidence of organisations developing separate alignments consistent with structural simultaneous ambidexterity with departments of functions working in areas of insight, marketing, profit innovation and research differentiated although connected with the rest of the organisation. Notwithstanding this, in the area of incremental exploration, often for the benefit of service or product optimisation contextual ambidexterity at the business unit level was evident within this research. Combined this finding of structural and contextual organisational ambidexterity identifies hybrid models, subject to the requirement for differentiation of the explorative function. Furthermore, the hybridity in structural models of organisational ambidexterity found links to the finding of dynamic capability (O'Reilly & Tushman 2008), and an indication of dynamic capability in the context of delivering on social mission as being more complex and multifaceted than within 'for profit' organisations (Peric et al., 2020).

The research finds clear examples in relation to business-like behaviour, practices, and language consistent with March's (1991) descriptors for exploitation. Business-like practices were found to be directly linked to the preservation of social mission, which is contrary to previous literature (Henderson & Lambert, 2018). The location of beneficiaries as stakeholders and the requirement for charities to survive in the context of external market forces were influencing the adoption and development of business-like practices. This was evident in the short-term and the long-term with services and business type models being developed towards sustainable social solutions. The matter of competitors, whilst acknowledged mostly in areas of exploitative practice

appeared to be overcome by allied working methods and models (as previously discussed) with participants demonstrating collective endeavours towards social goals. This finding thus offers new evidence, which contraposes previous literature highlighting risk to loss of charitable identity (Robichau & Wang, 2018) and social principles (Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Peric, 2020) linked to business models and techniques.

The use of systems and technologies as a strategic enabler did not result as a theme in the research however was recognised as important and underdeveloped in the limited examples provided, indicating more work to be done in the adoption of these methods for charities going forward.

CHAPTER 7: Conclusion:

7.1 Introduction:

This Chapter brings together the research outcomes, firstly by offering a summary of the research aim, and then the professional practice issue and scholarly contexts from which, the research took place. Followed by a review of the research methodology, the main findings are then presented including an outline of their contribution to knowledge. The implications of the findings for Charity Sector Leaders, is then offered in accordance with the research aim, question, and objectives. The chapter closes with an account of the limitations of this research, implications for further research and a summary, including final reflections from the researcher.

The aim of this research was to determine key components of organisational ambidextrous design in the delivery of social mission. The research question was: what are the key components of organisational ambidexterity that are evident in charitable organisations, and what can be learnt from them? The objective was to produce new knowledge in the form of key components, which determines how social mission is achieved within charitable organisations through the lens of organisational ambidexterity. Further to this, based on the assessed parallels between the two areas of the organisational ambidexterity concept and charity context, a subset of objective criteria was created in the areas of: vision, mission, and focus, in the achievement of ambidextrous working in charity; capability towards managing the dichotomies of the exploitative to the explorative; and charity architecture towards delivering ambidextrous outcomes.

The practice issue was the lack of charity specific organisational theory/design in the business literature and professional educative sources. This was experienced by the researcher in the context of her professional background and role in delivering effective, successful, and long-term charity businesses. This experiential context correlates with the findings of the literature review, which in combining the subject of organisational ambidexterity and charity/social mission, returned no finding of this application. Notwithstanding this, the review of literature did identify five

corresponding articles (Bryson et al., 2008; Cannaerts et al., 2016, 2020; Palm & Lilja, 2017; Peng, 2019) through the themes of publicly funded NPO or 'public sector' organisations linked to ambidextrous practice. In the context of the literature reviewed in the independent fields of organisational ambidexterity and charity/NPO, the overall review found frameworks for the conceptualisation of organisational ambidexterity including the role of vision, mission, and focus, strategic leadership capability and organisational architecture as consistent evidence of organisational ambidextrous design. It also found a high level of correlation between the prior debates on charity/NPO and the dimensions that exist within the concept of organisational ambidexterity. These findings, combined with established frameworks for the assessment of organisational ambidexterity within private organisations (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008) and public NPOs (Bryson et al., 2008; Palm & Lilja, 2017) shaped the design of this research.

In achieving the research aim, to determine key components of organisational ambidextrous design in the delivery of social mission, an interpretivist epistemological approach was taken. The research design was qualitative mono-method, inclusive of convenience and snowball sampling methods, and semi structured interviews using priori qualitative narrative analysis techniques. Primary data were collected through 14 semi-structured interviews with Executive Officers (Chief Executive Officers or Directors) from national, UK based charities in the provision of disability, health, and social outcomes. The interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and analysed through a thematic data analysis method (Braun & Clarke, 2022), applied reflexively, and culminated in a thematic framework, which organised the analysis and findings of the data. The limitations of qualitative interpretivist methodology associated with validity (Bryman & Bell, 2015), were countered through the researcher's values and skills in reflexivity; critical reflection in occupying an 'insider position' (Anderson & Herr, 1999; Cunliffe, 2009), as well as a commitment to remaining fully objective in the interpretation of the data to uphold full integrity and validity of the research process (Coffey, 1999).

7.2 Main Findings:

Before considering the main findings of the primary research, learnings from the literature review part of the research are considered by way of context. Significantly, an extensive literature review combining systematic and narrative methods resulted in no finding combining organisational ambidexterity directly to private charity or private NPOs. Five pieces of academic research represented consideration of organisational ambidexterity within public NPOs (Bryson et al., 2008; Cannaerts et al., 2016, 2020; Palm & Lilja, 2016; Peng, 2017). Combined analysis of the reviewed literature into both areas found predominantly qualitative, inductive interpretivist methodology as the most common utilised, which is consistent with the chosen methodology of this research. A general review of the literature on charity found a dichotomy in the narrative between charity and business sectors (Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Maier *et al*., 2016; Peric et al., 2020; Robichau & Wang, 2018), which was not represented or supported by the findings of this research. Indeed, this research finds no clear separation between charity and business practices (Dart, 2004; Peric et al., 2020) as delineated in the previous literature, thus introducing new knowledge that 'business-like' descriptors are equally comparable to both charity and for-profit sectors. Concomitantly, the distinction of social mission (Berlan, 2017; Horvath et al., 2018; Minkoff & Powell, 2017; Moore, 2000), determined within the literature was found to be comparable with the organisational vision or mission determined in private organisations, particularly where charities were utilising hybrid business models.

Furthermore, the representation of charity as dependable on the methods of, or acquiescent to the private business sector (Maier et al., 2016) identified within the previous literature, was not represented within this research. It is acknowledged that some aspects of charity survival noted in the previous literature appertained to commissioned service charities (Henderson & Lambert, 2018), of which there were few within this research sample. This research alternatively finds that charities have a unique capability to successfully apply solutions from a strengths-based perspective in their business decisions including exercising choice in business models, funding sources and strategies towards their chosen outcomes. Departing from the approaches of previous literature therefore, this research introduces new knowledge to the literature to date, that charity should be considered as operating in similar ways

as ‘for profit’ businesses and notwithstanding their social objectives, be considered alongside as opposed to separate to the private sector.

7.3 Findings and contribution to new knowledge:

This research, believed to be the first of its kind to consider organisational ambidexterity within the context of private charity sector, finds clear evidence of the concept being applied against the subset of objective criteria considered below.

7.3.1 Vision, mission, and focus, in the achievement of ambidextrous working:

The overarching theme of social mission, generated analysis, and findings consistent with the research question sub-criteria of ‘vision, mission and focus, in the achievement of ambidextrous working’. Significantly, this research finds clear evidence of the function of social mission in the achievement of ambidextrous working. Outcomes for people in society were found to be life changing or life saving as opposed to social outcomes per se, acting as a dominant driver and enabler towards achieving their cause. This original finding within the charity sector was thus found to act in accordance with the condition of “compelling strategic intent” identified by O’Reilly and Tushman (2008) in the traditional literature focused on private sector organisations.

Maintaining a strong vision, mission, and focus, in the context of external factors (beneficiaries, external markets, funding source, sustainable solutions), especially emerging out of a pandemic, which necessitated ambidextrous working led to a finding of ‘dynamic capability’ within the charities represented, consistent with the definition of Duncan (1976). This research finds senior leadership capability in balancing the tension in short-term deliverables and longer-term strategic development for the benefit of the beneficiary, the charity, and its staff. The focus on the shorter-term was also presented through examples of traditional cultures and designs serving to anchor charities in the past and present.

The research further identifies the importance of effective strategic direction and governance as a pre-requisite for effective resource allocation in ambidextrous working, also consistent with the work of O'Reilly and Tushman, (2013). Likewise, aligned with the previous literature focusing on charitable constraints, charities offering primarily services or funded through commissioners appeared more constrained in explorative development due to the short-term requirements of beneficiaries and funders for traditional service provision. Hence, this research finds supporting evidence of conditions (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008) and functions (Duncan, 1976) of organisational ambidexterity in the context of the UK charity sector consistent with their identification within the private sector.

Notwithstanding this, beyond the previous literature, this research offers exciting new knowledge in the areas of allied working, identified by participants as a key enabler to social change aligned with mission intent. This sits in contraposition to the traditional business literature, which considers organisational ambidexterity in a competitive commercial environment. Also, by way of new contribution to knowledge, this research finds the maintenance of mission integrity through the adaption of strategy or operating model as evident, with charities moving away from traditional services to remain relevant in the long-term. Indeed, several forward-thinking charities were transitioning from focussed social service providers to inclusive social change creators. This new contribution to knowledge is in contraposition to previous discourse, which identifies strategy and operating model diversification as risking mission drift.

7.3.2 Managing the dichotomies of the exploitative to the explorative:

Analysis and findings within the overarching theme of culture and capability aligned with the research sub-criteria of 'managing the dichotomies of the exploitative to the explorative.' Findings within this research predominantly serve to support the findings of the previous literature appertaining to organisational ambidexterity, thus affirming relevance of the concept in the charity sector and for the first time, affirming relevance of the concept in the private charity sector.

This research found capable senior charity leaders able not only to communicate, but effectively engage a workforce around strategic intent. This takes the findings of the

previous literature identifying “strategic intent” (O’Reilly & Tushman, 2008) and a “statement” (Bryson et al., 2008, p.16) a stage further signifying a commitment of charity leaders towards inclusivity, empowerment, and participation towards social mission success. In support of previous literature, this research found evidence of charity leaders resolving the tension between short-term deliverables and long-term strategic direction and change (Bryson et al., 2008; O’Reilly & Tushman, 2008). However, in contraposition to the previous literature (O’Reilly & Tushman, 2008; Bryson et al., 2008) there was no explicit finding of such engagements being inclusive of ambidextrous design or practice with the differentiation between the functions not being explicitly raised in the discussions.

The research brings new perspective and knowledge on the impact of charitable social mission acting as an anchor as well as a driver around organisational change initiatives. Linked to the concept of “dominant logics” identified by Bryson et al. (2008, p. 9), this research finds the role of beneficiaries and workforce advocacy for them, as driving a strong perspective against explorative progress. This offers original thought on the paradoxical relationship between change, which necessitates exploration to sustain social mission and a resistance to exploration, which curtails changes in the delivery of social mission.

Associated to this, findings within this research highlight the primary need of the present beneficiary group as significantly influencing the resolution of competing demands and requiring leadership capability in resolving complexity in outcomes linked to social demand (Peric et al., 2020). Indeed, this research brings new knowledge by offering perspective on the interrelationship between ambidexterity in the context of a foundational social mission represented by strong stakeholders and the complexity in leadership and management that this dynamic necessitates.

A significant new finding, and comparable with private sector research, this research determines differentiated cultural behaviours and higher-level integration of the whole organisational model and harnessing expertise from across the charity, thus suggesting multi-level integration at a contextual level (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; Sinah, 2005; Swart et al., 2019). Beyond this, this research brings a new contribution to knowledge through considerations of trustee board capability as a critical enabler

for success, with risk appetite and the requirement for explorative behaviours as prerequisites in the enablement of ambidextrous working.

Consistent with previous research (Miller, 2018), this research finds the need for increased risk and performance appetite within charity workforce, which overcomes siloed working and status quo attitudes towards improved exploitative behaviours. This research identifies a range of cultural tensions in the delivery of explorative and exploitative practices due to governance, risk appetite and opportunity, with evidence of attempts at reconciliation between alignments consistent with the findings of O'Reilly and Tushman (2008). Hence, there is new evidence that private charitable organisations actively manage tensions between exploitative and explorative functions in the same way as their private sector counterparts, with greater constraint around capability linked to incentivisation, countered by cultures of enablement and support. This is a further new contribution to knowledge.

7.3.3 Charity architecture towards delivering ambidextrous outcomes:

The overarching theme of structure and design generated analysis and findings consistent with the research question sub-criteria of 'charity architecture towards delivering ambidextrous outcomes.' This research originally finds that like their private business sector counterparts, private charities deliver explorative and exploitative functions of organisational ambidexterity (March, 1991), with leaders demonstrating their endeavours to resolve the inherent complexities and challenges of the dualities in these functions with an underlying social mission (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008).

Consistent with previous research (Miller, 2018), this research finds that innovation as a form of exploration was commonly identified by charity sector leaders along with the requirement for effective decision-making systems to inform strategic progression. As a substantial contribution to new knowledge, this research identifies two forms of innovation operating within charities differentially: incremental innovation predominantly linked to exploitative requirements operating at a contextual level within the charity, and transformational intervention linked to explorative requirements, which was typically separated in structural design. The importance of appropriate governance and accountability, and its role in enabling appropriate balance between

exploitative and explorative functions within a strategic framework was further found. This research offers new knowledge in finding the favouring of exploitative functions by Trustees, and the impact of this in limiting explorative practices towards long-term sustainability.

Structurally, this research finds no evidence of sequential (temporal) ambidexterity and clear evidence of organisations developing separate alignments consistent with structural (simultaneous) ambidexterity (Asif, 2017; Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008, 2013; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008). This research offers further new knowledge in finding incremental innovation (exploration) at the business unit level consistent with contextual ambidexterity (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; Sinha, 2015; Swart et al., 2019), and a finding of hybrid models of structural and contextual organisational ambidexterity, subject to the requirement for differentiation of the explorative function.

As a further contribution to new knowledge, this research finds business-like practices within the charity sector to be directly linked to the preservation of social mission, contrary to previous literature (Henderson & Lambert, 2018). The original finding of allied working and models of collective endeavours offers new evidence, which contraposes previous literature highlighting risk to loss of charitable identity (Robichau & Wang, 2018) and social principles (Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Peric, 2020) linked to business models and techniques.

7.4 Implications for Charity Sector Leaders:

The practice issue that the research aimed to address related to the key components of organisational ambidexterity, how they are evident in charitable organisations, and what can be learnt from them. The research aim was to determine key components of organisational ambidextrous design in the delivery of social mission.

The research question was: what are the key components of organisational ambidexterity that are evident in charitable organisations, and what can be learnt from them?

The objective of the research was to produce new knowledge in the form of a concept or model which determined how social mission is achieved within charitable organisations through the lens of organisational ambidexterity.

Taking into consideration findings, which support the previous literature in the fields of charity and organisational ambidexterity combined with new original findings, which contribute towards the academic knowledge in this area, this research identifies the following key components of organisational ambidexterity in charity:

- **A clear mission, which determines social outcome by connecting the beneficiary group with the social cause.**

Linked to the objective sub-set criteria 1, 'vision, mission and focus, in the achievement of ambidextrous working', this component is justified through the finding of a mission legitimised by its connection to people, and a life changing or life-saving impact as a social outcome. It is the unifying purpose of the organisation, able to justify short-term exploitative functions and long-term explorative functions through individual or allied contributions.

- **A culture of engagement, empowerment and recognition geared towards short-term and long-term success.**

Related to objective sub-set criteria 2, 'managing the dichotomies of the exploitative to the explorative' this component is justified through the finding of effective engagement linked to strategic intent. It also responds to evidence, which justifies empowerment and recognition for the workforce at the contextual level working in exploitative functions and/or offering incremental innovation, through to those focussed on transformational outcomes.

- **A senior team able to broker the complexity of ambidextrous organisational functions and requirements.**

Linked to objective sub-set criteria 2, ‘managing the dichotomies of the exploitative to the explorative’ this component is identified through the finding of leadership capability needed to balance and resolve the competing and complex demands of an organisation delivering dual functions of exploration and exploitation, and a mission linked to social cause.

- **Deliberate ambidextrous architecture (culture, operating model, structure), which supports exploration and exploitation in context.**

This component is associated with the findings under objective sub-set criteria 3, ‘charity architecture towards delivering ambidextrous outcomes,’ which support the need for specifically designed conditions, for organisational behaviours, the business model, and structures, which enable the functions of exploration and exploitation to be determined and delivered.

- **Strong organisational decision making, which enables risk and opportunity.**

Resulting from ‘charity architecture towards delivering ambidextrous outcomes,’ (objective sub-set criteria 3), this component is supported by the finding for effective decision making at senior executive and board levels, to inform strategic progression through explorative endeavours.

- **Enabling and effective governance, which balances the need for organisational ambidexterity in practice.**

This component is identified in connection with objective sub-set criteria 1, vision, mission, and focus, in the achievement of ambidextrous working, which finds the importance of effective strategic direction and governance as a pre-requisite for effective resource allocation in ambidextrous working. It is also identified in relation to the area of ‘charity architecture towards delivering ambidextrous outcomes,’ specifically the finding of appropriate governance and accountability, and its role in

enabling appropriate balance between exploitative and explorative functions within a strategic framework.

- **Effective relational ecosystems** with allies, beneficiaries, and funders.

Linked to objective sub-set criteria 1, 'vision, mission and focus, in the achievement of ambidextrous working', and 'managing the dichotomies of the exploitative to the explorative,' this component is supported by the finding of maintaining effective relationships with beneficiaries, allied organisations and funders as a means of enablement towards balancing the tensions in short-term deliverables and longer-term strategic development.

- **Innovations** which achieve optimisation in the short-term and transformation in the long-term.

Connected to 'charity architecture towards delivering ambidextrous outcomes,' (objective sub-set criteria 3), this component is justified by the finding of incremental innovation supportive of explorative requirements, and transformational innovation linked to explorative requirements within effective ambidextrous design.

In total, eight components for ambidextrous working in charity are proposed as a new contribution to the knowledge. This component model has been taken by the researcher to inform charity sector progression in the form of 'exploration incubator' projects, which develop charity business concepts to further social mission. The model has also been used within business development workshops to inform Charity sector board strategies and plans, as well as within coaching conversations with leaders. Hence, it is fulfilling the research purpose to create knowledge and understanding for sector leaders and is contributing to applied practice in industry development.

Table 7.4.1 below, presents these by way of comparison alongside the frameworks of prior scholarly authors (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008; Bryson et al., 2008; Palm & Lilja, 2017). Notably, this research has identified a new category of 'governance' as a component of ambidexterity in charity not identified within previous research. The area

of technology identified by Bryson et al. (2008) was not identified as a theme within this research albeit it was recognised by many participants as an important domain for development and as such, may become evident under further empirical enquiry.

TABLE 7.4.1: COMPARISON OF SCHOLARLY FRAMEWORKS FOR ORGANISATIONAL AMBIDEXTERITY

O'Reilly and Tushman (2008) **Conditions for leaders in ambidextrous organisations:**	**Bryson et al. (2008)** **Propositions for success:**	**Palm and Lilja (2017)** **Enablers to OA working:**	**Shaw (2022)** **Key components of OA in Charity**
A "compelling strategic intent" that raises the significance of applying both exploitative and explorative means;	**Effective relationships with oversight authorities** (legislative, executive and judicial), which includes that senior management teams must be given both the support and leeway to pursue ambidexterity.	**"Organize for good understanding of user needs and situation"** i.e., explore and exploit in accordance with the needs of the beneficiary group to ensure a quality led and legitimate service.	**A clear mission, which determines social outcome by connecting the beneficiary group with the social cause.**
"an articulation of a common vision and values," that support ambidextrous design and practice;	**Responsive autonomy in relation to political oversight and influence;**	**"A management team that realizes and can communicate the need for exploration"** thus acting as the fulcrum for participants working together.	**A culture of engagement, empowerment and recognition geared towards short-term and long-term success.**
"a senior team that explicitly owns the unit's strategy of exploration and exploitation;"	**A statement of strategic intent which justifies ambidexterity;**	**"dialogue"** to enable and communicate the interrelationship between the different elements of explorative and exploitative working.	**A senior team able to broker the complexity of ambidextrous organisational functions and requirements.**
"separate but aligned architectures" such as business models, structures, and cultures which operate at executive and front-line levels;	**Strong organizational culture, linked to mission;**	**"ambassadors"** to progress new explorations from the concept to delivery.	**Deliberate ambidextrous architecture (culture, operating model, structure), which supports exploration and exploitation in context.**
"the ability of the senior leadership to tolerate and resolve the tensions arising from separate alignments."	**Effective strategic leadership;**	**"a culture that allows mistakes"** which support exploration risk and tolerance.	**Strong organisational decision making, which enables risk and opportunity**

	Strong planning and decision-making system;	**"Budget for exploration and exploitation"**	**Enabling and effective governance, which balances the need for organisational ambidexterity in practice**
	Ambidextrous organizational architecture;	**"A system view"** for all employees to enable them to understand the interdependence and benefit of ambidextrous working.	**Effective relational ecosystems** with allies, beneficiaries, and funders
	Effective relations with partners and suppliers	**"Focus on implementing innovations"** beyond conceptualising.	**Innovations** which achieve optimization in the short-term and transformation in the long-term.
	Effective utilization of technology, which includes that sustaining and disruptive technologies will be managed effectively.	**"Incentives for both exploration and exploitation"** through a measurement framework.	

Key:

Strategic Intent	Architecture/organisation/design	External Stakeholders
Vision/mission/focus	Culture	Technology
Strategic leadership	Systems	Governance

7.5 Opportunities from this research:

This research offers new knowledge and components to support the applicability of organisational ambidexterity in the private charity sector, not found to have been considered before. For this reason, it opens a new pathway for further research, which has the potential to inform professional organisational practice and with that, influence the success of social mission causes. Notwithstanding this, it does have several limitations. Firstly, as noted in Chapter 3, the generalisability of the research is limited because a small research sample taken from the disability, health and social segment of the charity sector has been used as the basis of this research inquiry. It is not possible to say as to whether the findings in this research are generalisable to the disability, health and social segment of the charity sector, other segments of the charity sector or indeed, the charity sector more widely. Secondly, the sampling method used was that of convenience and snowball sampling, which for the reasons noted above were not random in their identification of research participants. The use of random

sampling may have improved the generalisability of the data collected and the reliability upon the data found. Thirdly, of the charities identified, these were predominantly funded through public fund-raising mechanisms with only a small number who had private or local authority contractual arrangements. Due to the significant difference in the conditions set by such funding arrangements, it may be considered that the findings from charities differentially funded would be dissimilar. Fourthly, the framework of inquiry utilised, which built on previous theoretical frameworks of inquiry into organisational ambidexterity used within the public not for profit sector was predominantly internally focused. This thereby provides a partial view of the overall factors affecting the requirement for organisational change. For example, had external factors such as politics, the economy, societal changes, legal frameworks, and environmental conditions being factored in also, this may have generated a wider set of findings from which, conclusions could have been drawn. Finally, there was a limitation based on the transferability of the previous measurement frameworks adopted, all of which had been based across public sector non-profit organisations or private sector businesses. Given that this research enquiry focused on private charitable organisations where no previous research frameworks had been found, the adoption of alternative frameworks was necessary, however may have resulted in predisposed measurement criteria more suited to alternative sectors.

7.6 Implications for further research:

This research, believed to be the first of its kind into organisational ambidexterity in the private charity sector represents a ‘tip of the iceberg’ of new potential knowledge in this area of study. As such, it is recommended that further research is undertaken, which advances empirical inquiry and evidence of organisational ambidexterity in the private charity sector. This research points to several themes that call for further investigation. Firstly, the implication of mission linked to social outcomes, which is specific to the charity sector and a further understanding of the complexity this creates in the act of ambidextrous working. Secondly, how charities balance the dichotomy of the dual functions of exploration and exploitation contextually and structurally within short-term and long-term time periods. Thirdly, and not specific to the charity sector, is the benefit of further research, which determines the effect of hybrid models of

structures and designs in ambidextrous organisations. Fourthly, research which offers definition of dynamic capability towards enabling senior leadership requirements. Fifth, research, which furthers this approach by offering multi-level and multi-method analysis of ambidexterity and draws findings from private, public NPO and private NPO organisations, including a wider participant sample. Finally, this area of enquiry would benefit from further research predicated on a framework built for the measurement of organisational ambidexterity within the private charity sector, thus further tests, expands and refining the components presented in this study.

7.7 Summary:

In conclusion, this research has identified several contributions to new knowledge. It represents the first scholarly research conducted into organisational ambidexterity applied to a private charity sector. Building on previous knowledge, it finds clear evidence of organisational ambidexterity represented in multi-dimensional structural models, culture (governance and leadership) systems and strategy (social mission), which has formed a model of components for ambidextrous working relevant to the charity sector. Thus, the purpose, aim and objective of the research has been achieved through answering the research question and bringing a new source of information for practical professional application in the charity sector and beyond. Notwithstanding this, the findings are embryonic, meaning that there is opportunity for this field of study to evolve and mature over time, to support leaders and managers in the achievement of mission and organisational success.

7.7.1 Reflections from the researcher:

The beginnings of this research came from the researcher having over two decades of practical experience as a leader in the UK voluntary sector and the realisation of a void in charity specific organisational design. For the third and final time in the literature, this discourse will depart from third person writing, to offer autobiographical reflection in conclusion.

As I reach the end of what has been an incredible journey of discovery, my prior experience of the unique challenges and requirements needed to run an effective,

successful, and long-term charity business, has been reaffirmed through the inspirational leaders I have interviewed. Their ability to balance the complex requirements of delivering social outcomes to beneficiaries, maintaining short-term efficiency and long-term sustainability has been represented time and time again within this research. The sector is clearly having to work harder than ever due to dynamic external forces, which necessitates change not experienced before. The creativity, commitment, and skill in doing this exists in abundance, however this research suggests that more can be done. As one participant said, the charity sector, "always carries on acting like the charity sector" (Participant D). This research has gone some way towards identifying that the dichotomies between the for profit and not-for-profit arenas are reducing. Building on the components for ambidextrous working suggested within this research, I hope that leaders extend their reach and perspective into broader organisational domains and upholding the foundation of their social mission and achievement, both taking and sharing their learning towards organisational success. Indeed, charities have much more to offer the organisational literature and practice arena. The final point on this, I hand over to Participant H.

> "Private business could learn that charities run things in as efficient and effective manner as businesses (…), the difference in outcomes we achieve for the people we support, how much work goes into delivering a successful charity, that we're not just about volunteers and some poor people, that we are effective organisations, that we are able to bring about change." (Participant H)

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Appendix A: Participant Informed Consent Form:

Participant Informed Consent Form

Title of Project: A study into Charitable organisations and ambidextrous working

Name of Researcher: Nicky Shaw

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet, dated ……., for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without my care or legal rights being affected. ☐

3. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of Person taking consent (if different from researcher)	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Researcher	Date	Signature

Negligent Harm Statement

'The University does not accept liability for harm which does not result from its negligence. In the event that something does go wrong, and a participant is harmed during the research and the harm sustained is due to the negligent acts of those undertaking the research, then the participant may have grounds to bring legal action. Anyone bringing such legal action may incur legal costs.'

Appendix B: Participant Information Document:

UNIVERSITY OF CHESTER

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

Participant Information Document

A study into charitable organisations and ambidextrous working

Dear Potential research participant,

You are being invited to take part in a research study as an executive peer in the charity sector. With a long-standing career as a leader the adult health and social care sector, I am conducting a study into charitable organisations and ambidextrous working, and I am looking to engage fellow leaders in the research study. Before you decide if you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Please ask, if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?

This study involves a concept called organisational ambidexterity, which was coined by the organisational theorist Robert Duncan in 1976. Organisational ambidexterity represents an organisation having to deliver two simultaneous requirements at the same time. These are to achieve efficiency in the present for short term survival, as well as innovation for future sustainability.

This research aims to address the key components of organisational ambidexterity and how they are evident in charitable organisations, and what can be learnt from them.

The aim of the study will be to determine key concepts of organisational ambidextrous design in the delivery of social mission.

A written report will be produced at the end of the project. The findings from the study will be used to develop a model which addresses survival and sustainability in the charity sector, and which can be used to inform strategic leadership and design by charity sector leaders.

Why have I been chosen?

You have purposively been chosen to be a research participant based on your executive leadership position within a charity within the adult social and health care sector.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect the standard of treatment you receive in any way.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and asked to sign the consent form. I will then contact you and invite you to attend an interview during which time I will ask questions which frame the research area and provide an opportunity for discussion. I may also ask you to provide me with non-sensitive organisational documents, which support some of the areas of discussion by way of supporting evidence.

Due to the current health and safety implications resulting from the pandemic, I will be conducting the interviews via an online platform such as Teams or Skype and using the record function to gain a record of the meeting. Only the audio recording will be analysed and used for the purpose of the research. Data will be processed in accordance with the principles of the General Data Protection Principles 2018.

All discussions that take place between you as the research participant and the researcher will be treated as **confidential.** Your **anonymity** will be preserved through the research process and no identifiable data will be published in the final report.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no disadvantages or risks foreseen in taking part in the study.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

By participating in this research, you will offer an important contribution towards evidencing how a charitable organisation survives and sustains when delivering a social mission. The findings will inform new research, which considers the concept of organisational ambidexterity in the context of public charity sector organisations for the first time.

What if something goes wrong?

If you wish to complain or have any concerns about any aspect of the way you have been approached or treated during the course of this study, please contact:

Professor Kurt Allman

Dean

Faculty of Business and Management, University of Chester

01244 512031 k.allman@chester.ac.uk

If you are harmed by taking part in this research project, there are no special compensation arrangements. If you are harmed due to someone's negligence (but not otherwise), then you may have grounds for legal action, but you may have to pay for this.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

All information which is collected about you/your organisation during the course of the research will be kept confidential so that only the researcher carrying out the research will have access to such information.

Although the researcher herself occupies a leadership position within the charity sector and may be known to you or your organisation in this capacity, this research is entirely separate to her professional work and the work of her organisation and will not be shared with it.

Participants should note that data collected from this project may be retained and published in an anonymised form. By agreeing to participate in this project, you are consenting to the retention and publication of such data.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results will be written up into a report. It is hoped that the findings may be used to improve the support provided to individual managers and as a result further enhance their professional practice. Individuals who participate will not be identified in any subsequent report or publication.

Who is organising and funding the research?

I, Nicky Shaw as a Professional Doctorate student at the University of Chester is organising and funding this research. My employer Blind Veterans UK has contributed costs towards my further professional education however is not specifically funding this piece of research and therefore has no claim over the research or the research outcome.

Who may I contact for further information?

If you would like more information about the research before you decide whether or not you would be willing to take part, please contact:

Nicky Shaw

Email: 1919103@chester.ac.uk

Tel: 07947 846851

Thank you for your interest in this research.

Appendix C: Ethical risk assessment framework:

Ethical Risk	Risk Description	Likeli-hood	Impact	Gross Risk	Mitigating Action	Likeli hood	Impact	Gross Risk
Lack of informed consent	The research participant may withdraw consent if they do not feel fully informed	Med 2	Med 2	Med 4	Ensure that the research participant is fully informed of research purpose and process through the provision of a study information sheet and study consent form	Low 1	Low 1	Low 1
Breach of confidentiality	Confidentiality is breached through researcher or data breach	Low 1	High 3	Med 3	Ensure that the research participant receives a confidentiality agreement. Apply Data Protection Act 1998 principles	Low 1	Med 2	Low 2
Harm to research participant/ organisation	Participants or their representative organisations are harmed due to research findings	Med 2	High 3	High 6	Ensure full anonymity in records to prevent individuals and organisations from being identified. Support with a confidentiality agreement	Med 1	High 3	Med 3
Data processing permission declined	Participants may refuse their data to be processed for the purpose of research	Low 1	Med 2	Med 2	Ensure that the research participant is fully informed of research purpose and process through the provision of a study information sheet and study consent form. Ensure a data sharing agreement which clearly identifies the purpose, use and identify of the data controller and the data processor	Low 1	Low 1	Low 1
Copyright permission denied	The interviewee may refuse to give consent to their spoken word being used in transcript	Low 1	Med 2	Med 2		Low 1	Low 1	Low 1
Affiliation/ Conflict of interest	The researcher may be conflicted by working in charity sector organisation	Med 2	Med 2	Med 4	Provide clarity of researcher/professional role and clarify this in study information sheet and confidentiality agreement	Low 1	Med 2	Low 2
Lack of reciprocity /trust	Participants may not trust the integrity of the research/researcher	Low 1	Med 2	Med 2	Communicate the mutual benefit of the research to participants through collaborative and active participation. Offer to share research findings.	Low 1	Low 1	Low 1

Appendix D: Interview Schedule:

Interview Schedule

Pre-interview Introduction:

- Greeting and thank you
- Confirmation of research role as distinct and separate to employment role.
- Confirmation of privacy and confidentiality around:
  - Meeting arrangement
  - Data access, recording and handling
  - Anonymity
- Confirmation of return of information sheet and confidentiality agreement and clarification that participant has read and understood it.
- Opportunity for pre-interview questions.

Social Mission:

1. **Tell me about your social mission?**

Potential areas for further exploration…

- How common vision and values are articulated
- How the organisational culture is linked to mission
- Social mission as a driver of organisational strategy
- Social mission as an inhibitor
- Benefit of social mission
- Achievement of social mission
- Mission diversification/drift
- Mission linked to organisational behaviours.

Business-like:

2. **Do you consider your charity to be business like?**

Potential areas for further exploration…

- How? (rhetoric in language, processes, goals etc)
- Forms of private or corporate practices are employed
- Influence on the business model of the charity
- View of competition

Strategy:

3. **To what extent does the charity's strategy determine how the organisation is designed to deliver?**

   Potential areas for further exploration…
   - Strategic planning methods used

- Role of senior leadership team in balancing short-term and long-term outcomes
- Role of people/human capital in enabling the charity to deliver to short-term and long-term outcomes
- Evidence and content of a compelling strategic intent

Innovation:

4. **What does innovation look like in your charity? (products, methods, services, process)**

Potential areas for further exploration…

- Innovation linked to performance
- The drive for innovation (internal/external)
- To what outcome? (social/financial)
- Employee involvement in new opportunities for development/innovation
- Structure for innovation

Capabilities:

5. **What kind of behaviours/capabilities have emerged within the charity in response to the pressures to survive/sustain? (SLT/technical/grass roots)**

Potential areas for further exploration…

- Capability to respond to change (intnl/extnl)
- Immediate versus long term management requirement
- Organisation structure to manage exploitative and explorative functions (sequential / structural / contextual, differentiation between SLT and grass roots staff) (*separate but aligned architectures / ambidextrous organizational architecture)*

Senior Leadership Team (SLT):

6. **Thinking about your organisation's senior leadership team, what do you view as important in their capability towards securing strategic success? (decision making, perceptions, org design, change response, managing resource)**

Potential areas for further exploration…

- An effective SLT
- *Ownership of the unit's strategy of exploration and exploitation*
- *SLT ability to tolerate and resolve tensions from separate alignments*
- Communication for exploration and exploitation
- Internal and external stakeholder management
- Team diversity

Human Capital/Culture:

7. **What within your organisational culture enables its success?**

Potential areas for further exploration…

- The challenge of short-term success and long-term sustainability being explicit in conversations within the charity
- A culture that allows mistakes" towards exploration
- The role of incentivised working.

Systems:

8. **Does your organisation use systems or a view of systems to manage its competing demands?**

Potential areas for further exploration…

- Planning and decision-making systems
- "A system view" for all employees to enable them to understand the interdependence and benefit of ambidextrous working
- Utilization of data and technology

Finally:

9. **What do you consider private business could learn from the charity sector?**

- Enablers towards strategic success
- How to improve using efficiency and/or exploration
- Constraints towards sustainability
- Improving opportunities for success
- (intnl/extnl drivers)
- Is there anything else you would like to tell me that you feel relevant to the research area?

Interview close:

- **Acknowledgement and thanks**
- **Next steps**
  - **Timelines**
  - **Publication**
- **Final questions/comments?**

Appendix E: Table of Participants:

Executive Officers (Chief Executive Officers or Directors) from national, UK based charities in the provision of disability, health, and social outcomes (anonymised):

Participant:	Position:	Time in sector:	Charity Income:	Sample Type:
A	CEO	8 yrs.	£25 - £50M	Convenience
B	Dir Ops	25 yrs.	≤ £25M	Convenience
C	Dir Fundraising	3 yrs.	≤ £25M	Convenience
D	CEO	3 yrs.	£75 - £100M	Convenience
F	Dir Income	25 yrs.	£25 - £50M	Convenience
G	CEO	23 yrs.	≤ £25M	Snowball
H	CEO	27 yrs.	£75 - £100M	Snowball
I	CEO	15 yrs.	£50 - £75M	Snowball
J	CEO	12 yrs.	£75 - £100M	Snowball
K	CEO	17 yrs.	≤ £25M	Snowball
M	CEO	17 yrs.	≥ £100M	Snowball
N	CEO	3 yrs.	£25 - £50M	Snowball
O	CEO	23 yrs.	£25 - £50M	Snowball
P	CEO	7 yrs.	£50 - £75M	Snowball

Appendix F: Thematic Coding Framework:

GRAND CODES	SOCIAL MISSION	BUSINESS LIKE PRACTICES	STRATEGY	CAPABILITY	INNOVATION	SLT	HUMAN CAPITAL	SYSTEMS	PRIVATE/CHARITY SECTOR	OTHER
Sub Codes 1	**Mission diversification SM:A160**	**Business practices BP:A123**	**Org design S:A161**	**Emergent to survive C:A190**	**Types I:A136**	**Role in balancing s/l term SLT:**A140/A156a/**A122**/A110/	**Culture HC:A105** A111c/**A107**/A162a/A140b	**Planning/decision making systems Sy:A108**	**What P sector can learn PS:A172**	**Governance O:A150**
Sub Codes 2	Layering on **A160a**/A165c	Behaviour A123a	User led A161a/**A160e**/A194c/A107a /A105b	Limits A190a (staff skill & retention)	No innovation A136a	Structure A140a/A178c/**C:A129**/A165	Mistakes A105a	Limits A108a	Social purpose A172a	Trustees **A150a**/A162/A169
Sub Codes 2	Divestment **A160b**/A194b	Business Dev. A123b	Managing change **A161b**/A178b	Getting fundraising ready A190b	Funding linked to innovation A136b	Differentiated sub-cultures A140b/A162a/A111c/**A107**/A 105	Member engagement A105b/**A160e**/A194c/A107a/ A161a	Successes A108b	CSR A172b	
	Inisght (research) led A160c	Accountability A123c (£ governance A182b/A123c /A111b/**A184)**	Innovation opportunity A161c	Extnl awareness A190 c	Macro & micro A136c	Capacity A140c	Resistant to change A105c/**A182a**/SIG2	Plans A108c	Resourcefulness A172c	
	Acquisition A160d	Staff from business A123d	Comissioned **A161d**/A129d/A165b	Building expertise A190d	Too much A136d	Focus A140d	Coaching culture A105d	Tools A108d	Staff engagement A172d	
	Beneficiary (led/resisted) **A160e**/A194c/A107a/A161a	Business culture A123e							Collaborative working A172d	
	No - (lack of progress) A160d	Business with corporates A123f							Values linked to discretionary effort A172e	
	Broadening A160G	Statutory £ A123g							Volunteers A172f	
	Narrowing A160h	Language A123h							Leadership A172g	
Sub Codes 1	**Mission link to strategy SM:A194**	**Business model BP:A131**	**Short/long term focus S:A122**/A110/A112/A156a/A 140	**Short-term / long-term** C:A110S: **A122**/A112/A156a/A140	**Structure/design** I:A165/**C:A129**/A165/A140	**Bringing staff along s/l term SLT:A112 S:A122**/A110/A156a/A140	**Strategic awareness HC:A156** S:A147	**A systems view Sy:A117**	**What C sector can learn A104**	**EDI A133**
Sub Codes 2	Drivers A194a (Community, £, commmissioned)	Charitable Purpose A131a (shops)	Dynamism A122a		Effective A165a	Freedoms A112a	Long/short term A156a/**A122**/A110/A112/A14 0		Looking after staff A104a	
Sub Codes 2	Social care to social change A194b/**A160b**	Subject to reserves A131b	Agility A122b		Limited A165b (stat funded) **A161d**/A129d	Constraints A112b	Planned/actual A156b			
	Beneficiary need A194c/ **A160e**/A107a/A161a		Strategic period A122c (rolling)		Layering on services! A165c/**A160a**					
	Focus A194d				Local grassroots A165d					
					Structural design A165e					
					Coproduction A165f					
Sub Codes 1	**Mission link org behaviours SM:A182**	**Competitors/allies BP:A141**	**Statement of intent** S:A147 **HC:A156**	**Structure to manage E/E C:A129** A165/A178c/A140	**Link to performance I:A162**	**Capability to achieve s/l term success SLT:A169**	**Role/function HC:A178**	**Technology Sy:A159**		
Sub Codes 2	Stickyness/ridgidity **A182a**/SIG2/A105c	Competitiveness A141a		Incubation v's fast wins A129a	Link to Trustees **A150a**/A162/A169	Diversity A169a (+ve, lack of challenge, all female)	In strategic design A178a			
	Lack of governance A182b/A123c/A111b/**A184**	(pros/cons/SLAs/£)		Structural A129b	Culture A162a/A111c/**A107**/A105/A140 b	(MBTI)	In Change process A178b/**A161b**			
Sub Codes 2	Inclusivity, EDI, cognitive diversity A182c	Allies A141b		Contextual A129c	Cultural differentiation A162b	Link to Trustees **A150a**/A162/A169	In innovation A178c/**C:A129** A165/A140			
		(pros/cons/merge/shared resources, policy, campaigning)		Commissioned services as an inhibitor A129d/**A161d**/A165b		CEO a:169c				
						Skills (strategically minded, enabling, reflexivity,				

Sub Codes 1	**Mission link to culture SM:A107** A111c/A105/A162a/A140b		**Capability to achieve S:A111**	**Governance C:A184** A182b/A123c/A111b	**Drive source intl/extnl I:A109**	**Connection to external world SLT:A124**	**Incentivisation HC:A116**			
Sub Codes 2	Beneficiary led A194c/ **A160e**/A107a/A161a		Strategic lead A111a	As an inhibitor A184a	Intnl (people, insight) A109a	Joined up A124a	Salary A116a			
	Drive A107b		Governance arrangement A111b/A182b/A123c/**A184**	As an enabler A:184b	Extnl (Commercial Partners) A109b		Awards A116b			
	Cohesion A107c		Culture A111c/**A107/**A105/A162a/A 140b				Investment A116c			
			Strategic ambition A111d				Working arrangement A116d			
							Discretionary effort A116e			
	Mission completion SM:A148			**Data C:A163**						
	Mission/vision communication SM:SIGNO									
	Logistics SIGNO 1									
	Resistance to msg SIGNO 2/**A182a**/A105c									
	How? SIGNO 3 (intnl, external marketing)									
	Mission benefit / disadvantage SM:A164									
	Misssion type SM:A101									
	Research A101a									
	Info/support/campaigning A101b									
	Social Change A101c									