

Investigating how the political will for strengthening resilience has developed within Bristol

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Abstract:

This study investigates how the political will for strengthening resilience has developed within the city of Bristol, focusing on how this is shaped by factors at local, national and international scales. Thematic analysis of Bristol City Council policy documents and interviews with participants from a range of different organisations throughout the city are used to gather data. The findings are analysed using a framework adapted from existing work on the political economy of disaster risk reduction, which reconceptualises political will to be an emergent property, that is realised when authorities have the motivation to strengthen resilience to disaster risk, and the broader political economy creates incentives to be able to pursue that agenda.

The study presents many findings that are relevant for Bristol, and some for other cities worldwide. Three underlying motivations for strengthening resilience are identified, and are found to be deeply embedded within the population and institutions of the city. More incentives are found to be emerging from the local and international-scale than the national-scale, which instead provides several barriers to the city authorities' efforts to strengthen resilience. Ultimately the study concludes that the most important finding is the role that Bristol's legacy as a city that prioritises environmental sustainability and progressive social innovation, plays in shaping its contemporary political will for strengthening resilience. It is also noted that the study is highly exploratory, and the methodological framework should be applied to other case studies before broader conclusions could be induced.

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Summary

Bristol is consistently rated one of the best places to live in the UK, yet it faces shocks such as severe weather events and disease outbreaks, and chronic stresses such as climate change and growing unemployment. Recently, Bristol has been recognised internationally for its strong leadership in strengthening resilience to these challenges. This study investigates why key organisations within the city are aiming to strengthen resilience. To do so, it uncovers factors that are influencing those organisations, including some that emerge from the city itself, some from the national context of the UK, and some from the international sphere.

In determining why the organisations are aiming to strengthen resilience, this study addressed several research gaps. Much academic work has aimed to untangle the discursive meanings of 'resilience', yet little is understood about how policymakers within cities understand the term. Whilst the term 'political will' is often used to describe why some authorities more effectively manage disaster risk than others, the concept remains vague, with no conclusive definition. This study aimed to address these gaps, by focusing directly on people working to strengthen the resilience of the city, and revisiting the concept of political will.

Thematic analysis of policy documents from the City Council as well as interviews with employees from a range of key organisations working to strengthen resilience throughout the city are used to gather data. The findings are analysed using a framework adapted from existing work on the political economy of disaster risk reduction. 'Political will for strengthening resilience' is reconceptualised as 'an emergent property, that is realised when authorities have the motivation to strengthen resilience to disaster risk, and the broader political economy creates incentives to be able to pursue that agenda'.

Using this framework, the study identifies three underlying motivations that are deeply embedded within the population and institutions of the city, and numerous incentives in the socio-political-economic environment. It also explores how these motivations and incentives are shaped by the interaction of factors at local, national and international scales, and

ultimately converging to create political will. As a result, the study presents many findings that are relevant for Bristol, for other cities worldwide, and for international policy formation.

Key findings include that more incentives are found to be emerging from the local and international-scale than the national-scale, which instead provides several barriers to the city authorities' efforts to strengthen resilience. Additionally, the role of Bristol's legacy as a city that prioritises environmental sustainability and progressive social innovation, is found to play a significant role in shaping its contemporary political will for strengthening resilience. It is also noted that the study is highly exploratory, and the methodological framework should be applied to other case studies before broader conclusions could be induced.

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Abbreviations

100RC	100 Resilient Cities
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
BCC	Bristol City Council
Brexit	British Exit from the European Union
BRS	Bristol Resilience Strategy
CCA	Civil Contingencies Act
CRO	Chief Resilience Officer
DFID	(UK) Department for International Development
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EGCA	European Green Capital Award
LGA	Local Government Association
LRF	Local Resilience Forum
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NUA	New Urban Agenda
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (now UNDRR)
UK	United Kingdom

1. Introduction

1.1 Study rationale

The concept of resilience is multi-faceted, with contested meanings (Alexander, 2013), yet has emerged as an anticipatory logic through which all risks facing society are increasingly understood (Anderson, 2010, Grove, 2013). This is reflected within the post-2015 international frameworks, which promote resilience as the solution to development, climate, and humanitarian issues alike (Peters et al, 2016).

As the use and different interpretations of resilience proliferate, it is vital to interrogate what the concept means in practice. This is particularly consequential for the field of disaster risk management (DRM), as resilience has now become a foundational concept (Grove, 2013). Whilst academics have indeed interrogated the discursive basis and potential consequences of the resilience agenda, they have been slower to explore why authorities aim to strengthen resilience against disaster risk. This is central to a broader problem, that the DRM field lacks a convincing narrative on policy formation (Wilkinson, 2012).

Little is understood about why authorities reduce disaster risk. There is an implicit assumption within international policy that national and city authorities are mobilised through frameworks such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), Paris Agreement, 2030 Agenda and New Urban Agenda (NUA). However, their influence is rarely investigated (Green, 2016).

Innovative studies in recent years have begun to investigate the political economy of disaster risk reduction (DRR). The concept of 'political will' for DRR has emerged, albeit with no single conclusive definition. For international frameworks to successfully influence national and city authorities, a paradigm shift is required (Wilkinson, 2012). Further research into decision-making in diverse political-economic contexts should inform a more sophisticated theory of how change happens, that considers how to get resilience onto the political agenda of authorities, and how to shape their incentives for specific DRM measures. This will allow

international frameworks to exploit ‘room for manoeuvre’ amongst authorities (Wilkinson, 2012).

This issue is particularly important for cities, which are increasingly positioned as more essential to solving the world’s major sustainability challenges than nation states (Bulkeley, 2018, Garschagen et al, 2018). Their collaboration in international networks and campaigns is cited as evidence of a shifting geography of disaster risk governance, in which national governments are no longer the predominant actors (Jones et al, 2015, Bulkeley and Jordan, 2012). Despite this exciting progress, policy makers within cities have rarely been asked directly why they are motivated to strengthen sustainability and resilience, for example whether this is in response to less progressive national governments and supranational entities, or rather informed by collaboration with them.

1.2 Research aims

This study utilises Bristol as a case study through which to interrogate these gaps in existing research, and to determine how factors at different spatial scales are shaping the political will to strengthen resilience. It also aims to explore the utility of reconceptualising political will to better understand how it is emerging within city authorities, and how international policy frameworks can encourage it.

These broad research aims are addressed through three key questions:

- 1. What do policy makers in Bristol identify as their motivation for strengthening resilience?*
- 2. What incentives in the socio-political environment of Bristol influence the ability of various stakeholders to translate this motivation into risk reduction measures?*
- 3. How are the perceptions of stakeholders in Bristol shaped by the interaction of factors across local, national and international scales?¹*

¹ This study uses the term ‘stakeholders’ to refer to individuals as well as to organisations such as city authorities, emergency services, research institutes, NGOs and businesses that are working to strengthen resilience within Bristol. The justification for using stakeholder as a collective term for both is explained further in section 3.4.

1.3 Case study

Founded in the eleventh century, Bristol has grown into a prosperous city with a population exceeding 440,000 (BCC, 2016a), that is consistently rated one of the best places to live in the UK (Core Cities UK, 2019). However Bristol faces many resilience challenges, including shocks of flooding, severe weather events, disease outbreaks and malicious attacks, and chronic stresses of climate change, population growth, growing unemployment and health inequality (BCC, 2016a).

Bristol presents an ideal case study for several reasons. Firstly, it is recognised internationally for a legacy and strong leadership in sustainability and resilience. It's environmental movement begun in the late 1960s, and has been recognised internationally; in 2008, Bristol topped the Forum for the Future's Sustainable Cities Index, and in 2015 it successfully bid for the EGCA, which recognises that a city has high environmental standards, and ambitious goals for sustainable development. Bristol's legacy is also associated with progressive social development, and innovative programmes to achieve it (Brownlee, 2011). Accordingly, it has more recently developed a host of local resilience building initiatives implemented by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and local authorities across many spheres of sustainable development, such as energy security, the local economy, reducing child poverty, and data security (European Union, 2015). More recently, the British City Council (BCC) has engaged with international campaigns that address the nexus of resilience, climate change adaptation and sustainability, such as joining the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities Campaign (100RC).

Secondly, the city is at a critical stage in its resilience journey. Since 2013, the BCC'S engagement with the 100RC Campaign provided extra momentum, resulting in the establishment of a Chief Resilience Officer (CRO) and development of an official Bristol Resilience Strategy (BRS). The Campaign has now ended, and BCC has entered a new phase, where the strategy is integrated into long-term plan.

Finally, the timing is also interesting due to the political context within Bristol, as the geographies of power change within the UK. Along with other 'Core Cities', Bristol has

developed a model of more localised governance compared to much of the country, as key powers have been devolved from central government to the BCC. Bristol therefore offers an opportunity to interrogate sensationalist academic discourses that construct a simple dichotomy between progressive cities, and more conservative central governments that are slower to act on sustainability issues (Bulkeley, 2018, Garschagen et al, 2018), as the government is allowing the city authorities to take leadership on sustainability.

Furthermore, it offers the chance to challenge critiques of resilience as inherently entangled within neo-liberal governance ideologies that absolve the state of the responsibility to address the vulnerability of its citizens, shifting it instead onto localised governance structures, communities and individual citizens (Joseph 2013, Schmidt 2013, Whitham 2013, Chandler, 2014, Evans and Reid, 2014). Within this reading of resilience it would seem paradoxical that the BCC has itself lobbied for increased autonomy as part of the 'Core Cities' lobbying group (Lowndes and Gardner, 2016), and have embraced the concept of resilience as a way to improve the lives of the population. Indeed, some are beginning to reject the hegemonic grammar of these critiques that obscure the potentially transformative role of local government, communities and the voluntary sector in strengthening their own resilience (Williams et al, 2014). Studying how the political will for strengthening resilience has developed within Bristol therefore offers an opportunity to resolve this apparent gap between the perspectives of academics and policy makers on the concept of resilience.

1.4 Overview of study

The literature review explores academic viewpoints on resilience and disaster risk governance in more depth; highlighting analytical insights that will be drawn on throughout the study and delineating gaps in existing empirical research and theories that the study will address. The methodology explains how the study has been designed in response to these gaps. The results section then presents an overview of how resilience is being governed within Bristol, and an analysis of how this governance is motivated and incentivised. Finally, the discussion explores how these motivations and incentives are constituting political will in Bristol.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Resilient cities

The term 'resilience' has a complex etymology bridging several academic disciplines and recent adoption into the policy realm (Alexander, 2013). Faced with a disturbance, a resilient system can be one that resists shifting from one equilibrium to another, bounces back to a previous equilibrium, or continuously adapts (Pendall et al, 2010). Elements of each interpretation have been applied to contemporary human-environment systems. Here resilience becomes an all-encompassing metaphor, theory, strategy and set of capabilities (Norris et al 2007) for a society that can continue to develop, in spite of shocks that are increasing in frequency and magnitude due to environmental changes and the growing interconnectedness of the world's socio-economic systems (Becker, 2014).

Resilience has emerged as the dominant and normative ideology (Sou, 2019) shaping interventions for DRM (Grove, 2013). The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)² defines it as 'the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions' (UNISDR, 2009). Here, DRM becomes about more than the traditional focus on response and recovery; it requires a broader approach that also incorporates risk prevention, mitigation and preparedness. The notion of resilience is therefore entangled within key thematic shifts in the DRM field, such as the need to view society from a systems perspective, and to engage multiple stakeholders in an 'all-of-society' approach (UNISDR, 2015). Here the focus progresses from one of disaster risk *management* to disaster risk *governance*, implemented through a system of institutions, mechanisms, policy and legal frameworks and other arrangements to guide, coordinate and oversee DRR and related areas of policy (UNISDR, 2009). Accordingly, numerous governments, supranational entities, and NGOs are utilising 'resilience' to guide their interventions for DRR, their overall mandate or even to drive governance reform (Harris et al, 2017).

² UNISDR (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction was renamed UNDRR (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction), in 2019. It is referred in the main text by the most up to date name, but referenced according to the name at the time of publication.

Cities authorities have embraced resilience as a lens through which to structure responses to a host of urban challenges (Hayward, 2013) that are growing due to environmental change, demographic pressures, and increasing interdependence of systems of transport, food distribution, and economic activity (Tyler and Moench, 2012). The concept offers an attractive framework through which to reduce these risks whilst also pursuing development, as it maps well onto in-vogue conceptualizations of cities as complex adaptive systems (Meerow et al, 2016). This movement for urban resilience has been global. It is propagated by the post-2015 international policy frameworks, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, SFDRR, NUA and Paris Agreement (Satterthwaite, 2016). Furthermore, many city authorities use international collaboration to strengthen resilience, through involvement in campaigns such as the 100RC Campaign. It has thus been proposed that cities are emerging as progressive actors driving sustainability policy and action (Bulkeley, 2018).

2.2 Political economy of disaster risk reduction

It has long been recognised within the DRM community that disasters are a function not only of hazard exposure but also of socio-economic vulnerability, and therefore stem from unresolved development issues (Wijkman and Timberlake, 1984). It follows that authorities can reduce disaster risk through interventions in numerous public policy areas, by providing services such as emergency response and public works, refraining from interventions that create risks, implementing land-use planning, and coordinating the risk reduction activities of other stakeholders (Wilkinson, 2012, UNISDR, 2010).

Whilst each intervention involves technical challenges, it also presents *political* challenges (Willams, 2011). Each will require funding, may advantage/disadvantage certain geographical areas and social groups over others, and may involve trade-offs with other policy goals, such as economic growth or environmental aesthetic. It is within this messy context that DRR interventions are selected and prioritized. It is therefore widely recognised that socio-political infrastructure is often the most important determinant of vulnerability to hazards (Eakin et al, 2017).

Despite this recognition, research into decision-making for DRR has been limited. The term ‘*political will*’ is often invoked to explain why some authorities reduce disaster risk, whilst others do not (Lassa et al, 2019). This is acknowledged by the SFDRR, with UNDRR remarking that ‘effectiveness in achieving the objectives fostered by the Sendai Framework for reducing disaster risk is contingent upon the political will to translate a global non-binding framework into national governance mechanisms that guide the public and private sector in addressing disaster risk’ (UNISDR 2017). Despite this apparent consensus on the importance of political will, it remains rather ambiguous and is rarely defined by those who use it. Sometimes it refers in an abstract sense to how disaster risk gets onto the political agenda, whilst other times it is about why authorities implement specific interventions for DRR. It is also unclear whether political will is an emergent property of a society, something embodied within individuals and organisations, or specifically within authorities and politicians.

Within DRM, the clearest articulations are provided by Lassa et al (2019) and Williams (2011). For Lassa et al, political will exists within a single organisation, where there is a locus of commitment for key aspects of DRR. For Williams, political will emerges due to *incentives*, that are constituted by structures, institutions and political processes (Williams, 2011).

- Structures: fundamental features of the political economy such as the nature of disaster risk, political geography, social structures, cultural beliefs and practices.
- Institutions: formal and informal rules and relationships that govern the behaviour of agents, such as legislation, organizational arrangements for DRR, and the political system.
- Political processes: occur as individuals and groups work within the rules of these structures and institutions to advance their interests, for example forming lobbies and acting as champions for a particular intervention

3

This study will build on these ideas of Lassa and Williams, as well as previous empirical findings on the political economy of DRR and theoretical work on resilience, to understand why the city of Bristol has been able to prioritise resilience.

³ Williams (2011), adapted from UK Department for International Development’s Drivers of Change framework, and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Strategic Governance and Corruption Assessment

Empirical studies on the political economy of DRR have so far focused more on exploring the role of single factors rather than all factors converging within one case study. These have yielded important insights, which the table below organizes according to Williams (2011) framework.

Table 1: Selection of empirical findings on the political economy of DRR

Structure	Institutions	Processes
Disasters that can be forecast ahead create stronger political incentives for DRR. ¹	Provision of public services may be dictated by national government, beyond control of city authorities. ⁴	Disaster risk concentrates in areas inhabited by marginalized communities.
Social contract determines government responsibility, e.g. a cultural belief that governments have a primary responsibility to protect citizens against risk leads to more government intervention. ¹		Low public awareness about risks can limit citizen pressure to address DRR. ⁴
Governments may prioritise spending on issues such as health care with more immediate cost-benefit, than on low frequency, high impact events that cost a lot to prevent and may never materialise. ²	Politicians prioritize visible public goods over environmental protection and enforcement, high-quality risk assessment and participatory planning processes, legislation for building inspections. ⁵	Disaster relief may be used as a political tool by manipulating its distribution and redirecting it to reward supporters and punish opponents.
	Public officials more likely to focus on short-medium term goals, linked to election cycles, limiting their ability to tackle root causes of risks. ⁶	Public resistance to relocation can limit land use planning. ¹
DRR policies are often most effectively implemented in central and urbanized regions where political and economic interests are concentrated and the state has its strongest presence. ¹	Politicians with short election timescales discouraged from addressing intensive risk. ⁴	Clientelism and corruption may dictate the interventions of politicians. ⁷
		Governments that deliver effective recovery are rewarded, even if risk reduction measures were insufficient. ⁸

1. Williams, 2011

2. Kenny, 2009

3. Pelling and Dill, 2010

4. Pal and Shaw, 2018

5. Keefer et al, 2010

6. Vale, 2014

7. Eakin et al 2017

8. Albala-Bertrand, 1993

2.3 Politicizing resilience

Academic perspectives on resilience are both positive and negative. Within sustainability science, resilience is a progressive concept providing an all-encompassing structure for policy interventions across multiple sectors to ensure that society can develop sustainably, despite shocks (Becker, 2014). However political science critiques stress that resilience is inherently political; it is entangled within normative judgements about the desired state of society, and will require trade-offs, which may favour particular social groups and political ideologies (Meerow et al, 2016).

In fact, numerous scholars have argued that resilience is rooted within neo-liberal ideologies that reinforce subjectivities of vulnerable groups. This argument states that whilst a discourse of risk reduction seek to prevent uncertain futures, a discourse of resilience seeks to enhance the capacity of individuals and communities to live with this uncertainty (O'Malley, 2010). The emphasis shifts from tackling uneven political-economic relations that create vulnerability, to ensuring that vulnerable groups can cope with risks portrayed as an unavoidable consequence of living in the contemporary world (Reid, 2012). This absolves the state of the responsibility to address the vulnerability of its citizens, shifting it onto localized governance structures, communities and citizens (Joseph 2013, Schmidt 2013, Whitham 2013). Here the discourse of resilience is depoliticizing (Reid, 2012) and detrimental to groups seeking to reduce vulnerability through transformative change (Cretney and Bond, 2014). The most severe criticisms suggest that it should be rejected altogether (Chandler, 2014, Evans and Reid, 2014), whilst others argue that it's potential to deliver progressive change can only be realized through coupling explicitly with the concept of transformation (Bahadur and Tanner, 2014) or the need to improve the life prospects of disadvantaged groups (Vale, 2014).

International policy frameworks are criticized in the same vein. It has been argued that the SFDRR does not adequately engage with the role of power relations in shaping disaster risk governance (Munene et al, 2018), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are not informed by an analysis of how governments can be influenced (Green, 2017), and the NUA is orientated towards vaccinating citizens against the effects of socio-economic inequality through technocratic solutions, rather than developing a transformative vision of an

alternative future political economy (Kaika, 2017, Garschagen et al, 2018). For these scholars, policy frameworks must go beyond promoting an ambiguous notion of 'resilience', and become more politicized; to capture the difficult policy trade-offs that are required to realise sustainable development (Chu et al, 2017).

Whilst academics have debated the meanings and implications of resilience, many city authorities have already embraced it and begun to structure policy around it (Weichselgartner and Kelman 2015). Here the use of international campaigns and networks to strengthen resilience has been cited as evidence that cities are progressive actors driving sustainability policy and action (Bulkeley, 2018). It is therefore clear that the academic debates regarding the potential for the concept of resilience to promote sustainable development are unresolved.

2.4 Delineating a research gap

Several interrelated research gaps emerge from this literature review. Firstly, there is a divergence between academic theory and the formation of policy within city authorities and international policy frameworks. Whilst academic theorisations become increasingly attuned to political dimensions of resilience, policy frameworks are accused of depoliticising the concept altogether, and little is known about how city and government authorities negotiate the concept of 'resilience'. Policy makers within cities are rarely interviewed directly to ascertain how they utilise the concept of resilience, and whether this is influenced by international policy.

For research to inform policy within cities and international policy frameworks, this tension between academic research and the experiences of policy makers must be reconciled. Policy-making is a complex, multidimensional and highly contextual process (Jones et al, 2012). Academic work should therefore be reoriented from a hegemonic grammar of critiques (Williams et al, 2014) that automatically write off resilience as a neoliberal conspiracy, towards empirical research that interrogates how it plays out within specific socio-political-economic contexts.

This can help to address a second research gap, of the political economy of DRR policy formation. The concept of political will is often cited as key to realizing DRR, but a definition has not yet been agreed. This study uses insights from Lassa et al (2019) and Williams (2011) to construct a definition of political will that can a) be investigated within a specific case study context, and b) provide useful insights for the formation of international policy that can exploit 'room for manoeuvre' amongst authorities (Wilkinson, 2012).

2.5 Reconceptualising political will for strengthening resilience

Williams' (2011) view of political will as something that emerges from incentives provides a useful framework for categorising the external factors affecting one authority's approach to reducing disaster risk. However, the focus on external incentives ignores the internal motivation within an authority to address resilience. Understanding how internal motivations develop, and whether they are consistent or vary amongst stakeholder within one city, is particularly important given the contested nature of this resilience paradigm.

This idea of internal motivation can be incorporated when using Lassa et al's idea of political will as a 'locus of commitment for key aspects of DRM'. Using this idea of a locus, a city authority's political will to strengthen resilience can be constituted both by an internal motivation to value resilience, and then incentives that allow the authority to act on this motivation and operationalize resilience through specific risk reduction measures. This study thereby reconceptualises political will for DRR as:

'an emergent property⁴, that is realised when authorities have the motivation to strengthen resilience to disaster risk, and the broader political economy creates incentives to be able to pursue that agenda.'

Nonetheless, this study diverges from Lassa's definition in one aspect, as it focuses on the range of stakeholders acting to strengthen resilience, beyond the city authority itself. This is

⁴ This thesis understands political will to be an emergent property, within a city that is a complex system. Here, political will is an unexpected outcome that is more than the sum of the functions of the different components in the city. In other words, political will has multiple origins, which are difficult to identify and understand as individual components. Instead, political will can only be understood when assessing the entire city as a whole, and the origins must be understood in relation to each other.

in necessary given the highly collaborative nature of efforts to strengthen resilience within Bristol, as the interactions between different stakeholders are influencing each other.

This conceptualisation of political will can still be investigated using Williams (2011) framework of structures, institutions and political processes. However, the framework needs to be expanded to incorporate not just the factors of the local political economy within that city, but the factors at local, national and international scales. The following methodology outlines how this conceptualisation of political will is investigated within Bristol.

3. Methodology

3.1 Epistemology and research design

Considering critiques that academic research is too theoretical, international policy frameworks have not engaged with the realities of policy formation within cities, and there has been insufficient empirical investigation into the experience of policy makers within cities (Wilkinson, 2012), this study takes a case study approach. Inductive reasoning is used, in which detailed observations of an example are used to make abstractions that could apply more broadly (Bernard, 2011). The findings of this study should be combined with those from other case studies. Multiple perspectives would uncover patterns and nuances, to inform a broader theory of the development of political will for strengthening resilience.

3.2 Data collection process

Owing to the exploratory nature of the research questions, this study used numerous data collection and analysis methods. This multi-method approach provided the multiple perspectives needed to gain a comprehensive understanding of a whole case study (Thomas, 2011). The findings were triangulated to cross-check their validity and contrast different perspectives amongst different stakeholders within the city, to increase the reliability and texture of the results (Abowitz and Toole, 2010).

An academic literature review was used to clarify the research gap, and develop an analytical framing of the research. Secondary data was reviewed to understand the risk profile and resilience policy within Bristol; how resilience is conceptualised, which hazards and vulnerabilities are prioritised, how the policy has developed over time, and which stakeholders have been involved. This included policy statements, legislation, organisational strategies, development plans and press releases from relevant authorities within the city. A full list of documents is provided within Appendix 1.

Primary data was collected through 6 interviews with employees of BCC's Civil Protection Team (1) and Flood Risk Team (2), the City Office (3), Schumacher Institute (4) and Bristol Green Capital Partnership (5,6). All were reached through email enquiries and snowball sampling. The interviews were semi-structured, lasted an average of sixty minutes and were held over the telephone. Along with the documents in appendix 1, transcripts of the interviews were coded using NVivo software to identify key themes (Bowen, 2009). Further details concerning interviewees and explanations of how each organisation works to strengthen resilience is provided in Appendix 2. A list of the interview questions is provided within Appendix 3.

3.3 Analytical framework

This study drew on themes from political economy analysis such as power, incentives, finance, stakeholder interactions, as well as insights from Williams and Lassa to design the overall research framework and key research questions. Utilising these concepts allowed the study to situate policy interventions for resilience within the context of the prevailing political and economic issues affecting Bristol. However, as this study addressed a significant research gap, there were a limited number of previous studies from which to draw upon. Amongst these studies there is little consensus as to the most important determinants of political will for addressing resilience, and even less is known about the context of Bristol in particular. As a result, this study is of a highly exploratory nature.

This study reconceptualises political will, as *an emergent property, that is realised when authorities have the motivation to strengthen resilience to disaster risk, and the broader political economy creates incentives to be able to pursue that agenda*. Whilst motivation is an

internal property of an organisation, incentives are understood to be constituted through structures, formal and informal institutions, and political processes (Williams, 2011). These structures, institutions and political processes are subcategorised into those that emerge at local, national, and international scales.

3.4 Limitations

This study faced several limitations. For example, the scope was limited by the politicised nature of the research topic and positionality of the researcher. Participants may have been restricted in discussing with an external researcher how incentives and stakeholder interactions shape the work of their organisation, or their interpretation of contested and controversial issues such as funding, devolution or legislation. Therefore this study deliberately began with broad questions for participants, before focusing on those that they could discuss. Triangulation of multiple participants and data collection methods were used to limit any subsequent confirmation bias. Additionally, the issue of confidentiality was discussed with participants from initial contact, to ensure that they were comfortable with the content of the interview.

The scope of the study also limited the ability to triangulate across different organisations. Ideally, the study would combine both official stated positions of organisations, as well as interview responses from multiple employees from each organisation, so that their answers could be triangulated to get a sense of the true perceptions within each organisation. However, this was difficult to achieve for a large city, given the time and resources available. To avoid uncritically assigning the perceptions of individual employees to entire organisations, the results and discussion refer to 'stakeholders', which covers both individuals and organisations, as separate but entwined actors.

Together, these limitations could restrict the findings that could be drawn. However this study is not claiming to make definitive conclusions about every determinant of political will in Bristol, or rank their importance. Rather, it is designed to be exploratory, aiming to uncover possible determinants that have been overlooked in previous academic studies of resilience. The findings will not necessarily apply to other case studies, instead the contribution of this

study to the emerging efforts to understand political will for strengthening resilience is more methodological, through the application of a new analytical framework.

4. Results

4.1 Governance of resilience within Bristol

Understanding how resilience is strengthened within Bristol requires an understanding of the governance of the city, the movement to strengthen resilience that has emerged within this context, and the myriad stakeholders involved in managing risk and the overall development of the city. This section provides a brief overview of each, using insights from secondary data analysis and interviews.

4.1.1 The tiered governance model of Bristol

Governance of risk refers to the system of institutions, mechanisms, policy and legal frameworks and other arrangements that guide, coordinate and oversee how risks are reduced (UNISDR, 2009). Compared to most countries, the UK has a more centralised model of governance, which means that many of these are determined by central government.

Nonetheless, within this context there has traditionally been a diverse range of governance models operating across different local areas, with powers devolved to local government authorities to different extents (Foresight, UK Government Office for Science, 2014). Recent reforms have reshaped the governance of cities like Bristol. Since the 2000s, a “new localism” approach emerged, which contends that central government has exercised too much control over local authorities, and that this should be addressed through the decentralisation of power, improved local decision-making (Storey and Farrar, 2009). This has been agreed by central government and city authorities; subsequent reforms have devolved powers and responsibilities to ‘Core’ cities. However, these changes have been implemented during austerity, in which funds allocated from central to local government have reduced significantly.

Collectively, these trends have reshaped the role of city authorities. They are increasingly tasked with setting a vision for the city, but must achieve this not by delivering services, but facilitating service delivery (BCC, 2016b), through guiding the 'dynamic interactions between an array of quasi-governmental, private, non-profit, community and other actors by providing stewardship of finances and major investment decisions' (ibid). Paradoxically, this means that the governance of risk becomes more diffuse, yet city authorities are held more responsible for ensuring that it is effective.

These trends are evident in Bristol. Since 1996, the city has been under the local unitary authority of BCC. This is responsible for providing services including housing, education, transport, planning, fire safety, social care, libraries, and waste management, using funds collected via local council taxes and granted by central government (UK Government website, 2020). Decision-making powers within BCC have increased. In 2012, it was awarded increased powers and freedoms to support economic growth, create jobs and invest in local projects, under the first wave of 'City Deals' made with central government. Furthermore, Bristol is one of only four cities led by a directly elected Mayor, responsible for all major policy decisions within BCC, made through a series of partnership boards. Nonetheless, many decisions are restricted by national legislation and funding allocations.

Additional services are delivered by other private, public and third sector bodies. Thus, decisions pertaining to resilience are made by numerous stakeholders, working at different spatial scales within and beyond the city. The next section outlines the role of BCC in guiding these stakeholders towards a common strategic vision of a resilient Bristol.

4.1.2 Strengthening resilience within Bristol

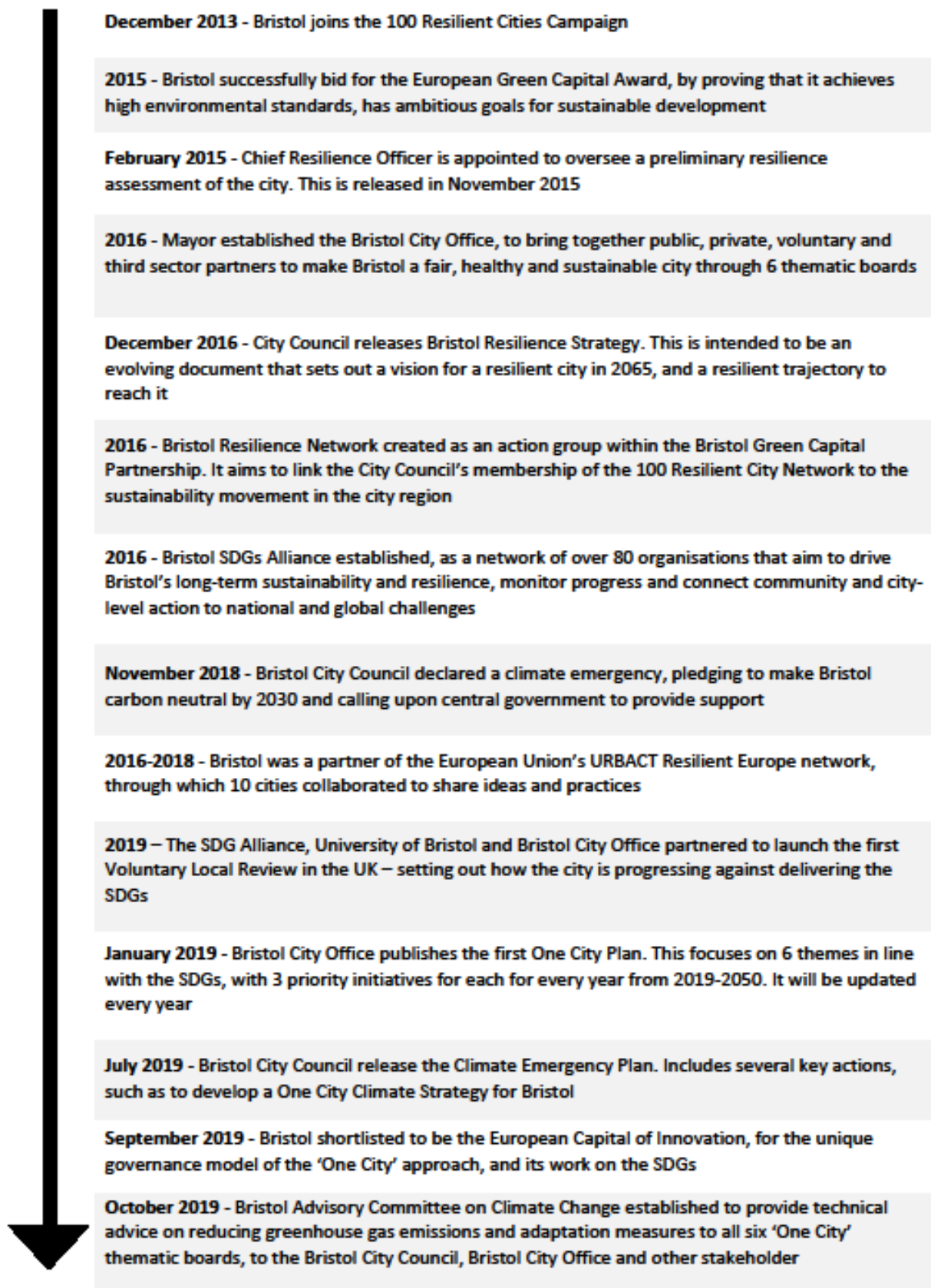
Numerous interventions to improve the city have retrospectively been recognised as 'developing pieces of the resilience jigsaw', (BCC 2016b). These include projects and strategies aimed at promoting sustainable development to ensure that the city can thrive, as well as efforts to reduce disaster risk, such as through climate mitigation and adaptation, or strengthening emergency preparedness, to ensure that the city can continue to thrive, despite shocks.

However, it was in 2013 that ‘resilience’ emerged as an overall strategic policy goal for BCC, when it joined the 100RC Campaign. The campaign funded the position of a CRO, to direct the development of the BRS. The board was tasked with bringing together diverse perspectives to create a holistic vision of a resilient Bristol. In 2016 the BRS was released, which ‘*stitched together existing initiatives to develop a coordinated resilience strategy*’ (BCC, 2016b).

From the outset, BCC stated that ‘our view is that sustainability and resilience are inextricably linked (BCC, 2016). Thus when the 100RC campaign came to an end in 2019, the Mayor of Bristol tasked the newly formed City Office⁵ with implementing the BRS, as part of its overall mandate to ‘encourage partners from across the city to come together and contribute to the immediate and long-term challenges facing Bristol’ (BCC website, 2020). The concept of resilience has become an important lens through which BCC can meet its role in setting a long-term, strategic vision for the city, to be realised by bringing other stakeholder together and guiding their efforts. Moreover, this momentum for strengthening resilience must be understood as part of a longer legacy of promoting sustainability. Figure 1 outlines how BCC arrived at this point, by providing an overview of the key initiatives that have emerged to strengthen resilience and sustainability at a strategic level.

⁵ The City Office encourages partners from across the city to come together and address the challenges facing Bristol, as part of what is termed the ‘One City Approach’. The office publishes the One City Plan every year, which aims to make Bristol a fair, healthy and sustainable city.

Figure 1: Emergence of key initiatives to strengthen resilience and sustainable development at a strategic level within Bristol



4.1.3 A multi-stakeholder approach to strengthening resilience

Within Bristol’s tiered governance system, there is scope for many stakeholders and organisations to affect the resilience of the city. By presenting the ‘resilience challenges’ identified by the BRS, Figure 2 reveals the breadth of how resilience is conceptualised in Bristol. This means that many stakeholders are play a role in strengthening the resilience of Bristol, as in Figure 3.⁶

Figure 2: Resilience challenges identified in the Bristol Resilience Strategy

Stresses Relevant to Bristol	Shocks Relevant to Bristol
Transport congestion	Disease outbreak
Ageing infrastructure	Public protest/disorder
Climate change	Terrorist & malicious attacks
Environmental degradation	Industrial action
Food supply	Major infrastructure failure
Fuel supply	Industrial accidents, environmental pollution & ordnance
Water shortages	International event
Change in political leadership	Transport accidents
Ageing population	Severe weather (esp. flooding)
Health inequality	Structural hazard
Growing unemployment	
Economic downturn	
Population growth	
Civil and political unrest	
Anti-microbial resistance	
Devolution	

Source: Bristol City Council (2016a).

⁶ Stakeholders have been identified from a variety of source to capture as many as possible, including the Bristol Resilience Preliminary Assessment and Resilience Strategy, the City Office website, however they are probably not exhaustive due to the broad scope of resilience and size of the city.

Figure 3: Stakeholders involved in strengthening resilience within Bristol

<p>Organizations that form the Local Resilience Forum, to prepare for emergencies:</p>	<p>Authorities:</p>
<p>Category 1 - Emergency responders and local authorities: Avon and Somerset Police South Western Ambulance Service Avon Fire and Rescue Maritime and Coastguard Agency</p> <p>Category 2 - Supporting organisations that provide essential services: Bristol Energy Company Wessex Water Wales and West Utilities Highways England</p>	<p>Bristol City Council (Civil Protection Unit, City Office) West of England Combined Authority Bristol City Council Flood Risk and Asset Management Team – the designated Lead Local Flood Authority</p> <p>Partnerships that aim to strengthen resilience and sustainability:</p> <p>Bristol Resilience Network Bristol SDG Alliance Bristol Green Capital Partnership</p>
<p>Public bodies delivering essential services:</p>	<p>NGOs addressing specific shocks, stresses and vulnerabilities:</p>
<p>North Bristol NHS Trust University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust NHS Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group Bristol Housing Board Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Network Rail Bristol Water Bristol Waste Bristol Food Network Bristol Community Energy Fund Bristol Chamber of Commerce and Initiative Environment Agency Bristol Avon Catchment Partnership. Lower Severn Internal Drainage Board Registered Social Landlords in the city Public Health England</p>	<p>Bristol Ageing Better Partnership Anchor Society Age UK, Older People’s Forum Up Our Street Bristol Friends of the Earth Bristol Environmental Action Trust Avon Wildlife Trust West of England Nature Partnership LGBT Bristol Child friendly City British Red Cross Centre for Sustainable Energy Bristol Energy Cooperative Knowle West Media Centre Sustrans</p>
<p>Examples of private companies:</p>	<p>Institutions supporting knowledge and learning:</p>
<p>Property developers and landlords Supermarkets Investors (Bristol & Bath Regional Capital) Consultancy firms forcing on (Arcadis) Transport providers (Metro Bus) Telecoms providers</p>	<p>Community leaders and advocates University of the West of England University of Bristol Bristol Futures Global Schumacher Institute</p>

To summarise, resilience is strengthened by a host of organisations, some addressing specific shocks, stresses and vulnerabilities, and others, resilience more broadly. BCC now guides the actions of these stakeholders, by increasing awareness and engagement, and producing plans and strategies, that set out a long-term vision of resilience in the city and a structure for different stakeholders to contribute to collective realisation of that vision.

4.2 The motivation to strengthen resilience

This section draws on thematic analysis of policy documents and interview responses, to identify various motivations for strengthening resilience. Three key themes are identified, based on nodes that emerged through NVivo analysis.

4.2.1 Theme 1: Strengthening resilience is required in order to address specific stresses and vulnerabilities

Although the BRS identifies 10 shocks and 16 stresses (Figure 2) that the city must become resilient to, further analysis reveals that these are not all given equal prominence. There is a deeper focus on addressing the impacts of climate change as well as socio-economic issues such as inequality, poverty, and social cohesion. This finding is also reflected in the responses of interviewees from other organisations, who each cited one or both as the main underlying reason for strengthening resilience. These different priorities are co-existing simultaneously among different stakeholders that all claim to be focusing on ‘resilience’.

Climate change and socio-economic issues are not only cited as important challenges facing Bristol, but are explicitly used to justify the need for strengthening resilience. For example, in the BRS, the need for a more long-term, strategic approach based upon adaptation of the entire city system rather than just prevention or response to specific risks is attributed to climate change. Comparably, interviewees expressed that resilience is needed to create a proactive approach for managing the multiple risks associated with inequalities in Bristol, so that communities will be prepared to cope with a broad range of risks. In both cases, the motivation for strengthening resilience is linked to the complexity and uncertainty of the underlying stresses.

In that vein, several interviewees discussed how the two stresses interact, and cited strengthening resilience as necessary for capturing the complexity of these interactions. For example, it was expressed that within Bristol, specific communities face socio-economic issues that are linked directly to climate change:

Interviewee 5: '*[Referring to migration, fuel poverty, economic disparity, heat stress] Until you are solving our communities' urgent priorities, you are not going to solve climate change... We are seeing a consideration of equality, economic and sustainability all together...*'

This quote reveals how complicated the links between the two stresses are. On the one hand, issues like heat stress and migration that affect vulnerable socio-economic groups are exacerbated by climate change, and will therefore be reduced by measures to mitigate climate change. However, measures to limit greenhouse gas emissions could have a more contested result on fuel poverty and economic disparity, as they may disrupt local jobs and incomes, and increase fuel prices. Measures to address climate change must therefore be informed by the local socio-economic processes. This complexity necessitates a multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder approach to addressing shocks and stresses. Accordingly, interviewee 5 confirmed that resilience provides a lens through which to understand all of the challenges within Bristol.

Nevertheless, there was also an argument that, instead of offering one coherent approach to addressing both issues, resilience is being utilised by different stakeholders to emphasise their own specific priorities. The predominant motivation for strengthening resilience among the city stakeholders, and the focus of most resilience projects, therefore varies over time according to the influence of each stakeholder. The influence of BCC was highlighted in particular, as it aims to set the overall strategic direction for strengthening resilience in the city. Interestingly, the motivation of BCC itself has fluctuated between addressing climate change and inequality in response to new leadership and political movements, as outlined in the quote below:

Interviewee 4: '*The first mayor was a real greeny... Then we elected a new mayor who had a very specific agenda around social issues, in particular promoting diversity, and tackling issues*

like youth unemployment, homelessness, and really shifting away a lot from environmental issues. The emphasis was really very different. In the last few months, the environment has been coming back mostly because of Extinction Rebellion and climate activism that is underway. These things come in waves.'

This revelation that BCC and its elected Mayor have significant influence in shaping the underlying motivation for strengthening resilience among other stakeholders is interesting to consider in conjunction with the point made by interviewee 5, that strengthening resilience offers a way to integrate work on both stresses. For both interviewees, resilience is entangled within climate change and inequality. This is clearly a consistent and important finding of the entire study. However, it remains to be seen whether resilience will successfully function as a lens through which to integrate the two issues and thus develop solutions that address both, or whether it will fluctuate between prioritising the two.

4.2.3 Theme 2: Strengthening resilience is necessary for a sustainable future for the city

The analysis found clear links between the motivations to strengthen resilience and to strengthen sustainability. The two concepts are not conflated, rather are both stated as long-term strategic goals of the city, overlap in the stresses that they address, will require similar ways of working, and are embraced by many of the same stakeholders.

This link was consistent across all stakeholders included in the analysis. However, there is debate about how the two motivations have informed each other. For example, the BRS expresses that *'sustainability and resilience are inextricably linked'*, and that acknowledging this relationship and strengthening both are essential for setting out a coherent, strategic approach to improving Bristol. However, interviews with other stakeholders provided different insights. For some, resilience was embraced by BCC because of its links to a pre-existing motivation for strengthening environmental sustainability. Conversely, interviewee 3 argued that the City Office's work to strengthen sustainability emerged out of the work undertaken to create the BRS. It was also suggested that it is not possible to pinpoint how the motivations to strengthen resilience and sustainability have emerged, nor to identify which has emerged first:

Interviewee 5: *'We have quite an active sustainability community culture here, which has been active for decades. Any one initiative or organisation will be reluctant to state this is what created that motivation and momentum [for strengthening resilience], because we have a bit of a soup here of lots of co-inspiring and different projects that are learning from each other... It won't be a simple answer.'*

This quote shows that no one stakeholder has a complete understanding of how the different stakeholders in the city are motivated, indicating that it may be challenging to ever conclusively capture where some 'original source' of motivation emerged. Whilst this precludes having one clear answer to research question 1 of this study, it more importantly has positive implications for Bristol. It shows that the motivation for strengthening resilience is being created gradually and collectively, with contributions and commitments from many stakeholders, which are continuing to emerge now. Thus the motivation is not contingent upon one single, driving stakeholder such as the Mayor or BCC, or guiding strategic document such as the BRS. It is something larger, coming from multiple origins. This omnipresence suggests that it will have a permanence beyond any one stakeholder, as it is very strongly embedded within much of the city.

Altogether, these insights show that regardless of which emerged first, the motivations to strengthen resilience and sustainability are integral to each other in Bristol. This could be viewed positively; where the motivations to strengthen each will reinforce each other, and projects can be designed so as to strengthen both. However, an alternative view sees a problematic relationship between the two, in which each becomes a buzzword that stakeholders are temporarily motivated to pursue, before moving to the next. Interviewee 4 from the Schumacher Institute expressed this concern, stating that BCC were asking whether *'resilience is the new sustainability'*, and arguing that this conflation impedes work on resilience:

Interviewee 4: *'Many people in Bristol, and this applies everywhere, are neophiliacs... So at the grassroots level there is extinction rebellion, and then everyone declares a climate*

emergency, and then looks at each other to work out what does this mean and what do we do now? This causes a shift away from resilience’.

This suggests that BCC, along with the other stakeholders, display a propensity for moving between the two concepts instead of integrating the two. They are not simply accepted as *‘inextricably linked’* but are in competition. This would be problematic wherever certain stresses are forgotten about, and points to a broader observation that efforts to improve Bristol are fluctuating between prioritising climate change and green issues, or inequality, rather than addressing the interaction between the two (theme 1).

However, this quote also suggests that the fluctuation between environmental and socio-economic concerns is a common problem, found in other cities too. In other words, it is not a problem unique to Bristol, but a universal challenge when integrating resilience and sustainability. Furthermore, there is a sense of hope in this statement; it again points to processes of reflection and collaboration among different stakeholders, as they collectively negotiate how the two concepts should be understood in relation to each other. Additionally, it indicates that there is potential for learning and improvement, as BCC seeks to learn from an organisation such as the Schumacher Institute

Overall, then, the motivation to strengthen resilience in order to achieve sustainability has potential to really deliver change. It is bringing different stakeholders together, provoking discussion, and drawing upon existing motivations to improve the city. Nevertheless, it remains to be seen how effectively the two concepts are being integrated, and there are indications that this changes over time.

4.2.4 Theme 3: Strengthening resilience offers an opportunity to build upon the identity and reputation of the city

The analysis indicates that efforts to strengthen resilience are attributed to building upon the existing legacy of Bristol, as a city that prioritises environmental sustainability and progressive social innovation. This legacy is dated back to the late 1960s (section 1.3). Here the stakeholders are motivated to strengthen resilience in order to advance this legacy in a more

structured way, using a clear vision and strategy. This goes beyond the opportunity to strengthen sustainability (theme 2); it is also about strengthening the identity of the city, its reputation nationally and internationally, and its ability to inform and learn from other cities.

There are many examples of this. The motivation for developing the BRS is attributed to a need to build upon previous work that has '*develop[ed] pieces of the resilience jigsaw*', something which is possible due to '*a culture of disruption for social innovation*' (BRS). BCC therefore recognises that relevant work has already been undertaken, but its overall impact can be more effective for supporting the development of Bristol if it is all integrated into one cohesive approach. Furthermore, the engagement with the 100RC network to do this is attributed to strengthening Bristol's international leadership in resilience and sustainability.

Interviewees also provided evidence that Bristol's legacy *is* indeed strengthened through engagement with these international campaigns for resilience and sustainability. For example, following the engagement in the 100RC campaign and EGCA, city authorities from other countries aimed to learn from Bristol's experiences, with the CRO being invited to speak at national and international events on these topics.

Overall, it is clear that Bristol's legacy of environmental sustainability and progressive social innovation continue to inspire the stakeholders to improve the city, in line with new emerging approaches. This is interesting when compared to the findings in section 4.2.3, which criticises the tendency to gravitate towards 'the new', sometimes at the expense of resilience. That the stakeholders are inspired by a historical legacy of action means that, even though the specific focuses fluctuate, the core, underlying commitment to improving the city is firmly embedded within the city's public discourses, institutional memory and political history. Moreover, many of the key aspects of resilience have been prioritised in Bristol long before they were labelled as such. All of this indicates a permanence of the motivation to strengthen resilience.

The three identified themes reveal several different motivations for strengthening resilience within Bristol. These motivations vary among different stakeholders, and over time. They reinforce and contradict each other, and their interaction changes over time with events,

political movements and new leadership. The subsequent section explores the external environment surrounding that the stakeholders are working within, to uncover why they are able, or unable, to translate this motivation into effective measures to strengthen resilience.

4.3 Incentives to strengthen resilience

This section explores how the socio-political environment has incentivized stakeholders in Bristol to strengthen resilience, to answer research question 2. The incentives are subcategorised into those constituted through structures, institutions, and political processes, and into those that emerge at local, national and international scales, to answer research question 3. Where relevant, the findings are compared to findings in the existing literature on the political economy of DRR (Table 1).

4.3.1 Structures

Structures refer to fundamental features of the political economy such as nature of disaster risk, political geography, social structures, cultural beliefs and practices. Interviews revealed several salient structures at the local and national-scale, that incentivise but can also act as barriers to strengthening resilience.

Local Structures

Local social structures were consistently cited as creating incentives for strengthening resilience. This role of local structures partly echoes the existing findings in the literature, but partly contradicts them.

One common finding in the literature is that stakeholders are more incentivised to strengthen resilience of local groups that hold power, such as political elites and majority groups, than other societal groups (Williams, 2011). Indeed, several interviewees acknowledged that wealthier groups hold more power to lobby BCC than other groups. However, they also reported that the situation is more complex than the literature suggests, as the wealthier groups use this power to support other groups rather than for themselves. As demonstrated by the employee of the Civil Protection Team in BCC, there is a sense that the powerful groups

share the same underlying motivation as the city authorities, to explicitly support socio-economically vulnerable groups.

Interviewee 1: *'It's not the case that a powerful, wealthier group are shaping policy to their own ends. People in Bristol use their influence on behalf of others... Bristol has a really strong social conscience and wants to actively work to reduce inequalities and increase inclusivity and work towards a more socially just community. And I think that is a real driver for the resilience work.'*

This quote shows that in Bristol, the whole idea of resilience is orientated around improving the life conditions and resilience of 'vulnerable groups'. It is not simply that stakeholders ensure each risk reduction measure is informed by differing vulnerabilities, but rather, inequality itself is seen as the resilience challenge that needs to be addressed. The idea that the city itself has a 'social conscience' is hugely significant; it shows that the underlying motivation to strengthen resilience to enhance its legacy (theme 3) exists not only within the stakeholders, but is embodied amongst the powerful citizens. Again, this indicates that the momentum to strengthen resilience is strongly embedded within much of the city.

The focus on reaching less powerful groups is acted upon, as evidenced by the implementation of resilience strengthening projects that address marginalised communities. Interviewees explained that this has increased in recent years. For example, interviewee 6 argued that, during the EGCA year (2015), BAME communities were found to under-represented in activities, so the 'Green and Black Ambassador' project was implemented to 'support emerging leaders within BAME communities to develop their interest in environmental or social issues'. This shows that the process of reaching marginalised groups is ongoing, and that the stakeholders are willing to search for new vulnerabilities, learn, and adapt their approach.

By the following year, BCC had embedded this approach into the BRS, arguing that the '*many citizens who feel disconnected or unable to influence the future of the city*' must be '*better connected to the city's formal planning, decision-making processes and delivery mechanisms to create a truly participatory future city.*' This quote shows that BCC knows a long-term,

strategic approach to strengthening resilience requires integrating diverse perspectives, including from vulnerable groups. The City Office has now adopted this into its decision-making structure, and is increasing the diversity of its decision-making boards.

Overall, these discussions suggest that while there is inequality and groups with more power, the stakeholders are not incentivised to strengthen the resilience of the most powerful groups, but rather are designing their entire approach to support the least powerful. It could be deduced that the motivations to reduce inequality (theme 1) are preventing external incentives created by social structures from changing how the stakeholders are strengthening resilience. Further research is needed to assess the extent to which the tailored projects and participation within decision-making structures are allowing the vulnerable groups to incentivise the city authorities to address specific risks or use specific interventions.

National Structures

The analysis reveals that the most consequential structural issue at the national-scale concerns the changing and uneven political geography of the UK. Section 4.1 explains that the convergence of devolution and austerity mean city authorities are increasingly tasked with setting a shared vision for the city, but must achieve this by guiding interactions among other actors rather than by delivering services themselves.

The analysis confirmed that this shifting role of the city authorities in Bristol are key reasons for the need to strengthen resilience. For example, the very aim of the BRS is stated as *'to create as many opportunities as possible for strategic partners and stakeholders across the city to work together... to explore innovative ways in which co-benefits can be delivered through collective inquiry and collaboration'*. Here the need to strengthen resilience is about changing how the city stakeholders are working. Whilst BCC provides a structure for collaboration, the responsibility for addressing resilience challenges clearly falls to the different stakeholders who are expected to work together and come up with new solutions themselves.

The interviewees confirmed that this shift has - in several ways - incentivised their organisations to strengthen resilience. For example, Interviewee 3 explained that *'The One City work was birthed out of the reducing resources for local government but the continued ask of delivery'*. Here BCC incentivises stakeholders to strengthen resilience by necessitating their support, and establishing a new institution with the mandate and structure to promote collaboration.

This premise that the increasing concentration of political powers within the city is creating an incentive for strengthening resilience echoes previous findings, whereby the most effective risk reduction policies are implemented in urbanized regions with a strong state presence (as in Williams, 2011). Nevertheless, interviewees expressed that their power to actually implement risk reduction measures remains limited as in the UK many of the budgetary decisions are made by central government. During 2011-2017, austerity resulted in cuts of over £170 million from BCC's budget, plus an anticipated £92 million gap from 2017-2022 (BCC, 2017). This severely restricts BCC's ability to fund stakeholders work. In fact, interviewees cited austerity for exacerbating poverty, inequality and homelessness, and therefore vulnerability to a range of shocks.

Overall, the national structures have a paradoxical effect. Austerity is clearly a barrier to creating a resilient city, but is also acknowledged by interviewees as making their resilience work even more important. Additionally, the shifting role of BCC means that they are assigned larger responsibilities for achieving resilience, but provided with less of the financial resources that are required implement effective risk reduction measures.

4.3.2 Institutions

Institutions refer to the formal and informal rules and relationships that govern the behaviour of agents, such as legislation, organizational arrangements for DRR, and the political system.

Local institutions

Interviewees expressed that the political system within Bristol creates both incentives and barriers for strengthening resilience.

The 5-yearly election of the Mayor and extent of their decision-making powers (section 4.1.1), were identified as particularly important for setting the strategic direction surrounding resilience. Whilst most stakeholders agree with the need for resilience and sustainability, the political system allows for new leadership to promote specific priorities within these broad concepts. Thus, BCC will identify different resilience goals, and encourage other stakeholders such as private companies to contribute towards them, through producing city strategies, establishing partnerships among stakeholders, funding specific projects, hosting informal network events, and establishing decision-making boards focusing on issues that BCC wishes to address. This all-encompassing approach means BCC builds motivation amongst stakeholders, such as by raising awareness of issues through strategies and networking, and builds incentives for specific interventions, such as through providing funding.

The local political system therefore provides one explanation for the shifting motivation between climate change and inequality (theme 1, section 4.2.1). Nonetheless, interviewees outlined limitations faced by BCC in trying to influence other stakeholders. Whilst it effectively builds motivation amongst stakeholders, it can rarely provide financial incentives to act on this motivation, due to budgetary constraints (section 4.3.1). Effectively, the political institutions are facilitating the development of a shared motivation amongst the city stakeholders, whilst the political structure restricts the local governmental institution from being able to incentivise other stakeholders. This raises an important point that has not been covered yet in the existing literature, that the incentives for implementing risk reduction measures are constituted by the interaction of structures and institutions.

Interviewees also highlight the importance of the political views of the local electorate. As the public directly elect the Mayor, their views determine the strategic priorities set by BCC. The two most recent elections of an independent, 'green' Mayor followed by a Labour⁷ Mayor who prioritises inequality, were attributed to these local political views, which were variously described as progressive, left-wing, alternative, socially conscious, and 'green'. At first glance,

⁷ The Labour Party is a prominent centre-left political party in the UK, that has served as either the governing party or official opposition party since 1992. One of its stated priorities is to tackle poverty and inequality.

this alignment between the public views and priorities of BCC and other stakeholders is promising; it reiterates the idea that the motivation to strengthen resilience is embedded within much of the city, and that the legacy of Bristol continues to shape the public views, indicating a permanence to the motivation for strengthening resilience.

Alternatively, the influence of the public views on the direction of BCC could be interpreted as problematic, where the shift between the different political parties - which weigh up the two priorities of environmental versus socio-economic concerns differently - means that the motivation of BCC changes every 5 years. Indeed, this tension is seen in the strategic guidance provided by BCC in the BRS and subsequent iterations of the One City Plan. Further research is needed to elucidate this influence of the Mayoral electoral system by determining the extent to which the implementation of projects is actually changing as a result.

Nonetheless, there is evidence of a deeper commitment to elements of strengthening resilience, that transcends party politics. The production of the BRS and One City Plan, establishment of the City Office, involvement in international campaigns concerning resilience and sustainability, and passing of motions regarding climate change demonstrate that BCC is committed to addressing many long-term development issues that will outlast electoral cycles. Interviewees indicated that this commitment to pursuing long-term change through a partnership approach exists within all of the major political parties in Bristol. This finding contrasts with previous findings of Pal and Shaw (2018), that politicians with short election timescales are incentivised to address hazards that occur regularly, with little incentive to think on longer time scales. Furthermore, each of the priorities highlighted by the two most recent Mayors of solving climate change and inequality will both require significant, long-term investment, and disruption to the existing political-economic system. Again this contrasts with previous findings, that politicians are mostly incentivised to implement low-cost measures with quick returns (as in Kenny, 2009).

Ultimately, the underlying motivation to strengthen resilience and sustainability could be sufficiently strong and widely-shared, so as to render local political-economic incentives less important than in other cities that do not have this same level of motivation. Interviews and document analysis suggest that this is due to the historical legacy of Bristol as a city that

prioritises environmental sustainability and social innovation. This reinforces the need for studies such as this, which draw a distinction between concepts of motivation and incentive.

National institutions

National legislation is an important source of incentives for strengthening resilience in Bristol, albeit with unexploited potential. In theory, legislation could provide incentives by outlining the responsibilities of different stakeholders pertaining to risk management, finance necessary to meet these, establishing and enforcing targets such as reductions in emissions, and providing standards that companies must adhere to, for example relating to wages or pollution.

There is some clear legislation directing the operational side of resilience. The CCA 2004 outlines a robust emergency planning framework, in which stakeholders such as BCC and emergency responders must form a Local Resilience forum (LRF) to assess risks, create multi-agency plans and undergo preparedness exercises (BCC, 2015). This provides a clear incentive for strengthening resilience, as stakeholders are mandated to undertake specific risk reduction actions, through an established collaboration structure. However, this direction focuses only on preparedness and response, with planning limited to a 5-year time horizon (BCC, 2016a). Interviewees stated that there is no legislation from central government that explicitly mandates city authorities to strengthen resilience over a longer timescale, at a strategic level.

There is however, other relevant legislation that incentivises the city authorities to address specific stresses over a longer time scale. Interviewee 2 cited the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 as a key source of incentives for the flood risk team within BCC. This tasks Local Lead Flood Authorities to produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, funded through a Revenue Support Grant. Unlike the CCA 2004, the responsibilities include long-term mitigation measures (BCC, 2018). It thus offers more incentive to pursue resilience from a strategic perspective.

Nevertheless, interviewees also expressed inadequacies with legislation that promotes a strategic approach, particularly relating to sustainability and climate change. They argued that laws that strengthen awareness of the issues and set national level goals are not paired with implementation strategies, nor legally binding commitments from cities or businesses. Additionally, the central government's engagement with the SDGs was deemed insufficient to incentivise and support city authorities to strengthen sustainable development. Interviewee 3 explained that the City Office has had '*very little direct support in terms of how to use the goals, what the national government want from our city*'. Interestingly, this was not attributed to a lack of motivation from the government, but the allocation of the SDGs across the national institutions:

Interviewee 3: '*It is not that [the government] doesn't have the will to do it, but that the goals are sat with the DFID team, which means that a lot of the engagement is about how the UK is helping other countries to deliver on the SDGs, rather than how the UK is delivering internally*'.

Together, the passing of laws regarding climate change and sustainability combined with this observation from the City Office indicates that, whilst the central government does have some motivation for strengthening resilience and sustainability, the current institutional environment is not conducive to supporting city authorities to contribute to these goals. Again, this highlights the need to compare motivations and incentives, structures and institutions, to completely understand how political will can be developed.

More promising is the observation that stakeholders in Bristol have been addressing this gap left by inadequate national legislation. It was the first UK city to review its local progress towards the SDGs, demonstrating that BCC is reaching out to international policy frameworks to transcend gaps in the direction and support provided by central government. Similarly, Bristol has a leadership role within the UK on climate issues. BCC was the first council to declare a climate emergency in November 2018, before the UK declared in April 2019. It has also set an example by publishing its Climate Emergency Action Plan, including actions to lobby central government and support local public bodies and businesses to reduce emissions.

Additionally, stakeholders within Bristol have sought to influence other cities, as well as central government. For example, the Mayor led a motion at the Local Government Association (LGA) conference to declare a climate emergency, which was unanimously endorsed by 435 councils. Furthermore, BCC lobbied the central government directly, asking it to lead on climate issues by devolving further powers and resources so that cities could contribute more to national ambitions. BCC is also working with other LGAs to lobby government to explore supporting domestic implementation of the SDGs, through funded partnership roles within each local authority area.

Overall, the analysis of national institutions supports the existing hypothesis of cities as progressive entities, that are outpacing national governments. However, it also reveals that within the UK, this is more nuanced. It is not because central government is unmotivated to address issues of sustainability and resilience, but at least in part because they have been more focused with supporting other countries to address these issues.

International institutions

Stakeholders within Bristol have engaged with many international institutions to strengthen the resilience of the city, including campaigns with the UN, EU, and Rockefeller Foundation, and international policy frameworks. Interviewees expressed that this involvement not only raises awareness within Bristol, but provides opportunities for learning, direction and resources not delivered by central government.

The city authorities use this engagement to incentivise other stakeholders to support their efforts to strengthen resilience. For example, interviewee 3 from BCC reported that policy frameworks and campaigns *'become ways to incentivise, energise citizens to initiatives and ideas that were probably already there to begin with, but to give them an identity... a way to communicate them.'* This indicates that BCC uses involvement with international institutions to develop a vague motivation to improve the city into commitment for a more defined vision. Likewise, interviewee 3 credited the SDGs for helping the City Office to cultivate a more collaborative approach to improving the city, by incentivising private sector organisations to contribute. This was possible because the SDGs demonstrate the *'direct links between the*

work that they are doing with the work that the City Office is trying to do'. This approach is already working, evidenced by the 'involvement of multinational businesses such as HSBC that wouldn't have necessarily been interested'.

Altogether, these observations reveal that the city authorities in Bristol are using the international frameworks and campaigns to improve the collaboration amongst their local stakeholders. In other words, they are appealing to international institutions to meet their new role as a Core City, as established by the national structures (4.3.1). This is particularly interesting when compared to the previous finding that BCC is restricted from incentivising stakeholders due to lack of financial resources. The juxtaposition here shows that the City Office is able to more effectively incentivise stakeholders by using tools that raise awareness and thereby create a genuine internal motivation for addressing resilience and sustainability issues, as opposed to simply providing financial reward or compensation. Again, this highlights the importance of distinguishing between motivation and incentive, when understanding how political will is constituted. A city authority must recognise which is possible for them to cultivate in their stakeholders, according to the political economy that they are working within.

The Paris Agreement was also widely cited by the BRS and interviewees, implying that it has had a significant impact. Interviewees explained that it not only raised awareness and therefore strengthened their motivation for addressing climate change issues (theme 1), but provided further incentives. These are evident in the following quote:

Interviewee 3: 'Bristol is one of the first cities in the world to declare a climate emergency, and one of the most ambitious for that matter. And that is in response to the Paris Agreement, and wanting to try and accelerate some of the national commitments that the government have made by taking a more ambitious local leadership role so that we can be an exemplar for other cities to learn from.'

This quote indicates that Bristol's authorities' engagement with the Paris Agreement provided them with a chance to strengthen Bristol's reputation and leadership nationally and internationally; address gaps in and even go further than the central government's approach;

to support other cities' learning. This finding could be important for the formation of international policy, as well as for national governments that do not have the capacity to support city authorities as effectively as they would like.

Another key point emerging from the analysis of relevance to international policy framework formation, is that Bristol's engagement with framework varies significantly. For example, the City Office is only now planning to engage with SFDRR in the upcoming One City Climate strategy, despite the fact that the BRS was completed in 2016. What is more, the engagement with the NUA is insignificant, but without any plans to address this in the future. Interviewee 3 described it as *'not something that seems to be on the radar of UK cities'*, and attributed this to *'a lack of engagement with UN-HABITAT from UK cities.'* This contrast indicates that international policy frameworks may be more useful for city authorities where, as with the SDGs, they offer clear priorities and a methodology that can be operationalised within local contexts, and where the international organisations that implement the frameworks have strong institutional links to the city authorities.

To some extent, these criteria are met by the international campaigns and awards that Bristol has engaged with, which provide more tailored support through strong institutional connections with BCC. As with the policy frameworks, these campaigns raise and reinforce the motivation to strengthen resilience, and they are used by the authorities to incentivise businesses to participate. They also provide a more direct incentive for BCC in the form of funding, such as for a Chief Resilience Officer to oversee the development of the BRS (100RC), or for specific projects (EGCA). Indeed, interviewees reported that these campaigns have had lasting impacts. For example, the Bristol Green Capital Partnership reported that they used the awareness raised by the EGCA to cultivate buy-in from businesses, who in turn gained more community engagement because of public awareness of the award.

However, Bristol's engagement with the 100RC campaign is more debated, as summarised by the following quote:

Interviewee 1: *'It was one of a number of things that put resilience in the minds of our political leaders... You don't hear too many people referring back to it, unfortunately so much anymore.'*

It does still come up now and again but fitting that into the council's normal day-to-day service delivery was quite difficult. And the scope and ambition of the resilience planning that the Rockefeller model required was really admirable, but local authorities just don't have the resources to keep initiatives like that.'

On the one hand, this quote indicates that the campaign built awareness and motivation to strengthen resilience, which is still within the institutional memory of Bristol's authorities. However, its impact has declined over time, once the funding concluded and other day-to-day priorities continued to take up time and resources. This could be a unique criticism of the unsustainability of the 100RC campaign itself, but also reveals a potential limitation of relying on international support for funding for resilience, as opposed to more consistent funding that could be guaranteed in national legislation, for example.

Altogether, the findings about the international institutions highlight an important point. The interaction between international, national and local-scale incentives; city authorities' engagement with international campaigns is ultimately restricted or facilitated by the local availability of resources, determined by the budget allocated by central government.

4.3.3 Political processes

Political processes occur as individuals and groups work within the rules of structures and institutions to advance their interests, for example forming lobbies and acting as champions for a particular intervention.

Local political processes

The analysis revealed that numerous local political parties, lobbying by civil society groups, and local champions such as the Mayor create incentives for strengthening resilience.

For example, there are many mechanisms for the public to incentivise the BCC. These include formal mechanisms through the political system, such as 'attending public development planning meetings, questioning public representatives and objecting to decisions, and the

electoral processes. There are also several informal mechanisms through which the public can influence BCC, such as writing to their local member of parliament, protesting and civil disobedience.

This engagement from the public has incentivised BCC to take unprecedented measures to address resilience. For example, interviewees attributed Bristol's declarations of ecological and climate emergencies to local protests and lobbying. Even after the climate emergency was declared, local political processes were then responsible for incentivising BCC to follow up with actions to address climate change. Interviewee 1 explained that the extinction rebellion movement pressured BCC to act upon its declaration of a climate emergency with greater urgency, and that this *'did make the council change pace'*.

These findings show that the local public effectively use formal and informal political processes not simply to build BCC's motivation to strengthen resilience, but incentivise it to do so through specific interventions. This supports previous findings of Pal and Shaw (2018) that increasing public awareness about risks results in citizen pressure to address those risks.

National political processes

Stakeholders within Bristol are incentivised to strengthen resilience by several national-scale political processes, such as Brexit, devolution, austerity and national elections. This is non-linear; authorities within Bristol shape these national political processes by lobbying central government to gain a better enabling environment for their efforts to strengthen resilience work.

Interviewees explained that recent reforms in the UK have had significant albeit contested impacts on efforts to strengthen resilience within Bristol. For example, Brexit is framed by the government as a resilience issue, and city authorities are expected to plan for the possible impacts through the LRF structure. Here the uncertainty surrounding Brexit exacerbates vulnerabilities in city systems, creating a further incentive to reduce risk. However, it is also identified as a barrier to reducing all other risks by taking up time, staff and financial resources that would otherwise be used to address them.

Interviewee 1: *'Brexit has kept us massively busy, and consumed resources over the last 18 months. The fear of a no deal has been framed as a resilience issue, the government is using the LRF network as the primary reporting network for the impact of a no-deal Brexit... Brexit was seen as a resilience challenge from the supply chain continuity point of view.'*

This comment indicates that political reform has complex impacts on incentives to strengthen resilience, particularly when the process is uncertain and lengthy. Nevertheless, authorities in Bristol have been lobbying the central government for other reforms, through their involvement in the Core Cities network.

Firstly, Bristol city authorities collaborate with other cities in the network, to lobby for powers to be devolved to the city scale. This would enable city authorities to better tailor their local economy and investments across sectors such as infrastructure and transport, thus facilitating management of the long-term trajectory of the city. The network argues that these powers are essential for improving the collaboration and productivity of the stakeholders working to improve the cities, particularly for resilient economies and addressing climate change (Core Cities UK, 2018). The Core City network lobbies the central government through several processes, including conducting research, collaborating with research institutes, publishing open letters to central government, and hosting events at political party conferences.

Secondly, Bristol city authorities use their participation in the Core Cities network to enhance their leadership role on climate change issues. This calls on the government to take several actions, including to develop a Climate Emergency Taskforce, a radical new UK Climate Strategy, a UK Climate Change Communication Programme, and to promote the transformation of local economies to be based upon clean growth and circular economy principles (Core Cities UK, 2019). BCC argues that these actions from central government are needed to support Bristol to meet its aims in the Mayor's Climate Emergency Action Plan (BCC, 2019).

To summarise, national political processes create extra incentives for cities in the UK to strengthen resilience, and this is recognised by stakeholders in Bristol. In response, the city

authorities are researching how they could be better supported by central government, and grouping with other cities to lobby for these changes. As a result, Bristol is taking a leadership role, and working to incentivize the central government to address resilience issues.

5. Discussion

This discussion further explores the study's most important findings, to determine how political will for strengthening resilience has developed in Bristol, and how this is influenced by the interaction of cross-scalar factors.

5.1 The interaction of motivations and incentives to create political will for strengthening resilience

Section 4.1 demonstrated that efforts to strengthen resilience within Bristol are complex, with collaboration between many stakeholders from multiple sectors, structured through a multi-tiered governance model that is being redrawn with a shifting political geography. This made investigating the underlying motivations and incentives an almost interminable task, as each organisation and political leader has their own motivations, each interaction could create incentives or barriers, and these interactions are changing. Nevertheless, it is clear even from this preliminary and exploratory analysis that the stakeholders are uniting around a collective vision and strategy, driven by the BCC and City Office. Whilst the exact vision of a resilient Bristol varies, the stakeholders are all committed to a long-term, collective approach to improving the city by what they understand as strengthening resilience. Undeniably, there is political will within the city authorities, stakeholders such as NGOs, research institutes, and the local population who often lobby BCC.

The analysis indicates that this can be attributed to interactions between numerous motivations and incentives. These interactions take various modalities, that are more complicated than first postulated in section 2.5. This expressed an inclination from before the study was conducted, that both motivation and incentives were necessary for a stakeholder to first value resilience, and to then be able to act on this through specific risk reduction measures because of an enabling environment. Here, motivations and incentives develop separately, and both are necessary but not sufficient. They have to converge for political will to exist. Indeed, examples of this were uncovered in the study, such as the City Office being

motivated to pursue the SDGs within Bristol but struggling to implement this, as they are not receiving the funding and methodological guidance that they required from central government.

However, the study also revealed cases where motivations and incentives are co-produced. For example, whilst the BCC had an initial motivation to address climate change and had declared an emergency, they subsequently 'changed pace' and developed the Climate Emergency Action Plan in response to local lobbying, and the extinction rebellion movement. It was the incentive from public pressure that meant they developed their motivation into an actionable plan. That this incentive itself emerges from the longstanding motivation of Bristol's local population to promote environmental sustainability, and a national-scale climate change protest, only reiterates how multi-layered the interactions between motivations and incentives are.

There were also cases where the motivations were so strong that incentives were inconsequential. For example, section 4.3.2 demonstrates that Bristol's legacy of environmental sustainability and social innovation has created a deep commitment to elements of strengthening resilience, that transcends local party politics. The motivation to strengthen resilience is so embedded within the city, that incentives or barriers created by the electoral process have little impact.

These examples demonstrate that interactions between motivations and incentives are complex. They can be co-produced, in which they are sometimes mutually reinforcing and sometimes contradictory, and they can emerge completely separately; this can occur across different scales; and the balance between the impact of motivation verses incentives varies amongst stakeholders and over time.

Ultimately the very complexity that makes this study so interesting, also means it is challenging to arrive at any one description of how motivation and incentives are interacting. Further research should explore how these interactions could be classified or compared across different case studies. Eventually, this could reveal entry points where action would

most effectively create incentives and motivations, to create a cohesive political will for strengthening resilience.

Another dimension of complexity comes from the proliferation of different underlying motivations for strengthening resilience, among the different stakeholders in Bristol. The confluence of stakeholders that prioritise socio-economic issues and those that prioritise environmental sustainability, around the single term of 'resilience' has huge potential; it means that the motivation is embedded firmly within different organisations, population groups and political ideologies of Bristol. However, it complicates the ability to understand and recognise 'political will for strengthening resilience' at the city scale. Two given stakeholders may have 'political will', but for different conceptualisations of resilience. This finding does not negate the importance of political will as a concept; rather it means that political will is something that can vary within one city. It is continuously renegotiated as motivations change and new incentives are formed with the changing political economy. Most importantly, it reiterates that every city is different, so further case studies are required before any conclusions can be induced.

5.2 The role of cross-scalar factors in shaping political will for strengthening resilience

The complexity of determining how the motivations and incentives are interacting to form political will for strengthening resilience is enhanced as these emerge from and interact across local, national and international scales.

Firstly, much of the motivation is rooted in the local-scale. Even where the need to strengthen resilience is attributed to stresses with global causes like climate change, or stresses that are endemic across the national-scale like inequality, the justification for prioritising those issues was attributed to the legacy of Bristol, political ideologies of the local public, and the 'social conscience' of the city. This is an optimistic finding for Bristol, as it suggests that the motivation is embedded firmly within the city's population and institutions, with a permanence that will outlast changes in factors at the national or international-scale.

Alternatively, it could be a discouraging finding for other cities that do not have this legacy, as it indicates that this is a significant determinant of political will for strengthening resilience.

Nevertheless, the analysis found that incentives are mostly emerging from the local and international scales. At the local-scale, stakeholders that are already motivated to strengthen resilience are working to incentivise each other, whilst at the international-scale, incentives emerge from international campaigns that provide an opportunity to show leadership, gain recognition and share learnings, and policy frameworks that provide guidance and methodological tools for addressing sustainable development issues. This is in stark contrast to the national-scale; at which legislation is insufficient to mandate and support city authorities in addressing long-term issues related to resilience. It would therefore be interesting to compare the findings to other case studies within the UK that are working with the same national environment.

Overall, the strategic direction of the resilience work in Bristol is shaped by a convergence of these pressures from above and below. However, the strong local leadership facilitated by the political system and newly established One City approach, means that authorities within Bristol are not simply manipulated by these pressures. Rather, they deliberately consider, negotiate and use these pressures, sometimes to support their own existing ideologies and sometimes to learn from. This was seen when successive Mayors chose to highlight different priorities from within the resilience-sustainability nexus, according to their own priorities of the environment and socio-economic inequality. For Bristol, this is promising, it means that the local political institutions are well placed to negotiate factors at different scales in order to design the best possible long-term plan for the city. There is also a broader implication for understanding the political will for strengthening resilience across other cities, as it shows that strong local leadership can outweigh the impact of factors at national and international scales.

The importance of Bristol's local leadership on resilience issues challenges some arguments in the existing literature, and supports others. Firstly, it refutes the idea that democratic governments are only incentivised to invest in short-term risk reduction measures, with immediate returns that are visible to the electorate, but not to invest in the longer-term

measures that are necessary to tackle the biggest contemporary problems such as climate change (as in Kenny, 2009). In Bristol, despite a 5-year election cycle, the motivation to take a long-term, strategic approach to improving the city is found to transcend political party divisions. However, this interest in the long-term is not only about addressing risk effectively, but it is also how BCC is justifying its requests for further devolutions of power from central government. In other words, the shifting national political geography and strong local leadership on resilience issues are reinforcing each other. This provides new evidence for the argument in the existing literature that cities are outpacing national government and emerging as progressive actors in resilience and sustainability (as in Bulkeley, 2018, Garschagen et al, 2018).

5.3 Interrogating academic critiques of a neoliberal resilience agenda

Understanding how the motivations and incentives for strengthening resilience emerge, and how they interact with each other, yields insights that contest some of the strongest critiques of resilience (section 2.3). Firstly, authorities in Bristol see a reduction in inequality as fundamental to an improved, resilient city. Rather than accepting increased risk as an unavoidable consequence of living in the contemporary world (as in Reid, 2012) and simply aiming to enhance the capacity of individuals to live with this risk (as in O'Malley, 2010), it is the inequality itself that is seen as the problem, that must be reduced through a process of disruption, social innovation and change. This means that in Bristol, resilience is about transformative change as opposed to something that obscures the uneven political-economic relations that create inequality (in line with Bahadur and Tanner, 2014 and Vale, 2014). That the political will to strengthen resilience emerges from a criticism of inequality, means that resilience is inherently political.

Furthermore, interviewees cited the central government's austerity policies that enhanced socio-economic vulnerabilities to a host of shocks as further justification for their motivation. Here, Bristol's stakeholders are using resilience for its potential to resist the challenges created by central government, created when it reduces funding available to city authorities. Additionally, BCC is reaching out beyond the central government, to international campaigns such as 100RC, and to international policy frameworks such as the SDGs and (soon) the SFDRR,

to pursue a resilience agenda beyond anything promoted by central government. Both suggest that city authorities in Bristol are choosing to strengthen resilience in order to improve their own city, rather than in response to a direction from central government. This is reinforced by the fact that BCC itself is lobbying the government for more devolved powers, so that it can take more responsibility for its own strategic development. These findings refute the idea that resilience is a concept used by central government to shift responsibilities onto local governance structures in line with neoliberal ideology (as in Joseph, 2013, Schmidt 2013, Whitham 2013). Instead, resilience is being used by the city authorities as a tool for justifying gaining more control over their own city, and solving problems driven by central government policy. In other words, resilience is a form of resistance against central government.

Of course, this will only hold true in so far as the resilience movement in Bristol is actually able to achieve the reductions in stresses of inequality, poverty and homelessness that are outlined in the BRS and One City Plan. Thus far, this has been complicated by financial cut-backs. Whether the city authorities are able to effectively reduce inequality will require further research as the resilience movement develops.

6. Conclusion

This study aimed to address a research gap regarding why city authorities strengthen resilience. It aimed to go beyond existing studies; to bring a new perspective to debates about the normative value of the concept of resilience by questioning policymakers directly; and to critically access the implicit assumption that international policy frameworks are influencing city authorities to address resilience. Accordingly, it drew on insights from Lassa (2019) and Williams (2011), to reconceptualise political will as *'an emergent property, that is realised when authorities have the motivation to strengthen resilience to disaster risk, and the broader political economy creates incentives to be able to pursue that agenda'*. The study's contributions are threefold, creating: knowledge about Bristol and other cities in the UK, recommendations for international policy makers, and a new methodological approach to studying political will.

In answer to the first research question, the study identified three underlying motivations, in which strengthening resilience is required to: address specific stresses and vulnerabilities; achieve a sustainable future for the city; and build upon the identity and reputation of the city. Thus the motivations for strengthening resilience are influenced by social, economic and environmental factors. Overall, the most important is its legacy as a city that prioritises environmental sustainability and progressive social innovation. This legacy means that the motivations are widely embedded throughout the city's institutions and population, have a permanence that will outlast fluctuations in incentives at national and international scales, and transcend concerns about resilience as the latest articulation of neoliberalism.

In answer to the second research question, incentives were also found to be shaping political will. These are constituted through structures, institutions, and processes. They are emerging more from the local and international-scale than the national-scale, which in fact provides several barriers to the highly motivated city authorities.

In answer to the third research question, many cross-scale interactions are found to be shaping political will. Most significant is that the shifting national political geography and strong local leadership on resilience issues are reinforcing each other, allowing the city authorities to set the strategic direction of the resilience work in Bristol. This demonstrates that any study of city resilience must consider factors from local, national and international scales, and how they are interacting. Further, it shows that for city authorities, strengthening resilience is not only about addressing shocks and stresses. It can be a form of resistance to higher authorities. In contrast to academic arguments about resilience as de-politicising, in Bristol, resilience is very much a political issue.

This study is highly exploratory; the findings are not an exhaustive list of factors that shape political will for strengthening resilience. However, they do substantiate the value of the methodological framework. They show that investigating the emergence of both motivations and incentives uncovers entry points and barriers for strengthening resilience, which is essential for moving forward. These extend beyond the case study. Already, this study has highlighted gaps in the UK's national legislation pertaining to resilience, and guidance and funding provided to local government. This could illuminate challenges facing other cities, and

highlight how central government policy could support cities more effectively. Similarly, the differing impacts of the post-2015 international policy frameworks could provide useful insights for international policy formation.

Thus, the overall conclusion is that this conceptualisation of political will should be applied elsewhere, to determine how unique Bristol's political will is, and to develop a larger and more textured evidence base for shaping the provision of support from the central government and the formation of international policy. It would be particularly interesting to compare the findings of this study to one that focuses on resilience at the operational level, as this study focused mostly on the strategic level. This may uncover more incentives/barriers in the political economy that affect the implementation of risk reduction measures.

7. References

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Appendix 1: Documents used in secondary data analysis

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Appendix 2: List of interviewees

Interview Participants

(Individual participants are not named, to protect their confidentiality. Instead, their organisation is described below)

Number	Organisation and area of work	
Interviewee 1	Civil protection team, within Bristol City Council https://www.bristol.gov.uk/	Bristol City Council guides actions to strengthen resilience at a strategic level. The Civil Protection team creates contingency plans, emergency plans, ensures continuation of utility supply, connectivity etc during an emergency, supports BCC in recovery of communities after an emergency.
Interviewee 2	Flood risk and asset management team, within Bristol City Council https://www.bristol.gov.uk/	Coordinates flood risk management activities in Bristol.
Interviewee 3	SDG Research and Engagement, within the City Office. https://www.bristolonecity.com/	The City Office encourages partners from across the city to come together and address the challenges facing Bristol. This is part of the One City Approach pioneered within Bristol. The office publishes the One City Plan every year, which aims to make Bristol a fair, healthy and sustainable city.
Interviewee 4	Schumacher Institute https://www.schumacherinstitute.org.uk/projects/	An independent think tank for environmental, social and economic issues in Bristol. The institute has supported several initiatives that aim to strengthen resilience in Bristol, such as the Bristol Resilience Network, and Prepare for Change programme.
Interviewee 5	Bristol Green Capital Partnership https://bristolgreencapital.org/	A network of over 900 organisations that have pledged to work towards a sustainable city with a high quality of life for all. This includes through delivering projects to deliver change, supports the Bristol Resilience Network.
Interviewee 6	Bristol Green Capital Partnership	Same as above

Appendix 3: List of interview questions

The interviews were semi-structured. These questions were used to structure discussions, but each interview contained subsequent questions according to the answers given. The wording was also adapted where necessary to reflect the work of the different organisations.

Question 1: Which organisation and team are you currently working with, and how does this team work to strengthen resilience?

Question 2: Why is strengthening resilience important within Bristol?

Possible follow up questions:

Which issues, organisations or leaders do you identify as most important for influencing the motivation for strengthening resilience?

Has there been a change over time?

Is it just about the shocks and stresses, or are there other benefits for the city?

Question 3: What do you identify as the main opportunities and challenges for strengthening resilience within Bristol a) for your team and b) for the city as a whole?

Question 4: What factors are creating these opportunities and challenges?

Possible follow up questions:

Local, national or international factors?

Does this vary for addressing specific risks, or implementing specific risk reduction measures?

Has there been a change over time?

Question 5: How does the local political context impact the ability of your team to strengthen resilience in Bristol? For example: establishment of the position of mayor of Bristol, local and general elections, local lobbying groups, protests,

Question 6: How is the national political context shaping the ability of your team to strengthen resilience in Bristol? For example: e.g. Brexit, devolution, austerity?

Possible follow up question: is it national or local political context that is more important?

Question 7: How do national legislation and policies shape the ability of your team to strengthen resilience in Bristol?

Question 8: Does the ability to strengthen resilience vary for people within different social groups or geographical areas within the city?

Question 9: How has Bristol's involvement with the Rockefeller 100 RC campaign influenced the ability of the your team to do its work?

Question 10: How are your team's efforts to strengthen resilience influenced by frameworks such as international frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the New Urban Agenda?

Question 11: How does your team collaborate with other institutions within the city and beyond in order to strengthen resilience?

Follow up: how do they lobby central government, persuade businesses, engage citizens?