Exploring how Professional Leaders in Social Enterprises Develop their Leadership Practices

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Declaration

I declare that I have composed this thesis myself and that it embodies the results of my own research. Where appropriate, I have acknowledged the nature and extent of work carried out in collaboration with others included in the thesis.

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Acknowledgements

Abstract

This thesis examines the practices enacted by leaders in a case study social enterprise in Scotland. The study investigates the complex issues involved in social enterprise as leaders navigate uncertainty caused, for example, by changes to government policy, funding decisions and external events, all of which can have a material and lasting impact. It explores a different way to think about leadership in social enterprise through considering leadership as practice-based to take into account the heterogeneous actors that enact practice.

The study considered a social enterprise in Scotland due to its particular policy and political context as this drives policy and funding priorities. The data collection was undertaken over a six-month period and involved one social enterprise who is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. A qualitative ethnographic approach was adopted, which provided an inductive approach to the research, allowing the findings to emerge as the research unfolded. Methods included observations, semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The collected data were analysed using Actor Network Theory (ANT) and thematic analysis. There were six participants involved in the study.

 Analysis of the data identified four leadership practices. First, practices enacted by leaders as they sought to mobilise, manage and deliver funded projects were identified. Second, practices performed by leaders on delivering through networks. Third, practices enacted by leaders on leading and governing effectively. Finally, practices enacted by leaders through stakeholder advocacy to deliver the social mission.

The thesis contributes to the knowledge in the social enterprise sector as it provides new insights into leadership in social enterprises through the use of ANT concepts and methods and combines this with more traditional thematic analysis. This adds to the discourse and challenges in current thinking on the practices that leaders require to lead a sustainable social enterprise

in Scotland. The originality of the research is in the unfolding of alternative perspectives with which to better understand the complexity and messiness of this diverse field of study. It also serves to foster further discussion of social enterprise as materially mediated and socially constructed assemblages of practices.

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List of Abbreviations

ANT	Actor Network Theory
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CICs	Community Interest Companies
CSR	Community Social Responsibility
CTAs	Charitable Trading Activities
DTI	Department for Trade and Industry
ENPs	Enterprising Non-profits
GVA	Gross Value Added
HM Government	Her Majesty's Government
HR	Human Resources
MSP	Member of Scottish Parliament
OTS	Office of the Third Sector
SC	Social Co-operatives
SEU	Social Enterprise Unit
SNP	Scottish National Party
SRB	Socially Responsible Business
STS	Science and Technology Studies

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Background to the Overall Study

In this thesis, I shall explore leadership practices in a case study social enterprise that delivers employability, social justice and fuel poverty services in Scotland. To facilitate this, I shall draw upon Actor Network Theory (ANT) and practice-based theories to understand the practices enacted by leaders as they seek to navigate an ever-changing policy and funding environment in Scotland. The study furthers our understanding of practice-based approaches in the social enterprise context. Adopting an ANT and practice-based approach enables an exploration of how leaders perform their role through their day-to-day work and examines how a practice-based approach could enhance leadership capability to be able to meet current challenges and prepare for any future ones. This thesis makes a valuable contribution to the literature on social enterprises through foregrounding the everyday leadership practices enacted.

1.1.2 Background to Social Enterprises

The term 'social enterprise' has existed in the UK for over twenty years. The concept can be dated back to the eighteenth century, with its beginnings stemming from the establishment of mutual societies and settlement movements at the time (British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres (BASSAC), 2002; Centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society (BRASS), 2014; Defourny and Nyssens, 2021). Over the decades, as capitalism advanced, groups linked to political-ideology, religions and other interests established voluntary organisations, cooperatives and charities in order to address social and economic issues which gave rise to the 'social economy' (Sepulveda, 2015). Organisations operating in the social economy aimed to service their members and the community, prioritise people over distribution of income, and were independent of government and operated democratically (Borzaga and Defourny, 2004; Defourny and Nyssens, 2021). Ridley-Duff and Bull

(2015), in their book, *Understanding Social Enterprise: Theory and Practice*, argue that the link to the social economy sets social enterprises apart from the third sector due to their role in the delivery of goods and services.

The concept is that these organisations should solve social issues through private and publicly funded initiatives (Defourny and Nyssens, 2021; Steiner and Teasdale, 2019), which separates them from the more traditional forms of business, where profit rather than social value/impact is the key goal (Teasdale, 2012; Defourny and Nyssens, 2021). Teasdale's (2012) research on the development of social enterprises in the UK between 1999 and 2010 found that changes in policy had promoted the emergence of different types of organisations at different times, including cooperatives and the community enterprise movement. From 2010 to 2016, Spear et al. (2017) found that, when the Conservative-led collation came into power, due to the economic crisis and the perceived need to cut public spending, the 'Big Society' initiative was developed to enhance the role for social enterprises in the delivery of public services (HM Government, 2010a; Sepulveda, 2015). However, Spear et al. (2017) found that, by 2016, the support for social enterprises had been cut and that policy attention had changed and moved to encouraging 'social investment'.

In Scotland, during the period 1998 to 2007 there was little development of social enterprises following devolution (Roy et al., 2015). However, the policy landscape changed in 2007 when the Scottish National Party (SNP) came into power, as there was a commitment to investing in not-for-profit organisations and support for the development of social enterprises (Osborne and Super, 2010; Hazenberg et al., 2016). This was further evidenced with the publishing of the Scottish Government's *Social Enterprise Strategy* in 2016, which set out a vision for social enterprises to "become a far-reaching and valued alternative and a key part of the Scottish way of doing business" (Scottish Government, 2016, p. 5).

1.1.3   Social Enterprises

Social Enterprises are not-for-profit organisations who primarily operate in the third sector (Laville, 2011). Social enterprises have two distinct characteristics; they are live businesses, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, and they are driven by a social purpose to reform conditions to the benefit of people (Lynch and Walls, 2010). There are many different definitions of social enterprise, and the term is influenced by the historical context, as described in Section 1.1.2. Due to these factors, there is not one agreed definition for social enterprise, and scholars have offered different interpretations. Borzaga and Defourny (2004) suggest that social enterprises do not normally engage in advocacy activities as a major goal but are directly involved in the delivery of services to people or the production of goods. Ridley-Duff and Bull (2015) suggest that these organisations reject the capitalist systems and replace this with wellbeing over the pursuit of economic gain, whereas Aiken (2006) advocates that it is a solution to the state failing to provide welfare services. However, Ridley-Duff and Bull (2015) suggest that the majority of social enterprise definitions include that they have been established to deliver a social mission.

The two characteristics defining social enterprises as delivering a social purpose and being commercially driven is described by Alter (2007) as an overgeneralisation, as it does not represent all the organisation types or activities that create combined value of economic and social objectives. Alter (2007) argues that social enterprises are driven by a social mission but are more concerned about financial sustainability through the generation of commercial income than a traditional not-for-profit organisation. This overgeneralisation has led to scholars using loose definitions for social enterprises in order to take advantage of the different actors and competing interests which allows for the term to be renegotiated and reconstructed at different times and contexts (Teasdale, 2012). One definition of a social enterprise, as outlined in Section 2.1.3, is by the Department for Trade and Industry (DTI), which captured the social objective and the reinvestment of any surplus back to deliver the social mission, but, operationally, it became interpreted in different ways, in different years (Spear et al., 2009; Teasdale et al., 2013). Ridley-

Duff and Bull (2015) argue that the term social enterprise is therefore a contested and fluid concept and is constructed into different things by different people. This thesis recognises that social enterprise is an umbrella term that encompasses organisations that combine business and social objectives but differ in terms of organisational structures and operate in various economic sectors (Steiner and Teasdale, 2019).

1.1.4   Leadership as Practice

Leadership-as-practice conceives leadership as occurring as a practice rather than residing in the behaviours and traits of particular individuals and is more about what people can do together (Raelin, 2016). Leadership-as-practice ontology can incorporate both practices and practice (Raelin, 2017). Pickering (1995) defines practices as specific sequences of activities that may repeatedly recur, and practice as emergent entanglements that transform meaning over time. Practices are inter-actional modes of activity in which entities compete for influence over other 'inter-actors', whereas, practice is associated with a trans-actional approach characterised by a continual flow of activities where material-discursive engagements produce meaning that is mutual and emergent (Raelin, 2016). Raelin (2016) argues that practice is more processual and more situated and recursive. Shotter (2006) adds that leadership occurs in front of us and not through the expressions of named individuals. It is through the process of these everyday actions and interactions, rather than from texts or mental capacities, that patterns of behaviour are established via routinised ways of understanding knowing (Reckwitz, 2002). Spillane (2005) advocates that leadership is embodied through language and other semiotic materialisations and in conjunction with the structural, material and aesthetic resources within the workings of practice rather than through individual a priori intentions. Raelin (2016) identifies seven further activities which are part of leadership-as-practice, scanning, signalling, weaving, stabilising, inviting, unleashing and reflecting.

Leadership-as-practice can be considered mundane, or what Chia and Holt (2006, p. 643) refer to as "non-deliberate practical coping" rather than "planned and intentional action". The day-to-day practice of leadership activity is therefore unspoken and unconscious (Chia and MacKay, 2007). Raelin (2016) argues that leadership development in this area needs to involve an immersion into the practices embedded within social relations between people, actors and their organisations. Denis et al. (2010) suggest that learning would require the examination of other qualities: collective – to recognise the constellation of complementary interaction; dynamic – to reflect leadership at one point can affect future actions; situated – in that it is found in specific consequences; and dialectic – as negotiated practices can produce divergent outcomes.

1.1.5   Professional Development of Social Enterprise Leaders

To date, leadership development in the sector has been limited. There is no recognised professional route into leading a social enterprise and there is limited continuing professional development for leaders. The European Commission (2020), in their report into understanding the size, scope and state of social enterprises in Europe, found that social enterprises lag behind in terms of numbers, despite rising interest among policymakers, researchers and practitioners in their ability to support economic growth. The publication describes how the lack of internal capacities is one of the main barriers to social enterprise development, suggesting that tailored programmes, coaching and mentoring are needed to allow leaders to develop appropriate competencies in "business development and strategy, methodology development, impact assessment and management of a diverse array of stakeholders" (p. 147). While skills and competency frameworks are common in relation to leadership development, there are questions over whether generic skills and competencies sufficiently address the needs of social enterprise leaders, or whether they identify what should be included within a more 'tailored' programme (Carroll et al., 2008).

The lack of clarity on what leadership practices are required within the social enterprise sector creates a real point of tension for leaders working in the sector who are tasked with running complex organisations that are both unstable and unpredictable as a result of changes to government policies and funding (Borzaga and Defourny, 2004). In Gravells' (2012) study of leadership in social enterprise, exploring natural aptitude versus learning and development, he argues that social enterprise leaders have to continually negotiate ongoing uncertainties and multiple networks, along with an ongoing need for innovation. Battilana (2018, p. 1293) adds further from his study of the organisational challenges of pursing joint social and financial goals and suggests that there is a need to continue to develop the organisations' values and behaviours. These factors set out a challenging landscape for leaders who have to enact practices that support organisational development and sustainability.

1.1.6 New Insights: Practice and ANT

The research presented in this thesis sets out to explore leaders' practices in social enterprises and adopts the position that knowing and practice are inexplicably linked. Gherardi and Strati's (2012) book, which considered the concepts and methods of practice-based studies, conceive that knowing is an activity and that it constitutes practice. They describe knowing as being:

> a collective and distributive 'doing' …. situated in time and space, and therefore taking place in work practices …. these in turn could be conceptualised practical activities, as a collective bricolage enacted by those participating in a practice, mobilising resources, using instruments, and employing a contingent and goal orientated rationality. This recognises the ontological shift from 'knowledge' to 'knowing' and follows that knowing is a situated activity and that practices is always a practical accomplishment (pp. 52-53).

This definition suggests that knowing is a dynamic process and that knowing and learning are co-constructed and are undertaken in the daily flow of work. This conceptualisation is further supported by Reich and Hager (2014), in their study of practice theory perspectives in professional learning, who argue that practice is a collective and situated process linking knowing, organising, working, learning and innovating. This emphasis shows how knowing is continually unfolding, and that practices cannot be fully known in advance. Practice can therefore be positioned as emerging in 'doing' and leadership considered as being materially mediated as the processes of knowing cannot be untangled from the materialities within and through the assemblage where the enactment of knowing takes place (Law and Singleton, 2003). Adopting a practice-based approach therefore helps foreground the kinds of social and material arrangements being mobilised by leaders in social enterprises.

This research adopts an Actor Network Theory (ANT) approach in order to bring a new lens through which to view and understand leadership practices in social enterprises. ANT goes beyond traditional competency-based approaches to leadership development, by providing a means to understand how both human and nonhuman actors perform and shape the assemblages through which leadership practices are enacted. Guided by ANT, ethnographic observations, interviews and document analysis are utilised to disentangle the materialities of leadership to explore how such practices are enacted in sociomaterial relations. The research aims to examine how leaders develop their practices as they seek to negotiate the complex relations and environments encountered in their everyday situations.

1.2   Rationale for the Study

1.2.1   Professional Trajectory

In 2016/17, I joined a well-respected social enterprise, located in Scotland, as Deputy Chief Executive. I believed that joining the social enterprise provided a wonderful opportunity to deliver services to marginalised groups and to create real social value. However, the

environment in which I found myself on joining was very different from its external view. The social enterprise had suffered significantly over a decade, mainly due to reductions in funding caused by changes to government policy. These changes resulted in the organisation having to use its reserves to continue to pay staff and non-staff costs, which were being rapidly exhausted. The senior management team had no experience of operating in a climate of funding reductions and had not innovated or invested in technology or systems improvement. The deficit on my joining was greater than the cash reserves available, and the challenge to overcome this was great. However, with much hard work, the team were able to turn things around and move to a break-even position within twelve months through a process of restructuring, reducing costs and generating new business.

During this time, I observed that many of the difficulties were not simply due to people and a lack of knowing what do to, but due to, for example, a lack of investment in technology, inefficient systems, ineffective understanding and engagement in policy and policy development, a lack of innovation in the way in which services were delivered, and ineffective governance and reporting as the organisations were focused on delivering the social mission and not adopting business approaches. Many of the issues that had to be addressed were not those that could be resolved by sending Senior Managers on a standard leadership programme, but instead related to what was happening on a day-to-day basis and leaders' ability to develop their practices to meet these challenges.

1.2.2   Foundational Research: Professional Practice

As I was stabilising the organisation, I was also undertaking my Doctorate in Education. The period coincided with my professional practice year, so, I decided to complete my research project on leadership in social enterprise. The research project was part of the coursework and was designed to explore the leadership competencies required by leaders in the social enterprise in which I was employed at that time. My study (Hepburn, 2017) found that

leadership in social enterprises did not fully align with generic organisational leadership competencies and that other actors were entwined with leadership practices. The research undertaken and the literature reviewed for the professional practice report identified gaps in leadership capability research and evidenced the demanding role of being a leader in the social enterprise sector due to the challenges of having to operate in the not-for-profit sector, resulting in tensions between profit and social purpose (Battilana, 2018). These are also compounded by the challenge of having no permanent sources of funding, no guarantees that a business idea would work in practice, or no stability (Praskier and Nowak, 2012).

These tensions presented opposing dualities, forcing leaders to occupy continually shifting and conflicting positions. Leaders had to be both commercial and social entrepreneurs, and on the other, seek opportunities and manage survival and growth whilst still delivering within their area of the market (Prabhu, 1999; Dearlove, 2004; Nicholls, 2006; Teasdale, 2012; Steiner and Teasdale, 2019). There were also many shifting boundaries, competitive pressures, complex relationships and identity issues that leaders struggled to understand and know how to address both collectively and individually (Tracey and Phillips, 2007; Battilana, 2018). The situation was further compounded by the Coronavirus (COVID-19)[1] crisis, which laced additional strain on leaders faced with operational, technical, wellbeing and wider people challenges, each of which increased the need to consider the everyday practices enacted by leaders in times of uncertainty.

Research to date has mainly focused on competency-based models (Carroll et al., 2008; Satar and Natasha, 2019). However, my research has utilised an ANT-led, practice-based perspective to examine how leaders develop their practices as they seek to negotiate complex relations and

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[1] Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus (World Health Organization, 2022).

environments in their everyday practices in order to understand the Practices being enacted and how this is shaped by human and nonhuman actors.

The overarching research question for this study is:

1. what practices are leaders in social enterprises enacting in practice? To answer this overarching question the following three research questions are used:

    o How do leaders in social enterprises develop practices to enable effective governance by the Board?

    o How do leaders in social enterprises cultivate practices to manage delivery?

    o How do leaders in social enterprises develop practices to negotiate the complex stakeholder relations to progress the social mission?

The research work included an extensive review of the literature on social enterprises, leadership, competencies and practices; analysis of a case study social enterprise website and internal documents, including minutes, strategy, plans and funding applications; and engagement with senior leaders working in the sector to gather evidence on how they enact their role within the social enterprise.

1.3   Structure of the Thesis

The thesis begins with a contextualising chapter (Chapter 2), which defines and outlines the background to social enterprise and leadership in this type of organisation by presenting a review of the works of key scholars in relation to leadership practices and competencies. Chapter 3 comprises a review of the literatures upon which the theoretical arguments and discussions are grounded, including sociomateriality, ANT and practice-based theorising. Chapter 4 presents the research strategy and approach to analysis, along with considerations of the elements of reflexivity, accountability and transparency. Chapters 5 present the findings,

with Chapters 6 and 7 providing the discussion, conclusion and recommendations. In the next

chapter, the social enterprise context in which leaders work is discussed.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1   Contextualising Social Enterprises

Over the last twenty years, the prevailing economic climate for social enterprises is one of public sector spending cuts, cost control, commercialisation and mergers, which demonstrates the new and complex challenges for the sector (Gravells, 2012; Vogelsang, 2017; Battilana, 2018; European Commission, 2020). Social enterprises face increased competition for resources and declining levels of funding (Bull and Compton, 2006), can struggle to generate steady and sustainable funding streams, and have difficulties pricing their services, which can lead to challenges in balancing their financial viability with affordability for beneficiaries (Defourny and Nyssens, 2010). Haugh and Talwar (2016) suggest that this is due to social enterprises not having the financial expertise and resources to develop and manage effective financial systems to help make informed decisions about funding and finance which can lead to challenges around risk management. Darby and Jenkins (2006) found, in their study into measuring business contributions in social enterprise, that a way to overcome these challenges is to have more of a business focus through adopting traditional business tools such as business plans, mission statements and goal setting in order to improve performance, particularly at times of uncertainty, which is an ongoing reality for leaders in social enterprises (Di Domenico et al., 2010). These challenges mean that social enterprises need be become more adaptable in order to manage the uncertainty of the environment in which they operate, and need to lever resources in more innovative ways (Sunley and Pinch, 2012). Lynch and Walls (2010) advocate that an approach to effective delivery of the social mission and organisational sustainability is to adopt a lean approach as this enables a relentless focus on customer value and enables the workforce to become more engaged and committed.

Further challenges have been identified by scholars, including having the skills and resources to create growth (Borzaga and Defourny, 2004); governing and, in particular, stewardship- and

stakeholder-based approaches (Mason et al., 2007); relationship-building with the public sector (Chapman et al., 2007); engaging with external business support services (Hines, 2005); marketing, particularly in relation to products and services, and information provision for customers (Bird and Aplin, 2007); accountability and. in particular. performance measures (Chan and Takage, 2011); and human resource management, particularly the challenge of managing organisations typically staffed by a blend of volunteers and paid workers (Royce, 2007). Di Domenico et al. (2010) add further, from their study into theorising social value creation, suggesting that one of the biggest challenges is for a tendency for social enterprises to be situated within environments that are de facto resource-poor.

However, such austerity can also provide opportunities to deliver in areas where there are gaps in services, although there are also threats, where funding can be withdrawn for services that were previously funded (Santos et al., 2015). As a result, there is an increased focus on the development of services to generate income through accessing other funding streams, such as the National Lottery,[2] enter into contracts for outsourced public services, and to become more self-financing through the commercialisation of products, such as selling products to the public (Borzaga and Defourny, 2004; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2015). Dees (1998, p. 56), in his case study of the meaning of social entrepreneurship, cautions of the "dangers" for non-profit organisations that may be operationally and culturally challenged by commercial funding systems. Dart (2004) agrees, and cautions about this approach, as non-profit organisations are not established or primarily motivated to earn money but are organised around an interconnected social and voluntary set of values and goals with few references to the structures and means in which these values should be enacted. Brinckerhoff (2000) adds that adopting a more commercial approach leads to market-focused social innovations, efficiencies and reduced cost structures. But there are also trade-offs between meeting the demands of paying

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[2] The National Lottery Community Fund (Scotland) – Funding Scotland.

customers and the needs of beneficiaries of the social mission (Ebrahim et al., 2014), and organisations complying with demands from external bodies as they are dependent on access to resources (Wry et al., 2013). Battilana (2018) found, in her study of pursing dual social and financial goals, that social enterprises can run the risk of confirming to these demands and dismissing the needs of beneficiaries which can result in mission drift. This is a long-standing concern by scholars in organisational studies as there is a heightened risk for the workforce and the organisation of losing sight of their purpose and values in the drive for organisational survival and efficiency (Selznick, 1949; Weber, 1952). Ebrahim et al. (2014) recognise that this mission drift is not specific to social enterprises, but argue that it does acutely impact them as they are dependent on generating revenue to enable them to survive, and that this can also result in them losing sight of their social goals. All of these issues mean that leaders need to have the capabilities to deliver the social mission, plan and manage the organisation, including sources of funding, deliver outcomes, engage with stakeholders, and deliver organisational sustainability, all whilst remaining true to the identity and values of the sector.

Governance is also a concern in the social enterprises in relation to the processes and systems required to ensure overall direction, control and accountability of the enterprise (Cornforth, 2014). Larner and Mason (2014) define governance in the sector as the strategic and board-level leadership that enables service users, managers, trustees and other defined stakeholders to create and maximise social benefit. This aligns with Petrovic (2008), who suggests that governance is also about corporate governance, which includes setting the strategic direction, controlling management, reporting to shareholders and meeting legislative requirements. However, Cornforth and Brown (2013) caution about this approach as they argue that boards need to remain focused on the delivery of social goals and not just on corporate governance issues. Together, this signifies that social enterprises have distinctive governance challenges associated with accountabilities in relation to what and who the organisation is accountable to (multiple stakeholders), and the delivery of the social mission, and for making a surplus

(Cornforth and Brown, 2013). Governance is therefore key to the success of the social enterprises in both business and social terms (Larner and Mason, 2014).

2.1.1 Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurs combine business expertise and innovative approaches to pursue a social mission whilst at the same time achieve financial sustainability (Sunley and Pinch, 2012). Social entrepreneurs are seen as distinct type of leader as they can help identify opportunities for social change and drive changes to public policies through bringing together resources to solve social issues (Dees, 1998).

There have been many different definitions of social entrepreneurship. Dees (2001) developed a definition of social entrepreneurship through setting out key characteristics, including organisations that act as change agents in the social sector, adopting a mission to create and sustain social value, pursing new opportunities to deliver the social mission, engaging in ongoing innovation, adaptation and learning, not being limited by resources but acting boldly, and having a clear sense of accountability to the groups served and the outcomes created. Chell (2007) describes social entrepreneurship as engaging in a process that creates value and serves to position the enterprise as competitive and for generating wealth that is distributed amongst its stakeholders, where the business approach is the entrepreneurial process to create economic and social value. In contrast, Miller et al. (2010) describe social entrepreneurs as being able to identify opportunities to provide services in a more efficient or different ways to impact a community in a positive way or to address an underserved social market. More recently, Hayes (2023) suggests that a social entrepreneur is a person who pursues innovative applications that have the potential to address community-based problems. These individuals take risks and put in effort to create positive changes to society through their activities, and believe that this is a way to connect with life's purpose through helping others find theirs, and thereby make a difference to the world (Ibid). Austin et al. (2006) suggest that entrepreneurship in the not-for-

profit context can be defined as entrepreneurial action with an embedded social purpose. Ridley-Duff and Bull (2015) offer three schools of social entrepreneurship to help understand where social entrepreneurs operate. The first is suggested by Austin et al. (2006), who focus on social innovation and something that improves community wellbeing. The second is by Nicholls and Cho (2006), which is linked to the first, but there is more emphasis on developing and understanding social entrepreneurs and their value propositions and social missions. The third is proposed by Ridley-Duff and Bull (2015), who emphasise the creation of social enterprises that have socialised control and ownership to meet the commitment to democratic principles of the organisation and participation in decision making.

Social entrepreneurs, therefore, play a key role in the development and growth of social enterprises as they are the driving force behind the development of organisations that have been established to address social problems and generate positive social impact. Shaw and Carter (2007) suggest that this helps social enterprises identify and exploit opportunities in the form of unmet social need in a similar way to traditional businesses, which suggests that these entrepreneurial activities are the same as for-profit organisations but with a focus on delivering the social purpose/mission. Scholars, including Chell (2007), Zahra et al. (2009), and Wilson and Post (2013), link the business model construct both implicitly and explicitly to 'social enterprise' and 'social entrepreneurship' with the enterprise's ability to be financially viable, based on the organisation's ability to generate revenue. Chell (2007) argues that it is through entrepreneurs being able to use their intellectual capacity to recognise opportunities based on their experience, their social and personal networks, and personal ability to make judgement on courses of action, that creates a competitive advantage.

This description of a social entrepreneur is seen by Morgan and Price (2011) as being an 'heroic entrepreneur', as the approach is more about the distribution of profit rather than its generation as it does not take into account future public policy changes. The notion of the 'heroic

entrepreneur' is based on the economist Joseph Schumpeter's work on his conception of innovation and capitalism as highly dynamic systems of creative destruction which are led by a charismatic leader to the benefit of the enterprise (Morgan and Price, 2011). However, he later changed his views and moved to the notion of a 'collective entrepreneur', which is more concerned with the collective social endeavour required to deliver both enterprise and innovation (particularly in the knowledge economy) (Ibid). The concept is used to describe a community where management and workers come together to deliver a goal and commends the qualities associated with teamwork, collaboration and mutuality, which is more aligned to a socially driven organisation (Ibid). Entrepreneurship is therefore an important component of social enterprise development as it brings together business management and approaches to innovation and enterprise, which are important for the development of social enterprises in order to deliver a social mission.

2.1.2   Historical Development of Social Enterprises

Over the last twenty years, social enterprises have continued to grow in significance as a movement. These new organisations were seen as being a way to address market failure by government in areas where they have been unable to deal with social issues, such as employability, and as a way to create new and innovative programmes (Gravells, 2012; Doherty et al., 2014). To understand the development of the term 'social enterprise', it is important to understand its roots. The term 'social enterprise' has borrowed its ideas from scholars such as Polanyi (1957) that help us to understand the economy as an instituted process, where attitudes, behaviours and strategic choices of actors are integrated into specific socio-institutional and socio-political settings across time and space. Sepulveda (2015) suggests that understanding the historical nature of social enterprises is important, as it shapes the roles that organisations play in shaping politics and behaviours, and the institutions are shaped by their history.

The first social enterprise was established in 1997 by a cooperative of practitioners and was known as 'Social Enterprise London' (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011). The company objects of Social Enterprise London stated that it had been set up (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p. 248):

> to promote co-operative solutions for economic and community development [and] to promote social enterprises, in particular co-operatives and common ownerships, social firms, and other organisations and businesses which put into practice the principles of participative democracy, equal opportunities and social justice.

From the development of Social Enterprise London, key Individuals close to the New Labour government, such as Baroness Thornton (a Labour Peer with a cooperative background) and Ed Mayo, then began to build on the Social Enterprise London concept as a model for mutual structures in public services (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011). Roy et al. (2015) also found, in their study into the development of an institutional 'ecosystem' for social enterprise, that the development of British social enterprises was influenced by the community-business movement in Ireland and Scotland, as these shared the same democratic values of Social Enterprise London but did not have as much reliance on trading income. The New Labour government, elected in 1997, enacted a policy change to commit to social and economic reform that marked the development of Latour's 'third-way', which rejected state ownership and the acceptance of market principles (Newman and Clarke, 2007). The first official mention of the concept was in a report by the Treasury entitled, *Enterprise and Social Inclusion,* which outlined the positive contributions that 'social enterprise' had made to the regeneration of deprived areas by helping to provide employment, services, goods and more generally build social capital (HM Treasury, 1999). The publication recognised a wider range of organisational types, including retail cooperatives, smaller cooperatives, large insurance mutuals, employee-

owned businesses, social firms, social-housing initiatives and employee-owned businesses (Ibid).

From 2001–2005, further development of the role of social enterprises took place. The term was expanded to include social businesses, as the emphasis had changed to then incorporate the use of business approaches to tackle deprivation and exclusion through the delivery of products and services into markets largely disregarded by the private and public sectors (Hines, 2005). In 2001, the then Labour government set up the Social Enterprise Unit (SEU) within the Department for Trade and Industry (DTI[3]). The SEU was subsequently taken over by The Office of the Third Sector (OTS) in 2006.[4] The new unit had a clearly defined role: first, to coordinate social enterprise policy, second, to champion the sector, and third, to identify and tackle barriers to the growth of social enterprises (Bull and Crompton, 2006). In 2002, the UK Government set out a strategy for social enterprise – *Social enterprise: a strategy for success* (DTI, 2002). The strategy set out a new approach and political framework for the development of social enterprise with a three-year focus on providing an environment where the organisations could flourish and to promote a better understanding of their abilities and for them to become better businesses. Within the strategy, the Department for Trade and Industry (2002, p. 14) set an influential definition for this new form of social enterprise: "a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners".

Support for social enterprises continued in 2006, with the publication of a further strategy, *Social enterprise action plan: scaling new heights* (OTS, 2006), which built on the strategy from

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[3] The DTI was the predecessor of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).
[4] The OTS was renamed and become The Office of Civil Society in 2010 due to the change in government.

2002. The plan had four key aims: firstly, to foster a social enterprise culture, secondly, to fund organisations to deliver specific business support, thirdly, to improve access to finance, and finally, to open up the market for social enterprises to deliver public services.

By 2010, and in line with the change of government from Labour to a Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition, came the repositioning of social enterprises as part of 'The Big Society' policy (HM Government, 2010a). The concept linked to Tony Blair's *Third Way* philosophy (Blair, 1998), which advanced a way to reconcile a division on the left between championing the state and supporting the voluntary response (Seldon and Snowdon, 2015). The purpose of the 'Big Society' was to redistribute power from the state to the people and had three strands: social action, public service reform, and community empowerment (Davis Smith, 2019). In 2012, a £1.4 billion fund was set up through a rebranding of the Social Investment Bank with a focus on the devolution of power to local communities (Ibid).

In 2012, the UK Government published the *Public Services (Social Value) Act*, which placed an obligation on the public sector to consider how services could be commissioned and procured to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing in areas where they operated and that were key to the growth of social enterprises. The act is being updated at present, and the interim report, published in May 2022, set out new demands for the third sector, and suggests that it should focus its efforts on systems-change, transforming public services and creating an environmentally sustainable future (White, 2022).

At the end of the Coalition government in 2015, the 'Big Society' had not succeeded in its ambitions and the amount of social financing available had reduced (White, 2022). An audit by the Civil Exchange (2015) concluded that it had failed to deliver its original goals, to work in partnership with the voluntary sector, and that the voice of the voluntary sector locally and nationally had reduced as a result. In a blog by Slocock (2015), the author of the audit, he

describes how the attempts to create more social action, to empower communities and to open up public services had not worked – except in a few exceptions – as it had not reached those who needed it most.

As a result of the 'Big Society' initiative, social enterprises developed further and were seen to be able to deliver more tailored, individually driven public services to the most deprived members of society and also to be able to deliver more innovative and effective approaches at a fast pace (HM Government, 2010a; Sepulveda, 2015). There was also a commitment to the creation and expansion of mutual, cooperatives, charities and social enterprises, and to enable these groups to have much greater involvement in the running of public services (HM Government, 2010b). Social enterprises had thus become part of the fabric used by government to deliver services (Steiner and Teasdale, 2019). In the next section, I shall outline the various definitions of the terms relevant to this thesis.

2.1.3   Defining 'Social Enterprise'

As a result of the historical context of the term 'social enterprise' and the various descriptions outlined above, the term has become an all-encompassing title for many different types of organisations which vary in terms of their legal structure, activities, size, geography, funding, profit orientation, relationship with communities, ownership and culture (Peattie and Morley, 2008; Defourny and Nyssens, 2021). Some commentators believe that social enterprises are embedded in the third sector and are therefore a part of it (Peattie and Morley, 2008; European Commission, 2020; Defourny and Nyssens, 2021). Others see it as a new social entrepreneurship whose features are partly out of range of traditional non-profit and social economy approaches (Borzaga and Defourny, 2004), or as being related to the early role of the cooperative movement due to its role in producing goods and services (the private sector) and the not-for-profit sector (Ridley-Duff, 2008; Defourny and Nyssens, 2021). However, others suggest that they exist between the public and private sectors, as these are the environments for social

entrepreneurship (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2015). Teasdale (2012, p. 99), in his paper on making

sense of social enterprise discourses, found that:

> policy makers deliberately kept the definition loose to allow for the inclusion
>
> of almost any organisation claiming to be a social enterprise. It allowed them
>
> to amalgamate the positive characteristics of the different organisation
>
> forms, and so claim to be addressing a wide range of social problems using
>
> the social enterprise policy tool.

However, the lack of a definition is challenging, due to the complexity of balancing the delivery

of the social mission with the need to generate income. There is a wide variety of definitions of

a social enterprise. Table 1 provides an overview of different definitions, drawn from key

authors.

Table 1: A summary of social enterprise definitions

Author	Social Enterprise Definitions	Key Elements	Theme	Social Enterprise typology studies
Dees (1998)	Private organisations dedicated to solving social problems, serving the disadvantaged, and providing socially important goods that were not, in their judgment, adequately provided by public agencies or private markets. These organisations have pursued goals that could not be measured simply by profit generation, market penetration, or voter support (p. 57).	• Solving social problems • Serving the disadvantaged • Providing socially important goods • Market and government failure	• Market Driven	• Socially Responsible Business [SRB] (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2019).
Defourny (2001)	Unlike the traditional non-profit organisations, are normally not engaged in advocacy activities as a major goal or in the redistribution of	• Production of goods • Provision of services	• Market Driven	• Socially Responsible Business [SRB] (Ridley-Duff

	financial flows, but they are directly involved in the production of goods or the provision of services (p. 16).			and Bull, 2019).
DTI (2002)	A business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners (p. 14).	• Surpluses reinvested for business and community • Social purpose rather than profits for shareholders and owners	• Community Benefit	• Socially Responsible Business [SRB] (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2019).
Dart (2004)	Differs from the traditional understanding of the non-profit organisation in terms of strategy, structure, norms, values, and represents a radical innovation in the non-profit sector (p. 411).	• Novel strategy, structure, norms, values	• Innovative Approach	• Enterprising Non-profit, [ENP] (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2019).
Haugh and Tracey (2004)	Businesses that trade for a social purpose. They combine innovation, entrepreneurship and social purpose and seek to be financially sustainable by generating revenue from trading. Their social mission prioritises social benefit above financial profit, and if and when a surplus is made, this is used to further the social aims of the beneficiary group or community, and not distributed to those with a controlling interest in the enterprise (p. 347).	• Trade to remain financially sustainable • Innovation and entrepreneurship • Social purpose above financial profit	• Community Benefit	• Social Co-operatives [SC] (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2019).
Haugh (2006)	Social enterprises adopt one of a variety of different legal formats but have in common the principles of pursuing business-led solutions to achieve social aims, and the reinvestment of surplus for community benefit. Their objectives focus on socially desired, nonfinancial goals and their outcomes are the nonfinancial measures of the	• Business-led solutions • Social aims • Outcomes are non-financial measures of the implied demand for, and supply of services	• Innovative Approach	• Enterprising Non-profit, [ENP] (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2019).

	implied demand for, and supply of services (p. 184).			
European Commission (2011)	A social enterprise is an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for their owners or shareholders. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and uses its profits primarily to achieve social objectives. It is managed in an open and responsible manner and, in particular, involves employees, consumers and stakeholders affected by its commercial activities (p. 1).	• Social impact-led • Provides goods/services • Entrepreneurial/ innovative • Involves employees, consumers and stakeholders	• Innovative Approach	• Enterprising Non-profit, [ENP] (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2019).
Scottish Government (2016)	Social enterprises trade for the common good. They address social needs, strengthen communities, improve people's life chances or protect the environment (p. 8).	• Trades for common good • Addresses social needs and protects the environment	• Innovative Approach	• Enterprising Non-profit, [ENP] (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2019).
European Commission (2020)	Social enterprises run commercial activities (entrepreneurial/economic dimension and have an organisation or ownership system that reflects their mission (inclusive governance-ownership dimension (p. 28).	• Commercial • Inclusive ownership/ governance	• Innovative Approach	• Enterprising Non-profit (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2019).
Defourny and Nyssen (2021)	Social enterprises trade to generate a certain percentage of income from trading by selling goods and/or services ranging from 25% to 50% of income depending on the type of social enterprise and the criteria employed by the governing agency (includes private and public markets) and must employee one or more paid worker. The primary focus has to be on the	• Social/ environmental purpose above financial profit • Reinvests income	Innovative Approach	• Enterprising Non-profit, [ENP] (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2019).

pursuit of social/environmental purposes. It should reinvest profits/surpluses into the organisation or the community. Self-identification criterion on whether it saw itself as a business with primarily social/environmental objectives (p. 258 – 259).			

In Scotland, there is no agreed definition of social enterprise by the sector, despite one being suggested by the Scottish Government in their Social Enterprise Strategy in 2016 (see Table 1). SENScot (2022) consulted the social enterprise community to consider the development of a new one. However, following consultation and engagement with the sector, the Board of SENScot would not support the development of a Scottish-specific definition and instead opted to develop 5 core criteria to help social enterprises flourish in Scotland (SENScot, 2022, p. 1):

Criterion 1: Social enterprises have social and/or environmental objectives.

Criterion 2: Social enterprises are trading businesses aspiring to financial independence.

Criterion 3: Social enterprises have an 'asset lock' on both trading surplus and residual assets.

Criterion 4: A social enterprise cannot be the subsidiary of a public sector body.

Criterion 5: Social enterprises are driven by values – both in their mission and business practices.

Considering the different definitions presented in Table 1 above, and taking into account the Scottish-specific criteria, it is evident that leaders in social enterprises have a unique set of expectations placed upon them. From this, it is clear that leaders need to focus on the delivery of the social mission and non-financial outcomes, whilst at the same time being entrepreneurial/ innovative, commercial/business-led and financially/environmentally sustainable.

Situating the research within this framing of social enterprises is important, as it creates space through differentiating the social enterprise as an entity, operating in a variety or legal forms (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2015). The next section summarises the different organisational types.

2.1.4 Organisational Types

The UK has many different types of social enterprises which recognises that these can be established from a variety of fields. The main types include Co-operatives, Charities, Community Interest Companies (CICs), community businesses, and community enterprises.

- *Co-operatives* are set up by members who set policy, carryout advocacy and research activity and make decisions. Elected members are accountable to the membership and it is the members who benefit from the activities of the organisation. There are different types of Co-operatives including worker, consumer, agricultural, credit unions, housing, community and food. There are different legal options for Co-operatives:

  1. To set up under the community Benefit Societies Act which requires a common social economic or cultural interest of members, be run for mutual benefit, managed by members, not based on the size of investment and must not be established to make dividends or profits for others.

  2. To register under the Companies Act (2006) as a company limited by guarantee which requires each member to pay an amount, usually one pound, in the event of the company winding up with debts outstanding.

  3. To register as a Community Interest Company (CIC) using model rules/constitutions which can be either by shares or limited by guarantee) under the Companies (Audit, Investigations, and Community Enterprise) Act 2004.

4. Using the model rules in point 3 above, to become a private company limited by shares and registered under the Companies Act (2006).

5. To register as a limited liability partnership under the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2000. Members have limited liability.

6. Very small Co-operatives do not adopted any of those set out in 1-5 above, and register as unincorporated associations and partnerships.

(Co-ops UK, 2009)

2. Charities are established where the organisation can prove it has a 'public benefit' and that it can also demonstrate that it has a legitimate social purpose as this is important to be able to access funds from grant-making trusts, donors and the public sector. It also has some tax exemptions, such as exemption from corporation tax, capital gains tax and local business tax. Governance is established through a set of trustees elected from the wider membership at annual general meetings who are able to vote for a wider management committee, make changes to governance documents and other issues and who are also responsible for the charitable activities. The legal basis for a charity is to set up as a charity with registration as a company with limited guarantee under the Companies Act (2006) which requires each member to pay an amount, usually one pound, in the event of the company winding up with debts outstanding.

3. Community Interest Companies (CICs) are set up to facilitate the development of community-level social enterprises. The model was established to take into account the resurgence of interest in mutuality following declines in the co-operative and mutual sectors. The structures are flexible to facilitate entrepreneurial activity and have three characteristics: constraints on the re-distribution of profits, the primary purpose is to benefit the community and have an asset lock. CICs must also satisfy a 'community interest test', cannot have charitable status, must produce an annual company report and a report to the Registrar of Companies. CICs cannot be set up for

groups/organisations such as political parties, political campaigning. The legal basis of CICs, the Community Interest Companies Register was set up in 2005.

4. Community businesses are established to support neighbourhoods and social cohesion. These organisations provide services in local communities such as shops, cafes, sporting facilities, educational services, care services, transport, village halls and are all central to community life. These businesses were first established in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland to motive and support communities. Members of the community take a share in the business in order to own and control it. The legal basis for community business is normally through a charity with trading subsidiaries.

5. Community enterprises are set at local level and are owned, controlled and run by the community. These organisations provide a mix of economic, environmental, cultural and social activities and are independent, not-for-profit, locally accountable and committed to involving local people and to support regeneration. The legal basis for these organisations are a private limited company.

(Adapted from Spear et al., 2017)

For leaders in social enterprises, this range of organisational models provides a wide choice to set up a social enterprise, and it also provides both opportunities and constraints dependent on the size, complexity, type of activity and turnover of the organisation. The next section outlines recent developments in Scotland.

2.1.5 Social Enterprise in Scotland

In Scotland, between 1998 and 2007, Roy et al. (2015) found that the development of social enterprises in a newly devolved Scotland was limited. There was a Labour administration in both Westminster and Holyrood which led to little policy divergency between UK and devolved governments. However, this changed in 2007 when the Scottish National Party (SNP) came into

power and changed the policy landscape for social enterprise with their commitment to investing in community based not-for-profit organisations which supported the emergence of social enterprises (Osborne and Super, 2010; Hazenberg et al., 2016). The new government introduced funding for early-stage enterprises to test out innovative ideas through programmes such as the Social Entrepreneurs Fund and Enterprise Ready Fund (Scottish Government, 2008). A further £40 million pounds was invested through Social Investment Scotland and the Scottish Investment Fund to allow third sector organisations to grow (Roy et al., 2015).

By 2012, social enterprises in Scotland had evolved to the extent that the First Minister of Scotland, Alex Salmond stated that "[Scotland] provides the most supportive environment in the world for social enterprise" (Ainsworth, 2012, p. 1), and he committed to continue to do so (Ainsworth, 2012). By 2014, the then Scottish Chancellor, John Swinney, claimed that Scotland had been identified as the best place in the world to start a social enterprise which led to international interest in the 'Scottish Model'. The evolving 'Scottish Model' was supported by the Scottish Government through the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill (2014) and the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act (2014). The creation of the Devolved Government provided the opportunity for the development of more practitioner-led support which resulted in the setting up of the Social Entrepreneur Network for Scotland (SENSCOT, 2013). The focus was on supporting local authorities to develop activities locally. However, a study by Hazenberg et al. (2016) found that this approach resulted in a lack of coordination which had a detrimental effect on the development of social enterprises in Scotland as it was too focused on local authority support and community engagement.

In 2016, the Scottish Government published its *Social Enterprise Strategy*, which stated that the social enterprise sector in Scotland was 'thriving' (p. 23). In 2017, it went on to publish a new action plan to support the development of social enterprises in Scotland: *Building a Sustainable Social Enterprise Sector in Scotland: Action Plan 2017–2020*. The Action Plan set out a number

of commitments which included the co-production of services, the development of organisational capacity through finance and business support, the development of market opportunities through procurement, and support for the national and international recognition of social enterprises.

In Scotland, the development of social enterprises is monitored through the Social Enterprise Census (Social Enterprise Scotland, 2019) – "a national survey that gathers longitudinal information on trends in the number, financial value and socio-economic activities of social enterprises" (Mazzei and Steiner, 2021, p. 41). The census shows that there are over 6,000 social enterprises in Scotland and that this had increased by 8% between 2015 and 2017, and by a further 7.5% percent over the following two years. Social enterprises cover all sectors and geographies of Scotland and contributes more than £2.3bn gross value added (GVA) to the Scottish economy, providing more than 88,000 full-time equivalent jobs (Social Enterprise Scotland, 2019). Social Enterprise Scotland (2019) also found through the census that, despite this growth and impact, organisations needed help in areas such as organisational development, access to finance and impact measurement in order to demonstrate their contribution to society and the economy in Scotland.

To support social enterprises, the Scottish Government published its *Social Enterprise Strategy* in 2016, which set out a vision for social enterprises to: "become a far-reaching and valued alternative and a key part of the Scottish way of doing business" (Scottish Government, 2016, p. 5). The strategy recognised the historical roots of the sector and set out ambitious plans for the following ten years and for it to become a growing movement, be part of the norm, be visible everywhere, touch more people's lives, sit alongside others, and become a national pride. It also set out a range of commitments to drive policy and funding decisions by the Scottish Government to support their ambitions on sustainable economic growth and to deliver on the shared ambition of greater prosperity for our country whilst ensuring fairness in how the

nation's wealth, resources and opportunities are distributed (Scottish Government, 2016). However, despite these commitments there has been limited success in the implementation of the strategy. Mazzei and Steiner's (2021) exploration of the perceptions of the provision of social enterprise support in Scotland found a conflict between social enterprises, as providers of services, and social enterprise policy aspirations, due to policies not being holistic, being based on ad-hoc support and, as a result, are ineffective. The authors called for more scrutiny and monitoring of policy implementation. These factors show that leaders have to navigate a complex and changing environment, despite the Scottish Government's policy commitments and support for social enterprises. In the next section, I outline the different types of leadership and describe what this means for leadership practices in social enterprises in adopting a relational approach.

2.2 Leadership Types and Leadership Practices

2.2.1 Traditional Leadership Types

There are different types of leadership, each with its own emphasis, examples of which include transformational, ideological, pragmatic, transactional, authentic, participative and distributed leadership.

A transformational leadership approach is one where followers trust, admire and respect their leader, and, as a result, are motived to do more than expected (Tatum and Fogle, 2016). Transformational leaders are often characterised as being charismatic. Such a charismatic leadership approach is characterised by a focus on positive emotions framed through a vision for the future (Griffith, et al., 2015). Crayne and Medeiros (2021) suggest that this results in an overt future orientation and problems are typically framed around the pursuit of multiple goals focused on hope and inspiring others, and generating influence through building larger coalitions. Lovelace et al. (2019) argue that this is a philosophy of inclusivity, where leaders structure a vision for the future and approval is from the mass so that the collective can create

and enforce its own group norms and identity. Conger and Kanugo (1998) note that these leaders also advocate for creativity, reflecting the propensity for breaking away from the status quo. Tatum and Fogle (2016) found, in their study into transformation leadership, that these transformational leaders raise effort and satisfaction amongst followers and encourage ethical behaviour, stimulate learning and creativity, strengthen commitment to the organisation and increase task performance. As a result, these leaders are not only able to impact on behaviours, they can also influence the moral, intellectual, and ideological principles of followers (Ibid).

Unlike charismatic leaders, who are future-focused, ideological leadership is based on previous established values, where leaders frame problems through an adherence to tradition and draw allusions to prior experiences that they share with like-minded followers (Hunter and Lovelace, 2020). Lovelace et al. (2019) advocate that this is often centred on a return to glory, where the leader's vision for the future is based on common points of reference and an idealistic view of the past. Mumford (2006) argues that this leads to leaders restricting the way problems are framed, which leads to the pursuit of single or selected goals.

Moving from these vision-based leaders, pragmatic leaders are problem-focused and have a rational approach to leadership (Mumford, 2006). Pragmatic leaders tend not to rely on emotional appeals (Hunter et al., 2011), and instead focusing on rational arguments and persuasion tactics to motivate followers (Mumford and Van Doorn, 2001). Lovelace et al. (2019) suggest that this leads to a tendency towards rationality, which leads to a willingness to shift and adapt to meet the needs of particular circumstances, focusing less on delivering specific goals and more on the current challenge. Leaders tend to delegate decision making responsibility and ownership to followers (Hunter et al., 2011), and focus their influence on small groups rather than solving problems through larger groups (Griffith et al., 2015).

Transactional leaders focus on the exchange relationship between themselves and their followers, which means that individuals know what to expect in return for their compliance with certain performance criteria (Hamstra et al., 2014). Transactional leaders treat followers as individuals with their own abilities and requirements (Bass, 1985). Hamstra et al. (2014) argue that this means that that followers focus on improving their skills rather than comparing themselves to others. Lord et al. (1999) add that this means that rewards are contingent on individual achievements, thus setting one another apart in terms of achievement.

A further leadership approach is one which builds on the transactional and traditional leadership approaches and considers contemporary positive forms of leadership for promoting organisational effectiveness: the authentic leader (Luthans and Avolio, 2003). For this leadership style, the focus is on authenticity, self-awareness and self-regulation (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). Avolio and Walumbwa (2014) argue that authentic leaders promote ethical conduct and discourage immoral behaviour amongst followers. Avolio and Gardner (2005) argue that this type of leadership is based on self-regulation, where leaders are able to align actions with their values and intention, making their authenticity self-transparent to followers.

Turning to more inclusive approaches, participative leadership was developed building on the concept of democratic leadership introduced by Likert in 1961 in this book outlining a new model of management. The democratic approach had three principles, including mutual support, group decision, and high standards. Kahai et al. (1997) redefined the concept of democratic leadership as participative leadership to reflect the notion that employees are asked for their opinions before decisions are made, decision making is delegated to employees, and employees are actively encouraged to participate in decision making so decisions are made together. Wang et al. (2022) add to this, suggesting that this leadership style also supports an employee's sense of ownership and helps to transform an employee's personal goals into organisational goals. Jing et al. (2017) argue that it also enables the daily leadership process to

actively enable participation for their employees through the conveying of meaningful values, actively organising reporting and other strategies that flex over time.

The concept of distributed leadership was first proposed by Gibb in 1954 in his book on social psychology. Gibb advocates that leadership and followers both have a role to play and that they need each other. Bolden (2011) agrees, and advocates that leadership in an organisation is not down to one person but rather a group of people. According to Tian et al. (2016), distributive leadership is not an individual domain but the outcome of interactions between people in an organisation. Spillane (2005) separates distributive leadership into three interconnected areas, leadership practices, interactions between leaders and followers, and conditions/settings that influence or are influenced by leadership practices. Gordon (2003) suggests that, where distributive leadership is spread across the organisation, the emphasis is on the leadership process rather than the style of the leader. Distributive leadership is believed to support practice-based leadership as it is about sharing power which can help facilitate organisational management and, as a result, can contribute to an organisation's success (Puspanathan and Mahaliza, 2020).

In the next section, I consider practice-based leadership, as this takes into account the messy and complex assemblages enacted in leadership practices, which allows leadership to be viewed as being materially mediated and distributed across people and things.

2.2.2 Practice-based Leadership

The shift in thinking to view leadership as being practice-based and materially mediated surfaced in the field of organisation studies. It has been achieved, in part, through the influence of several pivotal review essays by Ashcraft et al. (2009) and Phillips and Oswick (2012), who advocate for a material turn, and Coole and Frost (2010, p. 20), who argue that:

materialism offers a way of rethinking the relationship between bodies and other matters by paying attention to corporeality as a … series of emergent capacities and revealing the agentic capacities of non-living, supposedly inert matter to arouse visceral responses and prompt forms of judgement that do not necessarily pass through conscious awareness.

This indicates a shift, which recognises the growing awareness of materiality and how nonhuman objects transform how social actors interact with each other (Orlikowski, 2007). Raelin (2011), in his study of leadership-as-practice, suggests that artefacts are core elements of the material world and hold far more meaning than their object-like quality and deserve equal attention as relations between people. Oborn et al. (2013) advocate adopting a sociomaterial approach to distributed leadership, noting that, for example, there are many mundane nonhuman objects that contribute to the materiality of leadership practices, for example, offices, desks, meeting rooms, computers, 'reports', email distribution lists.

Research into the materiality of leadership has demonstrated the value of seeing agency as being distributed across human and nonhuman actors. Fox and Aldred (2015), in their paper on the materialism and micropolitics of social enquiry, found that research is not just about human actors but is about assemblages of people, things, ideals, institutions and social collectives, and observe that materiality must be studied not in terms of what it is, but in terms of what it does: what associations it makes, what capacities it has to affect its relations or to be affected by them, and what consequences derive from these interactions. In a study by Mulcahy and Perillo (2011, p. 122) into management and leadership in vocational education using ANT and practice-based theory, they found that management is not primarily about the intrinsic capabilities of managers and leaders, but the enactment of management that can be conceptualised as a field of practices constituted and performed contingently by people and objects in complex networks.

Conceptualising leadership as being materially mediated provides new possibilities for thinking about leadership practices more broadly, but also offers opportunities to consider leadership in complex organisations, such as social enterprises, differently. The activities of these social enterprises are shaped by human and nonhuman actors, and I believe that leaders have to develop practices to be able to deliver the social mission.

To date, research undertaken into leadership practice in the social enterprise sector has been limited. Gravells (2012) identified how leadership approaches varied, depending on the type of social enterprise and the individual characteristics of each individual leader. Tirmizi and Vogelsang (2017) found that the research often defaulted to the use of traditional constructs of leadership and command and control hierarchies. Hamlin et al. (2011), in their paper on managerial effectiveness in non-profit organisations, are critical of current management research and argue that it is divorced from the world of practice, is overly theoretical and abstract and does not recognise sufficiently the problems and challenges facing the manager in their everyday work.

Raelin (2011) adds further from his sociomaterial study, noting that there has been a long history of institutional thought and practice of considering leadership as an individual property. Crevani et al. (2010) are also critical of seeing leadership as an individual property and argue that an individualistic view should be reconsidered with a move to seeing value in separating leadership from personality to allow leadership to focus on behavioural change and social interactions within organisational life. Each of these examples challenge the traditional, human-centred understanding of leadership practices, acknowledging the value of thinking about leadership as being comprised of more than mere personal (human) traits.

To change the traditional approach to leadership development in the social enterprise sector, leadership needs to be considered from a practice-based perspective to promote an

understanding of the relational aspects of leadership and not simply the objective, technical, measurable and tangible ones (Carroll et al., 2008). It is about what work can be accomplished together rather than about what one leader thinks (Ibid). As Raelin (2011) suggests, the focus instead needs to be more about why, where and how leadership work is being practised and achieved, rather than about the individuals who are offering visions for others to shape how they perform the work of leadership. Raelin (2020), in his paper on leadership-as-practice, found that the building blocks for this includes issues of agency, context, identity, materiality, power and dialogue.

Practices are therefore not about the physical and/or mental capacity of one leader but are instead embedded and embodied within the setting in which they happen (Spillane and Sherer, 2004). Gherardi (2000) contributes further and argues that practice is a product of the world based on the specific historical conditions from previous practice which is transformed into current practice. Practice is therefore a system of activities, where knowing and doing is inextricably linked and a way to acquire knowledge-in-action (Ibid). Bratianu and Orzea (2010) argue that knowledge creation needs to be driven by strategic management within an organisation in order to inspire the intellectual passion of staff to create knowledge and be able to link this with a goal to connect the knowledge-creation process of discourse and practice. Leadership in knowledge-creation is based on the concept of distributed leadership (see Section 2.2.1) as knowledge is created through dynamic interaction and is achieved through the commitment of all members, not just a few (Nonaka and Toyama, 2007). Bratianu and Orzea (2010) suggest that a focus on knowledge creation can give businesses a competitive advantage and is a core competence of the organisation.

Considering leadership in social enterprise from a practice-based standpoint provides an opportunity to examine how leaders develop their practices though their everyday work as they seek to juggle the ongoing changes to policy, funding and the political environment. In the next

section, I shall describe the difficulties that leaders face in balancing the social mission with the commercial reality of running a social enterprise.

2.3 Defining Leadership in Social Enterprises

Within this study, leaders are defined as Board Members, Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and Senior Managers, who Tirmizi and Vogelsang (2017), in their publication on leading and managing in the social sector, describe as being responsible for delivering organisational strategy and plans, and the effective management and control of resources to ensure delivery of the social mission though people, interactions, rules and governance. Kirchner's (2006) definition goes further, suggesting that it is about leading upwards to manage governance, downwards to harness resources and run the organisation effectively, and outwards to represent externally. Tirmizi and Vogelsang (2017) argue that leading, in this context, is less about getting people to follow the directions of someone in a leadership position and more about responding to what arises in relationships to make meaning about what is occurring, resulting in mutual change in knowledge and actions. All of these factors have implications for how leaders develop their practices in order to manage the delivery of the social mission.

2.3.1. Leadership in Third Sector

In Section 2.1.2, the historical development of social enterprise was considered. A key part of the policy development since 1997 was the policy and political choices made to support those in a leadership position in the voluntary and community sector (Byrne, 2001; Dale 2002; Pierson, 2008). Green (2009) suggests that the lack of effective leadership was one of the top five constraints facing the sector. Diamond (2012) found that, during this time, key charities in the UK were developing initiatives aimed at developing the capacities and skills of potential and future leaders within the sector recognising that is was made up of different models of organisations, political/social, single issue, social enterprise, brokers and fixers, network and independent. The Close Social Leadership Programme (Hopkins, 2010) identified a number of

issues facing current and future leaders in the sector, such as the organisational profile, as 33% have fewer than 10 employees, workforce professionalisation and growth, increased role of direct services, and diversity of the sector which adds complexity. Diamond (2012) also found that there was conflict between managing the organisation and carrying out a leadership role which requires a different assessment of need.

Scholars have identified what leaders in the third sector do in their everyday work, for example, strategy (Dey and Teasdale, 2016), managing human resource (Kreutzer and Jäger, 2010), and innovation (Hodges and Howieson, 2017). Research relating to leadership models, such as team member exchange (Willems, 2015), leadership philosophies (Parris and Peachy, 2012), and distributed leadership (Duncan and Schoor, 2015), has also been conducted. Although much of this is from the UK, the body of this work refers to nonprofit organisations and not directly to the third sector (Hodges and Howieson, 2017). However, work is underway to establish leadership theory in the European context for the sector to recognise its diversity, including distributed leadership (Grint, 2005) and shared leadership (Bergman et al., 2012). However, it has been acknowledged that this needs to be further developed to recognise the context of the sector and its culture (Hodges and Howieson, 2017), with scholars also questioning hierarchical leadership and heroic leadership approaches (Bligh, 2016).

Despite the recognition of the importance of developing leadership capabilities for the third sector, Kirchner (2006) found that the sector suffered from a history of chronic underspending and a low level of prioritisation for investment, leading to a lack of demand for, and supply of, training and development for people operating in this complex environment. Do Adro and Leitão (2020) found, in their study about leadership and organisational innovation in the third sector, that there were key facets that were important for effective leadership, for example, the retention of workers through structural empowerment and reward, the promotion of job satisfaction through a culture of recognition and appreciation for performance, social innovation

to gain competitive advantage, and finding ways to effect change to create organisational innovation. Rees et al. (2022) go further, advocating for the importance of place in relation to local knowledge, relationships with other voluntary organisations, communities and the public, along with the importance of collaboration, and value/distinctiveness to mobilise the influence from local knowledge and collaboration.

Interestingly, Chambers and Edwards-Stuart (2007) identified a range of characteristics of successful leaders, including integrative and speculative thinking, drive and persistence, a strong value base, focus, and networking. The role of leadership is a demanding one and has changed over the last twenty years (Hudson, 2009). Hudson (2009) found that, to improve leadership effectiveness, it was important to understand the differences between leadership, setting the mission, motivating staff and giving the organisation a sense of purpose, management administration, developing plans and controlling budgets, and the importance of relationships and emotional intelligence as well as the technical skills.

Taking all these factors into account, leadership in the third sector is complex and requires leaders to consider how they balance being a leader with managing the organisation. It is also important that leaders consider the models and philosophies available and to deliberate how they can use all or some of these to discharge their role effectively.

2.3.2   Diversity of Social Enterprise Leaders' Trajectories

Many leaders who join social enterprises have strong values and beliefs and are drawn by the social mission rather than by financial reward (Thompson, 2002; Bornstein, 2004; Battilana, 2018). Gravells (2012) also found that they enter the sector from a variety of different backgrounds, including the private, public and third sectors. In contrast, Howieson and Hodges (2016) found, in their study of leading in the public and third sectors, that social enterprise also attracted extraordinarily diverse people. These factors mean that leaders joining the sector come with very different skills and experiences, which can lead to skills gaps and the potential

for a lack of knowledge and understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by the organisation (Howieson and Hodges, 2016; Battilana, 2018).

2.3.3   Nature of the Leadership Role

There are many different facets to leading social enterprises. A study by the European Commission (2020) of social enterprises and their eco-systems in Europe, found that social enterprises are impacted by the predominance of short- rather than long-term strategies that have an impact on the organisations ability to plan. Smith et al.'s (2012) earlier examination of the funding implications for social enterprises showed that mission consistency, entrepreneurial competence, and attitude toward donor behaviour had a moderate impact on the social enterprise. This suggests that leaders need to understand the views of funders while balancing the conflicting demands of delivering the social mission with the ability to deal with the economic demands of running the organisation. Wronka-Pospiech (2016) agrees, and identifies in her article on effective leadership skills and competencies in social enterprises that managers need to have a track record in business, achieve social and economic objectives and be able to execute activities typical of the business segment, becoming equal actors in the market game, competing for clients and resources with commercial enterprises. Gravells (2012) also found that leaders needed to focus on financial controls, build a strong team, manage the performance of people, place a clear focus on outcomes and impact, and put management measures in place. Other areas identified by scholars include the need for good governance arrangements to ensure delivery (Borzaga and Solari, 2004), the importance of stakeholder management (Battilana, 2018), and corporate and environmental sustainability (Ketprapakorn and Kantabutra, 2019). All of these issues mean that leaders need to have the capabilities to deliver the social mission, plan and manage the organisation, including its people, source funding, deliver outcomes, engage with stakeholders, and meet environmental and organisational sustainability requirements whilst remaining true to the identity and values of the sector.

2.3.4 Governance

Another element of leadership in social enterprise is that of governance (Battilana, 2018). One of the key roles of the governing board is to hold management responsible for the delivery of strategy, change (such as the development of new services or cuts to funding), and the social mission (Social Enterprise Alliance, 2010; Hiland, 2017). Ridley-Duff and Bull (2015) see these factors as tensions and note that an effective board must create and embed a culture of debate in the organisation. Watson et al. (2021) also found, in their study of Board governance, that processes and practices can help modulate the distance between the Board and management in negotiating these contradictions and tensions.

Santos et al. (2015) propose that, as part of the culture of debate, there must be effective performance monitoring, including a combination of operational and impact KPIs (key performance indicators), as operational KPIs alone are insufficient to monitor the achievement of the social mission. They suggest that an impact measurement system must be managed separately from the financial accounting processes and should employ standard benchmarks that can be compared across the sector. This view is supported by Staessens et al. (2019) in their paper on data analysis and social enterprises, noting that key performance indicators alone do not represent the total performance of social enterprises and do not allow for cross-sectional or longitudinal analysis. Tirmizi and Vogelsang (2017) suggest that there are challenges in designing and implementing performance measures, including identifying what to measure, identifying the right indicators, difficulty in attributing success, and expenses associated with collection. However, Bull (2007) suggests that the adoption of a balance analysis tool that incorporates mainly non-financial measures and managers' own perceptions on where the organisation is and what it wants to be in the future may provide an option. In addition to these factors, Borzaga and Defourny (2004) note that governance structures should always consider the expectations of relevant stakeholders, such as clients, employees and the public sector, when considering

performance reporting requirements. These elements show that leaders need to be able to design and develop approaches to reporting, including the design of KPIs that enable the board to govern effectively but prevent it from getting caught up in operational details.

2.4   Re-thinking Leadership from a Sociomaterial Lens

Leaders in the social enterprise sector interact with a multitude of stakeholders and partners to directing services/projects and the social mission (Gravells, 2012; Battilana, 2018). They therefore need to be able to influence, inform and engage multiple partners and stakeholders, including government agencies, funders, politicians, policy makers and clients. This emphasises the importance of the everyday relational work of leaders, showing "how leadership is dependent neither on individuals, nor on interpersonal relationships alone, but instead on particular constellations of relationships that are both social and material in nature and constituted through both material and social conditions" (Cox and Hassard, 2018, p. 542). Raelin (2016) observes how such a relational approach is the practice of collaborative rather than individual agency, which involves the activity of all those who are engaged, their social interactions, and their reflections and adjustments to their ongoing work.

It is evident from the literature that scholars who adopt a relational perspective in their research are interested in the relational things that individual leaders do. However, this relational perspective is human-centred. Scholars have now moved to consider a more sociomaterial understanding of relational leadership. Alvesson and Einola (2019), in their paper on leadership and other traps, found that a human-centred approach was out of date and too simplistic for current corporate life, and argue that it may lead to losing consideration of leadership as situated acts and missing the relational nature of leadership altogether. Raelin (2011, p. 197) supports this conceptualisation, suggesting that "if the assumption that reality can be distinguished and sorted by the human mind is relaxed, the dualist epistemology can be supplanted by a practice epistemology that conceives of practice as an ongoing recursive

encounter among parties to a social iteration". These relational perspectives invite the consideration of leadership as a social process through which meaning is made and reality is enacted, which leads to the exploration of how the 'social' in the social enactment of reality is to be understood (Dachler and Hosking, 1995). Each of these conceptualisations offer new ways of thinking about leadership that involve human and nonhuman actors and are not constrained by the traditional dualist conceptualisations, which ignore the complexities and tensions that are embodied within organisations, such as social enterprises.

Research about leadership in social enterprise to date has not fully explored the possibilities afforded with adopting a more sociomaterial understanding of a relational approach. Spillane et al. (2001), in their paper on school leaders' practices, found that school leadership is a distributed practice, and argue that it is important to view leadership practices as being distributed across and inter-linked with people, things and situations. This supports Oborn et al.'s (2013) position that leadership enactment entails engaging with materiality and that these materialities are not passive mediators or neutral channels for leadership but are consequential. It is through the mutual entanglement of the social in assemblages with materiality that agency is performed and practices are enacted (Spillane et al., 2001). Taking the relational approach further, Avolio et al. (2009), in their study about rethinking leadership theories, evidenced that there needs to be a move away from the leader/follower model due to the changing nature of society, the flattening of hierarchies and structures, and the growth in distributed leadership approaches that recognise the collaborative and inclusive nature of leadership that in no way excludes the individual but encompasses heterogeneous actors.

This move away from traditional leadership approaches within social enterprises to leadership enacted in a relational way encourages more attention to the sociomaterial aspects of leadership work and discourses in organisational settings (Cox and Hassard, 2018). Such an

approach enables the consideration of the actors, resources, power and so on – that the leader may use to shape and align the network to his or her vision (Sidle and Warzynski, 2003).

The areas outlined above have implications for how leaders develop their practices, and how to develop new approaches, recognising that this emerges through sociomaterial interactions of people and things. The insights illustrate that it is not just down to the leader, but also involves nonhuman actors, such as policy and funding and the negotiation of heterogeneous actors within complex assemblages. Viewing leadership in this way offers a new approach to thinking about leadership that is not constrained by the traditional dualist conceptualisations, which ignore the complexities and tensions involving multifarious actors that are embodied within organisations such as social enterprises.

Each of these arguments illustrate how important it is to examine leadership by first understanding that these practices are situated and relational and are mediated by complex assemblages of multiple actors, both human and nonhuman. As such, the more traditional competency-based approach to conceptualising leadership practices is perhaps inadequate in exploring more complex and nuanced properties of social enterprises. In the next section, I shall unpack practice and competency-based approaches to leadership to argue that leadership in the sector should instead be conceptualised as practice-led, due to the range of human and nonhuman actors at play and the importance of context in enacting leadership in the sector.

2.5   Competency versus Practice

Competencies alone are an insufficient indicator of leadership success (Carroll et al., 2008). Such a view is supported by Gravells (2012), who argues that a competency-based approach has always struggled to take account of the differences between the behaviour of equally successful leaders and the tendency for successful leaders to play to their strengths and develop their own unique style. Denyer and James (2016) argue that the focus on leader competencies is often

detached from the site in which the skills and competencies are applied. Carroll et al. (2008), in their study of leadership, and challenging the competency paradigm, found that a focus on praxis, practitioner and practice offers both challenge and transformational change to the ways in which leadership is limited and constrained by current organisational and managerial practices, and advocate that the approach also risks leadership competencies becoming an impoverished and largely mechanistic necessity (Ibid). Carroll et al. (2008) argue that taking a practice-led approach allows attention to be paid to the dimensions of leadership through practice that are currently neglected, if not actually invalidated, by the competency paradigm.

To compare the use of competencies for leadership, Bolden and Gosling (2006), in their paper on changing the tune for leadership competencies, use music to show how the repeating, recurring refrain imposes structure, predictability and constraint in the same way as competences do, and argue that competencies do not address or facilitate what gives music (or leadership) its originality, distinctiveness vitality and life (Ibid). Bolden and Gosling (2006) determine that competencies do not provide a sufficiently rich vocabulary for the subtle, textured, complex, embodied and highly situated mindset that is required for leadership, which results in conformity to a standardised and unfocused leadership model.

Such a critique is supported by Carroll et al. (2008), who see competencies as just a managerial concept and framework, and also by Gravells (2012), who contends that, when used within social enterprises, competency approaches produce 'one trick ponies', capable of operating well under certain conditions, but unable to adapt to changes in organisational circumstances, and over-reliant on systems and processes.

These factors show that leadership in social enterprises is not about acquiring a generalised set of competencies as this does not account of the complexity and messiness of leadership work which is situated and relational and mediated by assemblages of multiple actors. Together,

these elements present an understanding that leadership in social enterprise encompasses multiple opposing demands that present a complex environment of uncertainty, ambiguity, and competing objectives.

2.6   Summary

In this chapter, I have set out the context of social enterprises, including Scotland, provided definitions for social enterprise across the UK and the core criteria used in Scotland, and identified a gap in the literature related to leadership practices in the sector. I have described and critiqued leadership and competency-based approaches and have argued for a move to practice-based leadership which views leadership as enacted and materially meditated. In the next chapter, I set out the aims of the research and present the research questions that underpin the study.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Landscape – ANT-led, Practice-based

3.1   Introduction

Chapter 2 has illustrated that the complex and multifaceted nature of leadership demands new ways of understanding these practices – in particular, those that facilitate and acknowledge the importance of considering the relations between human and nonhuman actors when exploring such practices. Actor Network Theory (ANT) provides a useful set of tools for attesting controversies and uncertainties about the social world (Latour, 2005). Because an ANT approach considers practices themselves to be powerful actors in social assemblages, it offers a unique way to consider the complex relations between humans and nonhumans in any social setting. ANT is therefore a helpful theoretical approach to help understand leaders' practices in social enterprises.

This chapter introduces ANT and practice-based theorising to demonstrate how these theories can be used to trace the practices enacted by leaders in their everyday work in social enterprises. In this thesis, ANT is used to help to facilitate an understanding of the enactment of leadership within social enterprises. Practice-based theorising is used to demonstrate how knowing is a situated, relational and material performance.

This chapter begins with an exploration of posthumanism new materialism, object orientated-ontology and feminism. It then examines sociomateriality and ANT, and ANT and practice-based theorising and moves on to describe the heuristics adopted in the analysis process: *'follow the actors'* (Latour, 2005), *'assemblages'* (Law, 1999), the *'sociology of translation'* (Callon, 1986) and other heuristics used to understand translation.

3.2 Sociomateriality and ANT

Sociomateriality applies to theoretical approaches that see the separation between human and nonhuman, material and immaterial, as artificial; and the privileging of the human, or social, over the material limiting what we can know (MacLeod et al., 2019). There are a variety of different sociomaterial approaches, with complexity theory, cultural historical theory (CHAT), actor-network theory (ANT), and spatiality theories included within the term (Fenwick et al., 2011). Fenwick et al. (2011), in their book on emerging approaches to educational research, note three commonalities that join up these theories: they take on complete systems and the entangled nature of human and nonhuman activities; they trace how practices are stabilised through activity; and they de-centre the human. After considering these different sociomaterial approaches, an ANT approach was deemed most suitable and thus adopted for this study, as outlined below.

ANT, for the most part, was developed by three sociologists, Callon (1986), Latour (1986) and Law (1992), and considers science and society as a series of interacting networks. ANT theorists propose that science and society co-develop from the production and maintenance of actor networks and that scientific knowledge must be studied in the social context of which it forms a part. Initially, ANT was related to how scientists gained the support of others for their proposals on scientific facts, and how power and resources were attained to perform their work (Van House, 2003). Proponents of ANT argue that the approach is useful for understanding the complexities of relationships by offering a way of viewing how organisations overcome resistance (Law, 1992; Latour, 2005). Law (1992) asserts that at the centre of the actor-network approach is a concern about how actors and organisations mobilise, contrast and hold together the parts out of which they are composed. To understand the process of change being enacted, the term 'translation' is used to show the relations that influence actions. These translations are termed as 'traceable associations' between actors (Law, 1992; Latour, 2005).

In the mid-1990s, ANT moved beyond science and technology studies and is now considered to be a widely applicable theory of the social world. Latour (2005) describes the shift as a process of developing another social theory to deal with the new mysteries uncovered after carrying out fieldwork in science and technology. ANT, as one sociomaterial approach, is viewed more like a sensibility than a theory and is seen as a way to sense and draw nearer to a phenomenon (Fenwick and Edwards, 2010). Fenwick et al. (2011) suggest that it is a method to understand how effects, such as identities, knowledge and practices, are produced through assemblages of human and nonhuman actors. However, Latour (2005), in his book, *Reassembling the Social,* which sets out the main tenets and thinking of ANT, sees it more as a method by which researchers can learn from actors without imposing their own perspectives.

ANT is a relational theory reflecting the view that a thing is defined solely by its effects and alliances rather than by the lonely inner kernel of essence (Harman, 2010). It does not solely focus on the human actors, but instead considers the effects and relations between both human and nonhuman actors (Fenwick and Edwards, 2010). ANT has been enrolled in different areas, including education (Fenwick et al., 2011), health (Mol, 2002), management and leadership (Mulcahy and Perillo, 2011) and within science and engineering, for example, Callon's (1986) study of scallop fishing in St Bruic's Bay.

Adopting an ANT-led sociomaterial sensibility enables the decentering of the human and for humans to not be treated any differently from nonhumans (Fenwick and Edwards, 2010). Human actors in an ANT view are seen as part of the world and are not given 'status', and objects are also seen as legitimate actors who can create uncertainty and controversy (Fenwick and Edwards, 2010). As Muller (2015), in his paper rethinking sociomateriality, power, politics and space, describes, ANT also does not distinguish *a priori* between humans and materials, which ignores that fact that humans are capable of intention and pursing interests and things do not. In an ANT framing, both human and nonhuman actors are seen to have symmetry, and both

have influence in assembling and mobilising the assemblages (Fenwick et al., 2011). In ANT-led research, humans and nonhumans have symmetry ontologically and are considered as effects performed in relations (Fenwick et al., 2011).

Actors within an ANT understanding can be active and/or passive depending on how they are associating within an assemblage. Such an approach also provides methodological symmetry in that human and nonhuman actors have legitimacy and presence in research processes, and that we, as researchers, should not judge the adequacy of our methods in terms of any prior assumptions of which are appropriate and which are not (Law, 2004). It is through understanding the relations between them that is important. This means that there are no *a priori* assumptions about what will be uncovered (Fenwick and Edwards, 2010).

By acknowledging that ANT enables nonhuman actors to be taken into account, however, it follows that nonhuman actors could not exist on their own and exist only through agency in network relations (Latour, 2005). It also foregrounds the agency of nonhumans within practice (MacLeod et al., 2019). The fundamental insight of adopting an ANT view of the world is that all objects, as well as all people, knowledge and locations are relational effects (Fenwick and Edwards, 2010). MacLeod et al. (2019, p. 180), in their article on actor-network theory and ethnography using sociomaterial approaches in medical education, propose an argument for nonhuman agency when they state that:

> non-human agency is not as farfetched as it might sound – of course, a
> mundane object, like a thermometer, does not find its own way and 'jump'
> into a person's mouth, and 'decide' whether that person has a fever. A fever
> is determined through multiple relationships between people and things: a
> person feeling unwell, knowledge of thermometer use and normal
> temperatures, digital technologies, batteries, and innumerable other factors.

ANT theorises practices as heterogeneous and unplanned gatherings of human and nonhuman objects. Objects are not immobile, pre-shaped materials, but instead surface through ongoing negotiations between an ever-changing assemblage of actors (Orlikowski, 2007). Such an approach enables the examination of assemblages of actors which are useful for tracing the ways that actors come together (Fenwick et al., 2011). Tracing these connections can show how actors are drawn in or excluded, how some connections become stable and durable while others fade, and how these connections link to other networks and things (Fenwick et al., 2011). According to ANT, it is nonhumans and their specific relationships to humans that make up the 'social' and, as a result, the ways in which scientific knowledge and technology are made durable. Rather than essentialized categories, ANT supports the emergence of hybrid configurations (Ibid).

Thus, adopting an ANT-based approach for this study enables leadership to be seen not just as a human skill, but also places a focus on untangling the material relations involved in leadership practice. Using ANT allows practices to emerge through the relationships between the human – employees, board members and nonhuman actors – policies, processes, technology, and plans, all of which impact on the everyday work of leaders as they juggle the challenges of operating in a sector that is resource-poor and mission-driven. Exploring leadership practices using ANT will open up new opportunities to re-imagine leadership in a complex and ever-changing sector. In the next section, I acknowledge the critiques and potential challenges when using ANT.

3.3   Critique of ANT

ANT is not without its critics, even from its main proponents. For Callon (1986), ANT lacks criticality in that it can be seen to be so accepting that it ends up foregrounding an actor which is undetectable and nebulous, which leads to ANT being criticised for not being critical but only being descriptive.

Not all commentators accept the notion of symmetry between human and nonhuman actors. Star (1991), in her paper on power, technologies and the phenomenology of standards, examined the interactions between standardising technologies and human beings as members of multiple worlds, and argues that symmetry undermines the moral divisions between human and nonhumans and thereby could be considered dehumanising. Similarly, Vandenberghe (2002), in his article critiquing actor-network theory, found that the social power of humans fails to take account of the emergent properties of relational and cultural systems and posits that humans and nonhumans belong to different ontological regions and constitute different and incomparable ways of being. He notes that humans and nonhumans are interconnected, but, that it is humans that bump into nonhumans and give them meaning, use or value. Law (1992) argues that ANT dehumanises the human and does not celebrate the idea that there is a difference between people and objects.

Further problems arise around determining what is an actor and what part of the network is under study. Latour (1999) argues that ANT does not advise on the shape to be drawn, only on how to go about this systematically. He suggests that ANT does not claim to explain the actors' actions or reasons, but only to find ways which render actors able to negotiate their way through each other's world-building activity. Law (1992) sees these criticisms as misguided, as ANT never implied equality between humans and nonhumans as it did not propose that nonhumans act with the intentionality that is instilled in human actors, or, equally, that human actors have no intentionality or capacity for action.

This leads to questions about whether ANT is a theory, and, if it is, what is it a theory of. Latour (1999) sees it as a theory of space in which the social become a certain type of circulation, whereas Law (1992) suggests that it is both. It is a theory because we can tell a story (Law, 1992), and it is not because it is easy to "tell tales of a kind of diaspora, of interaction with other theories" (Law, 1999, p. 22). In Law's book on *Actor Network Theory and After* (1999, p. 4), he

recognises the debate over the human/nonhuman entities and proposes that ANT should be understood as a "semiotics of materiality" and notes that the naming of ANT has meant that is has been turned into a theory. As a result of this, it has spread to become something new, into many things that are different from one another (Law, 1999). Law and Hassard (1999) agree, and argue that ANT is dispersed having spread and converted itself into a range of different practices: cultural studies, feminist science; social geography and technology studies; and organisational analysis.

As a result, much of the 'after ANT' work has attempted to shift to a more fluid understanding of a 'network' as a way to become less rigid. Latour (2005) re-introduces ANT as a method through following the actors to trace the multiple associations and translations, whereas Law (2009) shifts ANT thinking to a more performative ontology, signifying that, alongside multiple modes of ordering, multiple realities emerge, with Mol (2002) often being attributed with this notion. Despite this re-positioning, criticisms remain.

These criticisms are relevant to ANT in general. However, in this study I show how ANT is being used to foreground leaders' practice, which is relevant to my research questions. In the next section, I shall show how ANT can helpfully foreground these practices and how this can shift the discourse away from its focus on a competency-based approach, which is more typically found in the sector.

3.4   Posthumanism, New Materialism and Feminism

In Section 3.3 above, the term after ANT was used to recognise that thinking about ANT has developed. Michael (2017, p. 49), in his book, *Actor network theory: trials, trails and translations,* describes ANT as "a complex, and oftentimes disparate, resource (closely aligned with a particular, evolving, set of sensibilities) that opens up a space for asking certain sorts of methodological, empirical, analytical and political questions about the processes of the (more-

than-) social world". Drawing on Law (1999) and Mol (2002), Michael (2017) argues that the social is not a given but a heterogeneous product loaded with the nonhuman, and are as much part of society as humans, and that ANT is made up of a single layer of associations amongst human and nonhumans, and not structured around the micro, meso and macro layers or spatially arranged in the local and global. He argues that standard social scientific categories of class, gender and ethnicity are largely avoided and is more about actors, mediators and intermediaries and the hybridity of these human and nonhuman actors (Michael, 2017). Michael (2017) argues that posthuman approaches are relevant to ANT but that this is a continuation of the ideas advanced in sociotechnical studies (STS).

3.4.1   Posthumanism

In her book, *The Posthuman*, Rosi Braidotti (2013) traces three linages of posthuman thought: firstly, moral philosophy, which is reactive as it asserts western humanistic values around individualism, cosmopolitanism and universalism as the solution to current challenges, whilst rejecting post-colonialism and feminism and other perspective that acknowledges differences, diversity and multiplicity of subjectivities and identifies (Ibid). The second is drawn from science and technology studies, which is analytic as it attends to the questions about ethic and values through acknowledging the relations, interdependencies and interconnections between humans and nonhumans that have equal agency in a network. The third is critical, based on the tradition of anti-humanism which is built upon post-colonial theory, post-structuralism and feminism (Ibid). This takes colonialism, sexism, racism, classism and other -isms seriously, as part of Western Enlightenment thinking, and notes the connections between humans and the environment (Ibid). Forlano (2017) argues that all three have the power to reshape our understanding of self and the relationships we have to machines and other species.

3.4.2   New Materialism

New materialism encompasses a non-anthropocentric realism grounded in a move from epistemology to ontology and the recognition of matter's inherent activity (Gamble et al., 2019). There are three types of new materialism – vital, negative and performative. Vital new materialism emerged in the 1960s from work by Deleuze (Lemke, 2018) who considered the works of Spinoza and Leibniz, which advocated that "all of nature was defined primarily by an immanent vital power or force [and] that force was immanent to matter, because matter is nothing other than an expression of force itself" (Gamble et al., 2019, p. 119). Spinoza argues that God states his power through the 'conactus' of single definitive things, which at the same time expresses God's power of being and acting (Ibid). This ontology of force is about a force that strives towards change, which leads to a view that matter is non-performative (Gamble et al., 2019). For Bennett (2010), this means that things possess a certain force before entering into a performative connection. As a result, Gamble et al. (2019) suggest that this means that vital new materialism remains a deeply ahistorical, metaphysical, ahistorical and apolitical position.

Negative new materialism suggests that matter is non-relationally external to thought and is called negative as it does not acknowledge the relation between matter and thought (Gamble, et al., 2019). There are two traditions associated with negative new materialism, 'speculative realism' and 'object-orientated ontology'. According to Meillassoux there are two statements relevant to 'speculative realism', Being is separate from thought, and thought can think Being (Harman, 2019). Meillassoux argues that "matter is independent of thought, and yet it is precisely thought and relationality alone that can think matter in its radically nonrelational being" (Gamble, et al., 2019, p. 121), and he further suggests that it is also contingent and capable of creating anything at all at any given time, even God (Candlerand and Cunningham, 2009). This form of negative materialism posited by Meillassoux is therefore based on a kind of indescribable miraculous ontological dualism between thought and matter with no explanation

of how one could materialise from the other (Gamble et al., 2019). Object-orientated ontology draws on a branch of philosophy called speculative realism and conceives a world of objects defined as "whether human, immaterial, durable or fleeting [and] is understood to be a flat ontology that is concerned with the 'real and sensual' qualities and aesthetics of objects (Harman, 2015). Bogost (2012) suggests that this ontology put things at the centre of being, humans are not the sole elements, and that nothing has special status, everything co-exists.

Performative new materialism differs from the theories of new materialism noted above. Performative new materialism does not see ontology and epistemology existing independently but are "inherently co-implicated and mutually constituting … neither requires nor is in any sense restricted to humans" (Gamble et al., 2019, p. 122). Barad (2007) proposes that reality does not reveal pre-existing values but always plays a role in constituting them. She suggests that there is no fixed boundary dividing the laboratory from the world and that humans cannot observe the universe from the outside which she calls 'agential realism' and is therefore performative (Ibid). Considering Barad's (2007) 'agential realism' ontology emphasises the entanglement of matter and meeting in relation to agential intra-action that articulates not just human bodies and experiences but a more than human world (Haynes, 2014). This relational ontology advances what Connolly (2011) suggest is 'emergent causality'. Haynes (2014) argues that emergent causality places the emphasis on the agentiality of material processes where no clear line can be drawn between cause and agent or cause and effect.

3.4.3 Materialism and Feminism

From the late 1990s onwards there has been a shift in feminist thought and critical theory that sees attention being paid to questions of materiality of bodies and nature, which is a more passive method for the determination of social forces (Haynes, 2014). Haynes (2014) suggests that a number of feminists have observed that the image of the human is framed according to gendered values and that it is "man that is the subject of pure becoming and who casts the

feminine as the material otherness through which he can ultimately arrive at himself as creative self-determination, the giver of forms" (p. 140).

Haynes (2014) argues that new materialism prioritises activity or passivity and therefore sustains a dualistic interpretation of the active/passive distinction traditionally associated with gendered stereotypes. This is supported by Colebrook (2008) who argues that materialism insists that life is always about striving, potentiality and actualising a particular form and as a result that maintains the gendered dualism that is passive female/active male. Colebrook (2008) sees this passive vitalism as a life that is not seen as one that seeks to actualise form, or one that endeavours to increase its creative productivity, but instead, it is an organic, machinic life, which liberates the concept of the lifeform from the grounds of the organism. Colebrook (2008) suggests that this helps reconfigure the relationship between nature and culture as culture would be seen to be an extension of nature but through its very materiality. Poststructuralist and postmodern philosophies have shown the extent to which culture (and language) are implicated in policies and power and therefore work to establish social norms in relation to gender (Ibid).

'The body' has been a topic of feminist writings since the publication of de Beauvoir's (2015) *The Second Sex* in 1949, and it could be argued that feminist theory examines discourse about the body as opposed to the material reality of bodies and worldly practices. Some scholars are seeking to reclaim matter to feminist theory, informed by the biological and physical sciences to drive a more material turn (Haynes, 2014). New materialism, therefore, could be seen as being good for feminism, as it could overturn the image of inert matter and therefore collapse the gender hierarchy that sees woman as passive body and man as active mind (Colebrook, 2008).

3.5   Everydayness and Practice

Everydayness was first noted in a lecture by Heidegger where he described it as the initial position but not the phenomenological foreground of the study (Dahl, 2023). Heidegger suggests that phenomena are not for everyone as something will not show themselves initially and may remain concealed and covered up (Dahl, 2023). Heidegger believes that everydayness is important for self-understanding and is indispensable because all "genuine understanding, interpreting and communication, rediscovery and new appropriation come about in it, out of it, and against it" (Heidegger, 2010, p. 163).

Everydayness is used to understand what Mauksch et al. (2017) argue are the contradictory aspects of human practice and the subtle workings of power. The approach is used to understand the social and how this is shaped and being shaped through everyday practice (Ibid). Mauksch et al. (2017) suggest that in studying everydayness this can help understanding of organisations as entities in the making which are reproduced through backgrounded mundane activities and the social that emerges through the work people enact in their daily routine. Mauksch (2016) argues that this can also provide opportunities to identify the macro in micro, the everyday work of leaders in order to understand the everyday worlds of leaders, and from the micro to the macro to understand the ways that individuals reproduce discourse from their most private records (Dey, 2014). Mauksch et al. (2017) suggest that it allows for the acceptance of some of the paradoxes, complexities and complications of social reality, through reframing from determined and simple representations thus allowing for reality to emerge as people enact their daily routine which helps understanding of everyday practice.

3.6   ANT and Practice-based Theorising

Practice-based theorising is not a unified theory but a broad array of theoretical approaches that offers a new way of understanding and explaining social and organisational phenomena (Nicolini, 2012). Practice theory stems from the view that the world is in an ongoing state of

change and is interconnected, where objects are foregrounded as a result of ongoing activities and complex machinations. Nicolini (2012) argues that practice-based approaches lie in their capacity to describe important characteristics of the world we inhabit as something that is routinely made and re-made in practice using our bodies, discourse and tools. Rouse (2007) proposes that a practice-based view offers a remedy to the problems left unresolved by other traditions, particularly describing the world in terms of irreducible dualisms between actor/system, body/mind, social/material, and theory/action. Practice-based approaches have the capacity to disperse such dualisms (Nicolini, 2012).

Defining practice is problematic, as there is not one agreed definition. One forwarded by MacIntyre (1981, p. 187) defines practice as a

> coherent and complex form of socially established co-operative human activities through which goods internal to that form of activity are realised in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence where appropriate to, and practically definitive of, that form of activity, with the results that human powers to achieve excellences, and human conceptions of the end of goods involved, are systematically extended.

Meanwhile, Schatzki (2001, p. 3) understands practices to be "embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organised around shared practical understanding". Reckwitz (2002) argues that practices are a routinised way in which bodies are moved, subjects are treated, objects are handled, things are described, and the world is understood. Considering these definitions, MacIntyre (1981) focuses on cooperative human activities and Reckwitz (2002) on the routine work of people and how objects are handled. Both focus more on the human aspects of practice and do not fully consider the sociomateriality of practice. In contrast, Schatzki's (2001) definition promotes practice as being embodied and materially mediated,

which takes into account the tools and other material entities that are central to organisational actors, to activity and to knowledge (Svabo, 2009). Using Schatzki's (2001) description of practice provides space in which to understand how practice relates to knowing which emerges in the doings and sayings that make up practice (Olohan, 2017). Knowing is an enacted capability, which suggests that the competencies and capabilities of the organisation are not fixed or embodied in areas such as human resources, technological artefacts, financial assets, or infrastructure capital. Rather, they are constituted in everyday in the ongoing and situated practices of members of the organisation (Orlikowski, 2002). Gherardi (2019) agrees and describes knowledge as a practical accomplishment and knowing and learning as a situated practice.

A practice-based standpoint therefore offers a basis upon which to study the practices of leaders in social enterprise, as this enables leadership to be seen as relational, involving people and things, rather than through individual agency (Raelin, 2016). Raelin (2020) showed how adopting a leadership-as-practice approach offered a chance to show leadership beyond the individual level in order to track the multi-intersectional networks that occur in everyday work and to uncover tacit processes that contribute to this to help get us closer to the lived reality that people do rather than what they say they do".

Adopting a material turn, everdayness and ANT challenges the leadership practice discourse related to social enterprises. The material turn considers the agency and influence of the objects and materials shaping leadership practices and examines how multifarious objects mediate leadership interacts and contribute to the enactment of leadership (Shrum and Kilburn, 2018). Everydayness focuses on the everyday practices that shape the social life and helps explore how routines, interactions and objects influence leadership enactment (Dey, 2014). Adopting a sociomaterial, ANT, view helps to consider the messiness and co-agency involved in leadership (Fenwick et al., 2011) and to understand the processes and dynamics of leadership. It enables

the researcher to understand the assemblages of things–people that are necessary for the enactment of practice and to gain a more complete picture of the richness and fluid and dynamic and often precarious nature of leadership in everyday practice (Law, 2007). The approach can help shift the discourse away from discrete competencies and instead to a more fluid repertoire of capabilities to help identify the practices required by leaders.

Through integrating the material turn, everydayness and ANT to examine leadership helps understand leadership as a sociomaterial phenomenon. It foregrounds the way materials and everyday work shapes leadership work whilst recognizing the agency of both human and nonhuman actors within leadership assemblages. In the next section, I describe Latour's (2005) concept of *'follow the actors'*, which was one influential heuristic that I used to analyse the data. Later in the chapter, I outline assemblages, translation and other heuristics to understand translation.

3.7   Follow the Actors

The central concern of ANT is how actors mobilise, juxtapose and hold together the actors with which they are composed (Law, 1992). Latour (1986) suggests that actors are not limited to humans but encompass both humans and nonhumans, and that actors are made to act by a large web of mediators that flow in and out of it" (Latour, 2005). Latour (2005) uses the term 'follow the actors' to examine actors and what makes them act. These actors can be both active and passive. Latour (2005) utilises the terms 'intermediary' to describe an actor that faithfully carries action or intention, and 'mediator' to illustrate the actions carried elsewhere and at other times. Latour (2005) uses these notions to illustrate how these actors can be both active and passive, and how actors are not only shaped by other actors, but they can also be reshaped. Examining leadership practices using these concepts helps foreground the intermediaries entangled in leaders' practice' as well as the translation of these intermediaries into mediators

able to modify meaning and create complex associations influencing and shaping leaders' practices.

Following the actors requires the mapping of connections to trace the movements to understand how each actor is recruiting (or repelling) others. Latour (2005) suggests that this mapping requires researchers 'to trudge like an ant', and look closely to foreground new actors, details and circumstance to emerge and to keep everything flat to be able to trace connections, as there are no longer local or global sites, only those that are more or less connected with other sites. Through tracing these connections and interactions and identifying the durability of these connections, it is possible to determine the power and relevance of each actor (Latour, 2005). In a study performed by Kamp (2018), an Australian government policy was followed to understand how this became networked with other actors to illustrate that the more allies the policy has the more it becomes real and that anything can be an actor, including a leader. Following actors in my study, funding letters, project planners and dashboards helped to foreground who-what is enacting leadership in social enterprises. Using the 'object interview questions' forwarded by Adams and Thompson (2016) to interview these actors, I was able to catch insightful glimpses of actors in action, as it performs and mediates the gestures and understandings of its human actor, and as it associates with others. Adams and Thompson (2016), in their book on interviewing objects in a digital world, argue that the process of interviewing an object enables objects to be given a voice to make them available for critical analysis. In the next section, I describe how the negotiations of human and nonhuman actors are stabilised to become assemblages.

3.8   Assemblages

Within ANT, the term 'network' is used to describe the assembling of human and nonhuman actors which are held together through negotiations and interactions to "produce force and other effects: knowledge, identities, rules, routines, behaviours, new technologies and

instruments, regulatory regimes, reforms, illnesses and so forth" (Fenwick et al., 2011, p. 10). It is due to the ability of these actors to act and the tracing of the negotiations and effects of actors that it is possible to see how these entities are assemblages and that ongoing work is required to sustain their linkages (Fenwick and Edwards, 2010). Using the notion of assemblages within the research is a way to see leadership practices through an enactment of human and nonhuman actors that are held together, and manage to hold together networks that produce force and other effects: knowledge, identities, routines, behaviours, policies (Fenwick and Edwards, 2010).

An assemblage consists of heterogeneous actors whose union comes solely from the fact that they work together as a collective to produce something (Feely, 2019). An assemblage is always a one-off, due to the continual influencing of both human and nonhuman actors as a result of relations constantly changing which means that any specific assemblage is always unique and result in a different outcome Bloome, 2012). The assemblages or networks that come together are composed of people and nonhumans - machines, texts or any other material (Law, 1992). This thesis seeks to foreground leaders' practices through examining the human (leaders) and nonhuman actors (project planners, funding letters) that shape these practices. In the next section, I shall show how actor-networks are actors and how these networks who are also actors are transformed through processes of translation.

3.9   Translation

An actor-network is assembled through the process of translation and all the actors are enrolled into a network by this process. Translation examines how a network comes to be and how it stabilises or falls apart, and is typically used to show how actors become indispensable or not to the networks in which they circulate in or to which they contribute. Callon (1986) proposes the sociology of translation to show how an actor-network is created and how actors take on certain roles within the assemblage in relation to one another. The process of translation is not just a

matter of transportation through a medium but is an ongoing transformation (Latour, 1986) enacted in specific, situated practices (Hultin et al., 2021). The ongoing transformation is not caused by the starting energy, but rather as a result of the consequence of the energy given to the idea by everyone [mediator] in the chain who does something with it, shaping it according to their different projects (Latour, 2005). Callon (1986) identifies four 'moments' of *translation*: *'problematisation', 'interessement', enrolment* and *mobilisation of allies. 'Problematisation'* relates to a problem being recognised, for example, in Callon's study of scallop fishing in St Brieuc Bay, the primary actors were the marine biologists who proposed the development of a conservation strategy which would have a long-term positive impact for the fishermen. At this stage there is normally a focal actor that defines the interest of other actors with their own interests. *'interessement'* signifies to be interested, which is to be in between (Callon, 1986). In Callon's (1986) example, *'interessement'* seeks to define the identities of actors. '*Enrolment*' is a process of aligning the interests of actors. For Callon (1986), these were the fishermen, the scientific colleagues and the scallops. The *mobilisation of allies* signifies a spokesperson acting as a primary actor to mobilise other actors into action. For Callon (1986), an example would be how a number of representatives were given approval for the restocking of scallops on behalf of the fishermen. However, translation is not always successful. Callon (1986) insists that actors do not always comply with the lead actor and that dissidence can happen as other actors question or reject the roles imposed on them. Using Callon's (1986) concept is one way of understanding translation and is a key concept in this thesis. The concept of translation is used within the data analysis for this thesis to foreground the practices by leaders in social enterprises. It is also used as a sensibility whereby actors are followed, and the connections and relations across the assemblages explored. I also draw on the later work of Law (2007) and Mol's (2002) notions of 'fluidity', which consider how objects differ from one practice to another but are still able hold their relations in place, and multiple realities, which suggests that "there is not a single reality on which there are different perspectives"; rather, there is a shift in the notion

of reality, one that is done and enacted rather than observed and is seen by a diversity of watching eyes while itself remaining untouched in the centre, reality is manipulated by means of various tools in the course of diversity of practices (Mol, 1999).

To further understand translations, other heuristics are used in analysis, including, *'matters of fact', 'matters of concern'* and *'centres of calculation'*. Taking each of these in turn, with *'matters of fact'*, Latour (2005) suggests that these are like individual data points and, as a result, these provide only a partial rendering of reality. For example, the project planner can be considered one of several 'matters of fact', as it provides information on project performance. However, it does not describe what sort of agencies are circulating in the assemblage. In contrast, *'matters of concern'* (Latour, 2005) occur where facts gather and are integrated with things and connect with our lives to affect agency and entail a sense of uncertainty and fluidity. 'Matters of fact' are more stable assemblages and shift to become matters of concern when the project planner connects with, for example, manager 'reports' and the leadership team to gain agreement on the final project planner. DiSalvo (2014) regards gaining such agreements as expressions of matters of concern, making them more accessible to others. For *'centres of calculation'*, Latour (1987) posits that this allows for the illustration of knowledge production as it is situated in particular locations and linked to other places, mainly through circulatory movements. An example of such 'centres of calculation' would be the project planner, which directly shapes reporting in the dashboard through the pie chart, the spider-diagram and the table (discussed below in Section 5.4). Foregrounding 'matters of fact' helps to demonstrate how assemblages have become stablised, and studying 'centres of calculation' is a way to unsettle and work in the realm of matters of concern.

In ANT, assemblages are continuously growing and transforming through a process of translation in which an assemblage progressively takes shape through the enrolment of actors who remain faithful with the objectives of those who are exercising control and translation is

achieved (Callon, 1986; Law, 1992). According to Law (1999), translation is one of the central aspects of the ANT argument; that when an (assemblage) object is performed, so too is an assemblage created. Researchers use translation to question the way these networks are established, expanded, strengthened or break down and use translation to help explore these questions. A study performed by Shan et al. (2021) used translation to explore learning and knowledge transfer in health between Canada and China. They found that it was the network that was created through the enrolment and mobilisation of actors, texts, technologies, and translators, the project coordinator and Canadian practitioners with Chinese heritage that enabled the delivery of teaching and learning across language, place and culture.

While using ANT to foreground leaders' practices, I needed to remain aware that this is moving ANT away from its foundations as part of the sociology of translation to another discipline through considering leadership practice as entanglements of human and nonhuman actors. I did this through foregrounding actors that were more or less powerful, such as the contract and the dashboard, to understand what work the assemblage of human and nonhuman actors were trying to do, recognising that leadership practices are continually made, unmade and remade. Landri (2021) in his study into educational reforms shows how using ANT can be successfully used to understand the enactment of educational reforms through drawing attention to the negotiations of human and nonhuman entities that come together and establish connection. These concepts emerge as being pivotal in guiding my analysis. In the next section, a summary is provided of ANT and practice-based theory.

3.10   Summary of the Theoretical Landscape

In this section, I have set out the theoretical approach to this ANT-led, practice-based study to bring a new lens through which leadership in social enterprise practices may be viewed and understood. I have also considered feminism, new materialism, posthumanism object orientated ontology within this context.

I have outlined the key heuristics adopted for the analysis: 'follow the actors', assemblages, translation, and other key heuristics. I have shown how an ANT lens enables leadership to be viewed not only through traditional leadership approaches normally associated with the sector but also to understand leadership differently through considering how human and nonhuman actors perform and shape the assemblages through practices which are enacted in social enterprise. In the next chapter, I set out the methodology I adopted for the study. It describes how an ethnographic, ANT-led approach has been used to identify, examine and analyse leadership practices. The methodology was used to explore how leaders develop their practices as they seek to negotiate the complex relations and environments in their everyday practices in the social enterprise sector.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology and Methods

4.1   Introduction

This chapter sets out the ethnographic methods adopted for this study to present a practice-based, sociomaterial study of leaders' practices that are mobilised in leading a social enterprise in Scotland. It outlines the research settings, how access was negotiated, the participants recruited, and how participant consent was achieved. It describes how ethical and legal issues were addressed, attends to issues related to undertaking 'elite' interviews with senior leaders, and sets out how matters relating to ensuring confidence and trust in the research were achieved.

In this chapter, I also describe the methods that were created to enable the exploration of the knowledge, practices, actors and materialities involved in leading a social enterprise. I use this mixed methods approach to allow me to attune to and tell 'a story' (Mol, 2002) about the practices enacted. I also describe how both thematic analysis and ANT is used to analyse the data set. Furthermore, the chapter also details the impact that I had on the research, given my existing experience as a leader who had worked in the sector, outlines my approach to reflexivity, transparency and accountability, and describes how this was built into the research approach. It concludes with a discussion on how the data were analysed.

4.2   Ethnographic Methods

In the previous chapters, I outlined how leadership in social enterprises can be understood as being practice-based and how knowing and doing are inextricably linked. Therefore, in my aim to better understand leaders' practices, it was necessary for me to gain an insight into their ways of *doing*. To do so, I had to engage with a methodology that would enable me to observe leaders' doings in situ over a period of time. To inform my approach, I considered an ethnographic, ANT-led study by Mulcahy and Perillo (2011) which explored management and leadership practices

in colleges of further education and schools in Australia. The data in their study were collected using surveys, interviews, observations and case studies, which were used to closely examine the detail in what leaders and managers were doing in situ and to identify new modes of relations between human and nonhuman actors. Mulcahy and Perillo (2011, p. 139) argue that, empirically, this allowed for "the tracing of specific modes of organising management and leadership and how these specificities are management politically, ethically, socially and materially". Their data are presented as vignettes, allowing the outcomes to be related to the context, which ensured the research asked *how* things occurred rather than why.

Informed by this study, and further studies that adopted an actor-network theory led ethnographic approach including Booth et al. (2015) which explored the relationship of nurses and technology in practice, and another by Kamp (2018) that explored system leadership in education, and my own understanding of ANT concepts, I adopted an ethnographic approach involving some of the same data collection approaches, for example, interviews, observations and anecdotes, as this would help me to answer questions about 'what is going on here?' Such an approach allowed for the fieldwork to be planned and designed with ANT to help attune to and notice the mundane details of practice (Fenwick and Edwards, 2010). Traditionally, the ANT-inspired ethnographic approach spans management theory, sociology, organisation studies and cultural studies (Neyland, 2008). Denzin (1997) describes ethnography as being both a product and a process, and an examination and account of the lives that the researcher has written about. In contrast, Law and Mol (1995) describes ethnography as being about seeing, hearing, noticing, sensing, smelling and then scouring what has been noticed, and trying to make sense of it.

Using an ethnographic approach enabled me to immerse myself fully into the social enterprise sector for an extended period of time, observing behaviour, listening to conversations and asking questions (Clark et al., 2021). Doing so allowed me to observe the ways in which events

developed over time or the ways in which different elements of a social system (behaviours, values, beliefs, and so on) interconnect (Bryman, 2001). It enabled an understanding of the actual experience beyond the verbal descriptions offered by participants and helped question some of the taken-for-granted, back-grounded aspects of everyday practices. Schatzberg (2008) sees this as a way to draw attention to things and the material and to make visible the invisible, convert silence to sound, start to question the unquestioned, and unearth the politics of practising at the everyday level.

An ANT approach therefore lends itself to ethnographic methods as both provide the space and time for the researcher to pay attention to the micro and mundane practices that are enacted and to see and feel what is happening in a leader's everyday world, which is often messy, complex and slippery. It supports Milne et al.'s (2015) view, from their study of junior doctors' capacity to practice, in that leaders' roles are fluid in the execution of their practice, requiring manifold interactive re-negotiations throughout their daily practice. Therefore, adopting an ethnographic approach meant that the research had to be fluid in nature to enable the research to emerge and not be limited to a design set out at the start. This is fundamental in an ANT-led research study, as it is through following the actors that the interplay of human and nonhuman actors are traced (Latour, 2004), which enables leadership practices to be foregrounded . Using an interpretive approach also enabled the analysis of the data to be more recursive, rather than linear, thus enabling the circling back to earlier steps in light of new data or themes that needed further investigation.

To achieve this, I ensured that, throughout the study, the research questions, methodological choices and questions and probes were adapted and changed as the process unfolded. This is consistent with an ANT-led approach as it enabled the research to be undertaken iteratively (MacLeod et al., 2019). This was important as, just over two months into the data collection stage, COVID-19 appeared, and society went into lockdown, which meant that I had to move to

using Microsoft Teams to interview participants and attend meetings. It also resulted in adjustments to the research to take account of this, which in turn shaped the outcome of the research. These changes included the updating of my research questions as a result of COVID-19 to allow for the further exploration of what this meant for leaders, and additional exploration of leaders' practices during fieldwork as a result of unexpected and powerful nonhuman actors suddenly appearing in the data.

Table 2: Adjustments to Research due to COVID-19

Activity	Change
Semi-structured interviews	3 were changed from face to face to using Teams
Meetings with senior teams/Board	2 were changed from faced to face to using Teams
Follow up discussions/requests for documents etc.	Ongoing engagement for 7 weeks through Teams to follow up on discussions or to request documentation

Bryman (2001), in his book on social research methods, sees fieldwork as a way to become submerged in a social setting with a general research focus in mind and gradually to formulate a narrower emphasis by making as many observations of that setting as possible and to allow for flexibility and changes of direction. Throughout the research process, I continued to 'follow the actors' and trace the social connections in new and interesting ways (Smith et al., 2017). I also foregrounded any tensions that I observed to discover how these relations unfolded and to look at how these influenced, informed and shaped practice. Accepting the need to adjust my approach as the research process progressed resulted in the final design of the research presented here not fully materialising until nearer the end of the study and to allow for actors to be foregrounded through the data collection to be traced in order to surface leaders' practices. These assumptions are consistent with an ANT-based approach, as it accepts that

reality does not precede practices but is brought into being through them (Mulcahy and Perillo, 2011). In the next section, I shall consider the philosophical issues related to this research study.

4.3   Ontology and Epistemology

The choice of philosophy to underpin this research provides the direction for the research (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Setting out my philosophical framework provides an additional layer of credibility and rigour to the research enquiry (Mays and Pope, 2000). Guba and Lincoln (1989) describe ontology as a basic set of beliefs that guides action. All research is guided by a set of feelings and beliefs that are personal to the researcher, in relationship to the world and how it should be studied and understood (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Ontologically, this positions the researcher to view the 'truth' as socially constructed, made up of social actors and perceptions, and is therefore, subjective and may change (Hennink et al., 2020). The philosophy seeks to understand how reality is formed and whether multiple realities exist (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988). The socially constructive ontology argues that there is not one objective reality but there are many realities created and shaped by the experience of individuals and actors (Bryman and Bell, 2015). The focus is on understanding and not explanation. The social construction paradigm enables the phenomenon to be explored in its live context, which is realised by the participants who construct meaning to it (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

Adopting this position means that the research has rejected objectivism and the single truth forwarded in positivism. In rejecting the positivist philosophy, the researcher does not see the area of study as a subject that would produce law-like generalisations similar to those produced by the physical and natural scientists (Remenyi et al., 1998), as there are no patterns, causes and effects that positivism would highlight and no single truth to be found. Positivism is normally associated with quantitative methods which are likely to have more rigid methodological sampling and conditions (Carson et al., 2001).

This forwards an ontological position of knowledge being socially constructed and that there are no certainties, only social constructs. However the socially constructed approach does not take into account the nonhuman actors enacted in practice. This means that the social (human) is foregrounded, and the nonhuman actors are disregarded, silenced, and made invisible. Therefore, in contrast to a social constructivist approach, and in order to explore how leadership practices are enacted in practice, the complexity of these material actors are taken into account. This study instead adopts a relational ontology with a view to move materiality away from something distinct, bounded and separate from human agency and intentionality, to an understanding that it is entangled and co-constituted through agency (Hultin and Mähring, 2017; Hultin and Introna, 2018). Law (2004) argues that realties are constructed not by people but in the networks of human and nonhuman actors that enact practice. In this view, agency is constantly forming and transforming from within the act itself (Barad, 2007) – in the assemblages of the social (human) and material (nonhuman) actors who, together, enact these practices.

Informed by this understanding, knowledge is therefore performed through the sociomaterial relations between all actors (human and nonhuman). Law and Singleton (2000) argue that there is a lot of energy expended in this relational ontology by different actors in order to maintain connections and to act in certain ways, and that nothing is ever in a final state but performed in the moment. Therefore, there is no social order, only attempts at ordering (Law, 1994). This means that attention is paid to actors' actions and intentionality, namely, ways of acting, by the circulating flow of agency enacted in practice (Barad, 2007). Taking a performative view, as opposed to a constructivist view, recognises the practices of observing, experiencing, thinking, theorising, measuring and knowing and material practices of intra-acting as part of the world (Barad, 2007). Therefore, knowledge cannot be separated from the practices that are performed to enact it (Ingold, 2015), and that knowledge is not obtained by creating representations at a

distance but directly through the material engagement with the world (Barad, 2007). This differs from the Cartesian view, which insists on the duality between mind and body, separating the social and the material, and which views knowledge as being something that is only attainable by using human agency.

Adopting a sociomaterial ANT approach shifts the focus from individual actors and their actions to the flow of sociomaterial practices that enact such doings (Butler, 1997). Research does not begin with a specific end in scope, nor does it involve an analysis aimed at unravelling concerns that cause certain actors to act in specific ways or to look for a specific outcome. Research in these terms contests the predisposition for dualism by instead beginning 'in the middle' of the flow of practice and concentrating on the performative flow of agency which establishes a set of conditions that render certain modes of being and acting to be accepted as meaningful (Hultin and Introna, 2018).

Social enterprises therefore need to be studied from within to understand the leadership practices enacted as it perceives the case study social enterprise as a changing phenomenon, and leadership is being performed through the entanglement of human and nonhuman actors. The mode of enquiry must therefore be one that adapts to its surroundings, signifying that there has to be fluidity in the research. Adopting a qualitative approach enables the understanding and interpretation of interactions between people and things as opposed to charting causes and associated effects (Neuman, 2000). This approach enables the researcher to produce reflexive accounts, not explanatory models or theoretical proposals (Mantere and Ketokivi, 2013).

4.4   Positionality

I recognise that I was not independent within the study, and that I was inextricably part of the social reality being researched, so it was important that I considered my positionality in the research. Positionality helps us to consider who we are, based on our experience, and influences

what or how we know (Tierney, 1993). 'Me' as the knower, therefore, influences what is known

in this research – leadership practices in social enterprise. From a leadership standpoint, it is

also important to acknowledge that a leader's identity is overlapped with, and related to, the

way in which individuals construct leadership, as this is based on multiple aspects, including

identity and philosophies reflected in their life experiences (Kezar, 2002).

This positionality acknowledges that individuals have multiple, overlapping identities and make

meaning from different aspects of their identity, such as professional standing and social class

(Alcoff, 1988). As a result, the power relations can change with social categories remaining fluid,

dynamic and affected by social and historical changes (Alcoff, 1988). This impacts on the power

dynamics between the researcher and the participants (Day, 2012). The semi-structured

interview questions were set by me. Karnieli-Miller et al. (2009) argue that this means the

researcher possesses the initial power and that the research participant might feel influenced

by the hierarchical imbalance of the researcher and participant relationship. In this research, I

have tried to address any power imbalance through creating an environment where leaders felt

that they were having a conversation in a safe and confidential space. My positionality was also

inseparable from the research and data analysis and interpretation of meaning, which was also

affected by my subconscious and conscious preconceptions about the participants involved in

the study (Bourke, 2014).

It is impossible to fully eradicate subjectivity from this research, so it was important to

acknowledge and recognise the impact of my background and experiences on the research and

to put into place strategies and tools to mitigate any personal bias within the process (McLean

and Leibing, 2018). I acknowledged through the research that I was an insider, having had direct

experience as a leader of working in a social enterprise (Chavez, 2008), and could therefore

understand the challenges that existed within the sector (O'Connor and Baker, 2017). Some

scholars are critical about the objectivity of insiders, as they argue that there is potential bias

due to views being projected on participants (Ortlipp, 2008; Greene, 2014). To help mitigate the risk of my positionality, I kept a research diary, which helped me to reflect on the research activities and to continue to review my actions and interactions.

4.5   Credibility and Trustworthiness

The credibility of this study was assured through aligning with Tracy's (2010) concept of the Eight 'Big Tent' criteria for excellent research – a worthy topic, carried out with rich rigour, is sincere, has credibility and resonance, makes a significant contribution, is ethical and has meaningful coherence. Tracy (2010) suggests that worthy topics can come from timely personal or societal events. As outlined in Section 1.2.1, this research was stimulated through a project undertaken through my professional practice year as part of my Doctorate in Education, which stimulated my interest in practice-based approaches.

Strong rigour was promoted by ensuring that explanations and descriptions were rich and generated through the necessary variety of theoretical concepts, data sources, contexts and examples (Tracy, 2010). This rigour was achieved through the adoption of a mixed methods ethnographic approach, using interviews, observations and document analysis to generate data from leaders through their everyday work. Also, adopting the theoretical concept of ANT to underpin this research as this afforded the opportunity to move away from what Michael (2016) sees as being the 'all seeing knower' and being open to the possibilities of following everyday practices rather than providing accounts of what took place. For Hine (2000), an ethnographic study such as this is presented as neither truth nor a fiction, but an account of an ethnographically constructed field of interaction. According to Latour (2005, p. 138), a 'good account' should "perform the social in the precise sense that some of the participants in the action – through the controversial agency of the author – will be assembled in such a way that they can be collected together". The story in this research illustrates the enactment of leadership which developed and changed as I became more entangled with a wide range of

heterogeneous actors. This led me to re-considering my research questions on an ongoing basis as data were generated, as this allowed for what Whatmore (2003) argues is a way to keep questions open through the research process by insisting on the produced-ness of 'data' and the creative and sometimes contrary possibilities generated in and by exchanges between the researcher and researched. It was not possible in using ANT to know what the outcomes of the research could be. Remaining open to the possibilities through the generation of materials, the process of performing the analysis, and the telling of the leadership story enabled the thesis to be a faithful reflection of leaders' practices.

Sincerity was assured through considering validity with the ethnographic approach adopted. To achieve this, I adopted a reflexive approach (Cho and Trent, 2006) as outlined below in Section 4.9. This was achieved through my commitment towards transparency, reflexivity and criticality to provide good accounts (Latour, 2005). Transparency was achieved through keeping an audit trail of all my research activities and decisions (Creswell and Miller, 2000), outlining how I engaged with the context, the level of participation, acknowledgement of participant input/colleague support, my time in the field, and the challenges I faced (Tracy, 2010).

Throughout the data collection and analysis process, this reflexivity supported the reasons for choosing to follow some actors whilst leaving others silent. Law and Singleton (2013) suggest that, in order to decide what to leave out, consideration should be given to who is powerful and that these choices partly depend on our own agendas (theoretical, political, personal), and partly on how we are being led by our ethnography and on what people are saying.

To some extent, this research was based on my own ontological and epistemological assumptions, and the focus I chose for the data I collected. Self-reflexivity was achieved through recording observations, collecting fieldnotes and critically discussing the research with my supervisors, who actively questioned my approach, the data, and the subsequent analysis. I also

reached out to other doctoral students who had undertaken ANT-inspired research to discuss approaches to data collection and analysis which informed my thinking.

Credibility was assured through using detailed descriptions, crystallisation and multiple voices (Tracy, 2010). Geertz (1973) suggests that thick descriptions involve an in-depth illustration that provides culturally situated meanings along with abundant detail (Bochner, 2000). This was achieved through ensuring that there was sufficient time in the field to collect the data (see Section 4.8) and through showing the complexity of the data collected by providing sufficient detail (Tracy, 2010).

The terms validity and triangulation are often used in describing the quality of ethnographic studies (Bryman, 2001), but this would not be appropriate for this study, as this implies that there is a fixed goal for the study (Settlage et al., 2005) and assumes that there is one single truth waiting to be discovered. Richardson and St. Pierre (1994) provide an alternative approach for postmodern research – crystallisation – as this recognises that there are far more than three sides from which to approach the world. As Denzin (2012, p. 2) writes, "Crystallization seeks to produce thick, complex interpretation … [it] deploys multiple forms of analysis, reflexively embeds the researcher's self in the inquiry process and eschews positivist claims to objectivity". The use of crystallisation in this research helps us to understand the way in which the investigation has been conducted, acknowledges the data under consideration and the goal of the research (Settlage et al. 2005). Ellingson (2009) suggests that crystallization depends upon interweaving, blending, or otherwise and drawing upon more than one genre of expressing data.

Resonance was achieved through ensuring the research had impact through the way the thesis is presented and how it affects the audience (Tracy, 2010) through the provision of good quality narratives that are engaging, vivid and complex and tell a story that moves head and heart

(Bochner, 2000). The study also provides an opportunity for the outcomes to be considered across other contexts to support transferability (Tracy, 2010).

Contribution was achieved through ensuring the study contributes to our understanding of social life (Richardson, 2000), that it extends, builds and critiques subject knowledge, and examines how theories such as ANT make sense in a different context (Tracy, 1995). The research also has heuristic significance, as individuals engaging with the research may act on it in the future. It could also influence others, including policy makers or research participants, to make a change as a result of the thesis, and it provides practically useful knowledge to provide insight into a contemporary problem (Ibid). The overall quality of the thesis was assured through regular and robust feedback sessions with my supervisors, which involved detailed commenting and guidance that were utilised within future drafts and within this final thesis.

This study brought together mixed method ethnographic approaches to generate materials about leaders' practices, which are presented in this thesis, and provides assurance that the mixed methods adopted affords appropriate assurance on the credibility of the study. In the next section, I shall consider the ethical issues related to this research study.

4.6   Ethical Considerations

At the planning stage of my research project, it was important to set out how the ethical and legal aspects related to carrying out the research should be addressed. I did this through considering the implications for the research, having critical discussions with my supervisors, and then completing an application for ethical approval from the General University Ethics Committee, which was submitted and approved prior to starting the research (University of Stirling, 2019). After ethics approval was obtained, I ensured that the issues addressed in the application were discussed at the first set of meetings with the individual Chief Executives who had been invited to participate in the study. At these meetings, I set out the overall approach to

the research and the information on how consent would be obtained, and discussed and agreed how to minimise the impact of the research on senior leaders, given their individual roles and workload. I addressed issues of confidentiality in relation to my access to the field and in the use of sensitive information, matters that would arise during the interview process (Patton, 2001), and the potential access to new or innovative developments. I also considered the use of establishing formal non-disclosure agreements to ensure anonymity. Kaiser (2009), in her article on protecting respondent confidentiality in qualitative research, notes that these agreements are often only offered at the start of the research process to agree confidentiality and obtain informed consent, but cautions that this should not be discussed as the research unfolds or in relation to the data collected. However, in discussing the use of confidentiality agreements and the issues of data with the Chief Executives, both agreed that it was not necessary, as neither were concerned about their individual organisation being identified. However, I have used pseudonyms for each participant to recognise the seniority of roles, although both were not concerned about their individual participation being known.

The recruitment of the Senior Managers for participation in the research was undertaken with agreement and support from each Chief Executive, who were enrolled as *gatekeepers* to facilitate access to potential participants. Once their participation was verbally agreed, the ethical and legal considerations were set out and the gatekeepers were provided with participant recruitment information and guidance for gatekeepers (Appendix 1), a participant information sheet (Appendix 2), a draft email to be sent to potential participants (Chief Executives/Directors/Senior Managers) (Appendix 3) and a participant consent sheet (Appendix 4). These set out the nature of the research, the necessary time commitments and the expectations of both parties (the researcher and the research participants). After confirming with the participant that they understood these expectations, the consent form was signed to

demonstrate agreement between the participants and me, and a copy was retained by both parties.

Once consent was agreed, it was important that I established my credibility early on. I also had to establish trust and confidence with the participants and to assure them that I would uphold the professional researcher values of respectfulness, honesty and transparency throughout the research process. I did this initially through articulating my experience in the sector with the Chief Executives, where I outlined the research that I had already undertaken as part of my professional practice year for my Doctorate in Education. This helped to assure the Chief Executives that I was committed to undertaking the research and that their, and their teams', investment in the research was worthwhile. This was important, as the research required access over a six-month period to be able carry out observations and interviews and to gather documentary information. I also needed to ensure that the participants felt at ease and did not feel constrained when providing information to ensure that they felt comfortable in opening up to provide useful data for the study (Lancaster, 2017). I did this by providing assurance that my interest was in the practices carried out and not in whether what happened was successful. I assured the participants that the data were going to be used for academic purposes only, and that these would be anonymised. However, Lancaster (2017), in his article on confidentiality, anonymity and power relations in elite interviewing, cautions about the challenges of assuring anonymity in research of this nature, due to the ongoing partnerships and professional relationships and networks involved. I approached this issue through not sharing any information between participants and, if questioned, gave only vague responses.

Participants had to be confident that they would not be negatively impacted by the outcomes, hurt in any way through involvement, and that any such issues raised during the research, whether positive or negative, would not be exposed to the public (Bryman, 2001). These later points were key considerations for participants as there are limited numbers of senior leaders

working in larger social enterprises in Scotland. As a result, the individuals who participated could be aligned with the outcomes, which could lead to issues around confidentiality and anonymity due to the challenge of balancing the faithful reporting of findings with potentially exposing respondents identities, or, alternatively, choosing to withhold information to reduce the risk of harm to participants (Lancaster, 2017). Section 4.5.5 below discusses the implications of interviewing elite leaders. In the next section, I shall set out the research questions for this study.

4.7   Research Questions

Following a mixed-method ethnographic approach allowed me to attend to the aims of the research in multiple ways. It allowed the understanding of leadership practices as objects generated in practice (Mol, 2002), and that realities are not explained by practices and beliefs but, are instead produced by them and have a life in relations (Law, 2004, p. 59). It enabled the answering of my research questions which were further redefined after the research process as this had shaped them.

The overarching research question is: What 'practices are leaders in social enterprises enacting in practice? The detailed sub-questions are:

- How do leaders in social enterprises develop practices to enable effective governance by the Board?

- How do leaders in social enterprises cultivate practices to manage delivery?

- How do leaders in social enterprises develop practices to negotiate the complex stakeholder relations to progress the social mission?

In the following section, I describe the practicalities of performing this study and my approach to analysis to tell the stories of the sociomaterial assemblages enacted in the leadership practices within social enterprises.

4.8 Practicalities of the study

This section begins by describing the process of gaining access to the case study social enterprise involved in the research. It then goes on to outline the participants, observations, interviews fieldnotes and document analysis. It concludes by describing my hybrid approach to data analysis using thematic analysis and ANT sensibilities. Data were collected through interviewing six leaders using semi-structured interviews and interviews to the double (Nicolini, 2009), six months of ethnographic observations, the documentary analysis of websites, papers and information from Board and leadership team meetings, organisational strategies, and funding bids (see Appendices 5 and 6).

4.8.1 Negotiating Access to Social Enterprises

The initial interest of this research was to understand the practices enacted by leaders in social enterprises in Scotland. To do so, I required access to particular settings, of varying size and location, as those operating in Scotland practice leadership in a different political and funding environment than those operating in the rest of the UK and globally. I wanted to understand the specific practices that were enacted by leaders who were challenged with navigating a constantly shifting policy and funding environment. I also wanted to ensure that the study considered a social enterprise that had been established for a significant length of time, more than five years, so that it had undergone cycles of transformation, experienced changes to their funding base, offered more than one service, and had an annual turnover of at least one million pounds. This would ensure that leaders had direct experience of leading an organisation over a longer period of time, of managing uncertainty, and of developing new approaches to organisational innovation and sustainability. This would require leaders to have enacted a wide range of leadership practices and had experienced a wide range of nonhuman actors that would have influenced and shaped those practices.

Gaining access to carry out the research within the case study social enterprises was not difficult, as I already had established contacts in the organisations that I could approach. The use of known contacts is widely acknowledged as an effective way to enable access (Gilbert, 2004). However, it was still important that that access was accomplished through an explicit negotiation with a *gatekeeper* (Gilbert, 2004). In this case, this was achieved by making direct contact with the individual Chief Executive from the social enterprise. Although this made the first contact easier, I still had to negotiate who would be involved in the research and agree the access requirements for interviews and observations, the necessary time commitments, and the provision of other documentary information. One case study social enterprise, an Enterprising Non-Profits (ENPs) (Nyssens and Defourny, 2016) was chosen for the study.

- The organisation[5] was established in 1984 is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. It is a large social enterprise and was set up to lift people out of poverty and to build bridges and opportunity for the most vulnerable in society. Every day it supports customers into jobs, works to lift people out of fuel poverty, and to help people coming out of prison to build a better future. It is committed to social justice and a fairer society for all. The organisation's annual turnover was £16,007,204 with unrestricted funds of £7,399,265 (Participant Organisation, 2022). It was set up to deliver services in three broad areas to provide services to customers:
  - **employability services and skills** – programmes included employability programmes in partnership with Capita, Fair Start Scotland with Scottish Government, work coaches for the long term unemployed with the DWP, skills development for newly released prisoners with the Ministry of Justice, volunteering and/or work experience through the National Lottery Community Fund, pathways to employment with Borders Council and online learning and

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[5] Organisation has been anonymized.

community activities through Community Payback Orders. The total number of customers supported was 8,035.

- o **community justice** – programmes delivered in partnership with other partners including Sacro, Apex Scotland, SAMH and Families Outside included mentoring of male prisoners prior to the return to the community and for women leaving prison, a further with St Giles Trust to deliver throughcare support, and contracts for personal wellbeing, accommodation and women to support people from prison back to the community. The total number support was 4,814.

- o **energy advice and advocacy** – services included advice and advocacy support to control energy bills and keep warm and well at home, a crisis fund to support homes feel safer due to the energy price rise, mentoring of people and family to advise on how to use energy at home to reduce energy bills and minimise their carbon footprint, and home energy efficiency programmes. The total number of people supported was 37,844.

The organisation is situated in an office block in Glasgow City Centre. It has a range of funding sources, including the Scottish Government – £6,171,621, National Lottery Community Fund – £2,924,363, Local Authority and Housing Associations – £2,264,094, Skills Development Scotland – £193,700, the Ministry of Justice – £1,592,694, the private sector – £5,364.389, and other funders – £85, 852. It is worth noting that, in this period, the social enterprise sold owned property for the value of £2,030,000.

Initial contact in this case study social enterprise was made by sending an email to the Chief Executive of the organisation to explain the research study and their potential involvement. This was followed up an individual meeting to provide a full outline of the study, the access requirements and information on the time commitments involved. The access required was for

up to seventeen weeks to allow for the interviews, observations and other documentation to be collected. The Chief Executive was very encouraging and fully welcomed his involvement, indicating that he would provide any access required to individuals, teams, meetings and associated documents and processes. He was passionate about the social enterprise sector and indicated that anything that could be done to equip current and future leaders with the practices required to be a leader in the sector would be welcome. The Chief Executive agreed to be my primary host to enable open and flexible access as required. He also agreed to provide introductions to their leadership teams and Board Chair, enabling informed consent and addressing ethical considerations before and during the research process.

4.8.2 Recruiting Participants

Participants (see Table 3) were recruited to this study using a purposeful sampling approach (Bryman, 2001). The approach is widely recognised as participants are invited based on their roles, knowledge, insight, and on those who are willing and able to discuss their experiences (Baillie, 1995; Roper and Shapira, 2000). The initial recruitment of the participants was negotiated with the Chief Executive of the organisation. It was agreed that six leaders would be selected, the Chief Executive, and four leaders who reported directly to the Chief Executives and the Board Chair. The Chief Executive was enthusiastic and pleased to provide their expertise and perspectives on the research and agreed to nominate senior leaders and to invite the Board Chair to participate after discussing the purpose of the study and the research questions with them. There were few barriers found in accessing the leaders once the approval was given from the Chief Executive. These leaders were key participants and would be followed as key actors in the research but, as this was an ANT-led study, other actors, such as the project planner, funding letters, invitations and contracts, were also followed to understand the sociomateriality of leadership.

Table 3: Participants

Role	Pseudonym	Male	Female
Chair	John	1	
CEO	George	1	
Senior Finance and Performance Manager	Alyson		1
Contract Performance Manager	Michelle		1
Governance Manager	Kerry		1
Development Manager	Hamish	1	

All the participants agreed without reservation to be engaged in the research as required. No one withheld any consent for inclusion, participation or being named in the study. However, as these were elite participants, I also considered the impact that their involvement in the research might have on them as individuals and on their organisations and the potential for their input to become known, which was important to consider from a participant's perspective. Lancaster (2017) identifies how the leaders' knowledge and accounts could be potentially scrutinised, with the potential that they might then enact particular 'performances' from participants who wish to appear knowledgeable in front of a critical audience.

These leaders provided rich insight into the sector, as all were directly involved in social enterprises for a minimum of two years and had been in existence for over five years, and both covered a wide range of services, including employability, training and development, criminal justice and fuel poverty.

Overall, one participant was involved in observations only, one participant in interviews to the double only, and four were involved in observations and the semi-structured interviews. Participants also provided a range of documentation, which included six months of leadership

team meeting papers and minutes and two quarterly board 'reports' and minutes, an organisational action plan, and two public sector funding bids. All of these were confidential and not publicly available. Other information received, which was in the public domain, included the company website, strategic plans, and two sets of information packs that were provided to clients in the social enterprises. All of these documents were provided for review and analysis.

4.8.3   Interviews

The use of interviews is consistent with the interpretive nature of this study (Braun and Clarke, 2006, 2021a), which recognises that knowledge is socially constructed and is created through the interactions between the interviewer and the interviewee, and which is widely used in ethnographic research. The interviews were conducted with six people and took place during the period of observations, which were used to help build trust and to develop a genuine exchange of views (Heyl, 2001). This was important for an ANT study, as the interviewees needed to guide the study as they know what they do and how and why they do it" (Latour, 1999). I was also aware that it was important that leaders were able to open up and discuss their experiences and knowledge and to consider the actors that were influencing their practices.

Once a leader had agreed to participate in the research, as described above, individual participants were invited to interview sessions at a pre-arranged time. The interviews were semi-structured and lasted an hour-and-a-half and were carried out either on-site at or where this not possible, on Microsoft Teams. Every endeavour was taken to complete the interviews within the agreed time to ensure as little disruption to the participants as possible.

The interviews were organised around an interview schedule to enable variation in the sequence of questions as required and involved a set of semi-structured questions. The questions were structured around five broad questions with a range of additional probes to gain an understanding of the everyday practices carried out by leaders and to gain a detailed

understanding of the nonhuman actors involved. Bryman (2001) describes how this semi-structured approach allows some latitude to ask further questions in response to what is seen as significant replies. Costley et al. (2011), in their book on doing workplace research, adds that it enables participants more latitude in responding in their own words. This was important, as often comments and anecdotes made outside of the formal interview provide more insight and have an influence on, and can add real value to, the research (Berry, 2002). Nevertheless, there was always the possibility that they would refuse to answer questions or to withdraw approval at the last minute, despite agreeing and signing the consent forms (Liu, 2018). However, this did not happen, as the participants wanted to participate and, importantly, wanted to contribute to the future development of leaders in the sector. It also enabled leaders to have scope to provide a wide range of input and for the practices to unfold during the interview process. All of the interviews were audio-recorded for future transcription purposes with participants' full permission, which enabled me to concentrate fully on the interview questions.

4.8.4   Interviews to the Double

In an ANT-based study, it is important to ensure that the research provides sufficient data on the practices that are carried out by leaders, as these provide the detailed, often less visible, information on the work carried out on a day-to-day basis (Nicolini, 2009). Participants may find it difficult to recall these details as they are often taken for granted. In the second set of interviews, I adopted Nicolini's (2009) method of *interview to the double* as outlined in his article on articulating practice. This technique was used by Scoles (2017) in her doctoral thesis into practices for engineers in the wind industry, and suggests that this is a technique that asks the participants to imagine that the next day a 'double' will come to work in their place, and to avoid betraying the switch, the double must act precisely like the participant. The approach asks the participant to describe the tasks they do on a day-to-day basis. One participant was asked to describe these activities using 'you statements' – you will. The approach provided more detailed

information than a job description, as it provided information on the tasks, decision-making processes, principles and conduct involved in their work environment.

The interview to the double provided rich detail on the micro and mundane tasks that were undertaken. The participants described accounts of real-time activity in which practices unfolded. However, there were challenges with the technique, as both found it difficult to provide comprehensive information on what they did in blocks of time, such as in meetings and time spent at their desks. I followed up these sessions by taking time to observe them going about their day-to-day practices, which I used to ask further questions on the systems, tools, processes, policies and documents with which they engaged. It helped gain an understanding of the nonhuman actors they were encountering and with which they were interacting and that were influencing and shaping their day-to-day practices.

4.8.5 Interviewing Elite Participants

Interviewing senior leaders for this research could have been problematic, as these participants could be seen as elite (Lancaster, 2017). Elite participants can be described as individuals or groups who are apparently closer to power or particular professional expertise (Morris, 2009). It was therefore important to recognise the power and influence that could be at play in such research assemblages. Neal and McLaughlin (2009), in their study of research involving elites, argue that power has been statically defined as residing in the explicit structural positions of either the researcher or the research participant rather than as an ambiguous, fluid, multi-directional dynamic, which can flow unevenly across and between different positions in the research relationship. It was possible, given the nature of the everyday practices of those occupying such senior leadership positions, that such power relations would be enacted, disrupting the balance between the researcher and the participants, and the leaders would seek to exert control over the research (Lancaster, 2017).

However, I did not find this to be a problem during the research process, which may be reflective to some extent of my previous experience of being a leader in the social enterprise sector. Although I did expect more of a challenge in sharing the transcripts as leaders may have wanted to provide further detail or enhance certain points, I found instead that the participants were very willing to participate, as they were used to being asked what they think and having what they think matter in other people's lives (Lancaster, 2017). Similar to Tansey's (2007) findings, from her case study of process tracing and elite interviews, I found that they were also articulate and knowledgeable and spoke freely about their work and were eager to share their perspectives of their challenges and the processes they enacted, often with the aim of 'setting the record straight'. However, I was also aware that they could misrepresent their own positions in ways that raise questions over the reliability of their statements (Tansey, 2007), and may minimise or inflate their own role in relation to an event or process depending on whether they wish to be associated with the issue (Tansey, 2007). Dexter (1970), in his book on elite and specialized interviewing, suggests that one way of dealing with these issues is for researchers to consider whether the interviews are reliable. Dexter (1970) proposes criteria for assessing the collected data, including the style of the leader, their manner, experience and social position, and also the understandability and plausibility, and the responses provided. Taking this into account, I looked across the data set and considered the responses as I was analysing the data. I then pulled out anything that seemed uncertain and put them in an 'othered' category for further exploration. A number of the things that were 'othered' during the analysis stage feature in the findings chapters (Chapters 5, 6, and 7), as these were important in answering the research questions, for example, the project planner.

4.8.6 Participant Observation

Gaining an understanding of the day-to-day practices and activities that took place in both social enterprises was important for this ANT-led research study. Observing leaders in situ provided

an opportunity to observe, listen, watch, think and talk to people until something of interest emerged (Fenwick et al., 2012). Research of leadership practices by Mulcahy and Perillo (2011) showed that it was important to consider what was being enacted and to look for the mundane and micro practices that were undertaken in situ, while taking into account the human and nonhuman actors at play. The observations for this study included attending leadership team and Board meetings, as well as one-to-one sessions with individual leaders to follow actors.

During these sessions, I was able to observe actions and discussions that were routine, impromptu, mundane and taken-for-granted, and to examine the interplay of human and nonhuman actors (Fenwick et al., 2012). Taking the lead from Latour (2005) to 'follow the actors', I looked for actors that impacted and influenced to understand how they mediated the practices of other actors. As both Law (1992) and Latour (1999) emphasise, the importance in ANT-led research is placed on what these actors do and not what they mean. I found that adopting this approach allowed for conceptual freedom, accepting shifts in networks, which enabled the consideration of how actors were involved and were modified by other actors in the network. It allowed the research to be shaped by the actions of the actors with important actors being foregrounded through agency and translation, meaning that they could not have been identified *a priori* (Booth et al., 2015).

4.8.7 Fieldnotes

In my fieldnotes, I captured observations as soon as possible after each session to ensure that they encapsulated the rich detail of what had taken place (Liu, 2018) and that they accurately reflected what had happened. I also noted the changes that had to be made as a result of COVID-19, such as moving the interviews and meetings onto Microsoft Teams. Gilbert (2004, p. 152) in her exploration of researching social life, emphasises the importance of this practice, as

good reportage and observation is marked by accurate description of how

many people were present, who in particular was present, the physical

characteristic of the setting, who said what to whom, who moved in what

way, and a general characteristic of the order of events.

Similar to Gibbs (2007), I found that the fieldnotes were as important as the taped interviews, as the observations provided rich data about the conditions of the session and that some respondents offer a lot more information, sometimes confidential and revealing. Such instances were captured and added additional data to the study. I also used the fieldnotes to reflect on the observations. Gilbert (2004) believes that it is essential to record your personal impressions and feelings. Doing fieldwork has emotional costs, and data needs to be collected on your own attitude and the evolving relationship with others in the setting (see Section 4.6 on reflexivity). To ensure effective record keeping and ease of access, I managed my records electronically, utilising Microsoft Excel spreadsheets to monitor activities, dates and contacts, and Microsoft Word to keep fieldnotes on my interactions and to detail actors of interest or any decisions made about adjustments to future observations throughout the research process.

4.8.8 Document Analysis

To develop an in-depth understanding of the social enterprise, data were collected electronically and in paper form, including publications on strategy and business planning/bids, annual accounts, leadership team meetings, Board meetings, company accounts and text from websites (see Table 4). However, I recognised that this would not provide me with the full picture, as it would not be possible to get a full understanding of the organisation from these materials. I needed to understand more about the information and also gain an insight into the internal processes that produced them. Tansey (2007, p. 767) raises important points about the limitations of such documents, writing how

written materials are sometimes not created to document important

processes, as participants either feel their actions are not important enough

to merit recording them, or instead feel that they are too sensitive to

document in written form. Over time, important documents may also be lost,

as they are unintentionally discarded or as archives are destroyed.

I addressed such issues through the observations and interviews, where I was able to ask further questions to gain insight and additional information on these documents. Tansey (2007) argues that this helps to obtain new information that may not be included in released documents and provides an opportunity for further exploration to advance the research process.

4.9   Reflexivity, Accountability and Transparency

The data for this research project were gathered using an ANT-influenced ethnographic approach, which allows for the multiple relations, materialities and networks to be considered with the emphasis being placed on enactment. In other words, such an approach focuses on who-what is acting (Adams and Thompson, 2016). Drawing on ANT means that the researcher does not set out to discover a pre-existing truth, but instead enables participants to portray their own realities through assemblages of human and nonhuman actors, whose realities are contingent upon the networks they are connected to and the worlds in which they reside (Fenwick et al., 2011). It means that, in adopting ANT, it is not possible to impose a framework that might enforce meaning onto a situation. Lenz Taguchi and St. Pierre (2017), in their article on using concept as method in educational and social inquiry, suggests that the concept, ANT, could be the 'method' itself, and that using 'concept' plays on tracing-and-mapping of the problems and components from which the concept takes on its dominant meanings and practices.

Adopting an ANT-led approach therefore requires the researcher to not only make sense of the data, but also to interpret patterns and meaning to hold ideas open whilst at the same time remaining reflexive. Cho and Trent (2006), in their book on the validity of quality research, argue that incorporating reflexivity within the collected data involves the constant backward and forward confirmation between the research and the participants in regard to re/constructions of constructions of the participants in order to illuminate a better representation of the lived experience of the participants. In my study, the emphasis is on describing and doing and not on representing the data to draw out meaning, but to allow participants to portray their own reality rather than it being represented by me, as the researcher. Michael (2016) also suggests that the researcher should not position themselves as the all-seeing knower. Instead, researchers should consider the affordances between bodies and objects in more speculative and provisional ways:

- learning to be affected by the objects at hand,

- challenging conventional interpretations, and

- hinting at the possibilities that everyday events offer rather than providing definitive accounts.

ANT research requires a reflexive approach and the researcher should acknowledge that what is being represented is always mediated and never direct action and that our methods also craft realities (Ibid). Michael (2016) in his article on speculative methodology in everyday life, writes that, in the enactment of research events, nonhuman and human elements affect one another in ways that unsettle the very 'meaning' of that 'event'. Adams and Thompson (2016) suggest that writing such posthuman accounts demands the agility to create and navigate multiple realities and grapple with uncertainties, perplexities, gaps, and the ever-present unknown.

To ensure that I incorporated a reflexive approach, I used my fieldnotes throughout to help make decisions on which data were most relevant in responding to the research questions. The

fieldnotes also aided reflection on my research and how I felt about what I saw and what was being said. It also helped me explain my methodological choices and my approach to analysis to ensure a faithful account of my research was written which aided accountability. The fieldnotes helped me to remain aware of my role within the research as I recognised that that my values and previous sector experience may have impacted on the interpretation and presentation of my data. I may have blurred the lines between my role as a researcher and as a senior leader, and my knowledge and understanding of the sector could have been blurred with the data I was collecting (Costley et al., 2011), which may have influenced the ways in which the findings are presented. However, I took action to be open to the experience of others within the research through being open and respectful of the professional expertise offered.

To ensure trustworthiness in the research, I kept detailed records and asked each participant to review their interview transcripts for accuracy (Cho and Trent, 2006). I also took time during my fieldwork to follow up and detail any areas that were unclear and captured this information in my fieldnotes. To support the analysis, I embraced Latour's (2005) use of notebooks to log the enquiry within my fieldnotes, to keep a chronological order of actions, create categories, and note the effects of accounts on actors. I ensured rigour through considering the symmetry of the human and nonhuman actors, placing equal importance on all actors in the networks, thereby allowing each to be made visible, unhindered by a coding process influenced by mostly human endeavours. I also paid close attention to the detail throughout, which enabled a detailed examination of the data in order to challenge assumptions and uncover practices that may have been less visible (Law, 2007).

During the thematic analysis I looked for salient themes and ideas across the data set to foreground initial themes which were them combined into overarching themes, paying close attention to capturing something important in relation to the research questions (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Bringing together ANT and thematic analysis was challenging, which meant that I

had to be detailed and meticulous in the analysis. I utilised technology to bring together the actors that were foregrounded through ANT with the overarching themes from the thematic analysis to tell the story of the leadership practices performed by leaders in social enterprises across Chapters 5, 6 and 7. In the next section, I shall fully describe my approach to analysis using thematic analysis and ANT sensibilities.

4.10   Data Analysis

The corpus of data includes six interview transcripts, six months of fieldwork, and documentary analysis (see Table 4: Summary of Data Collection Activities). The table below summarises the hours of interviewing and the time in the field.

Table 4: Summary of data collection activities

Interviews/ Interviews to the Double	Fieldwork	Documents
9 hours x 6 participants	21.5 hours: • One to one meetings • Board meetings • Observation and discussion	Strategy and annual business plan – 3 Leadership team meetings – 49 papers Board meetings – 27 papers Funding application – 1 Contract template – 1 Company accounts – 1 Scottish Government Funding Guidance – 1 Scottish Government Report – 2 Partnership agreement – 1 Website – 1 Planning/bids – 2

Here, I describe the hybrid approach that I took to the analysis, which was led by ANT sensibilities, but also incorporated thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006, 2021a). This hybrid approach uses the ANT heuristics derived from ANT theory and sensibilities proposed by Latour (2005) and other heuristics proposed by Adams and Thompson (2016) for the ethnographic data, and the inductive approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) as well as

their updated approach (2021a), reflexive thematic analysis, for the analysis of the data drawn from documents.

In the diagram below (Figure 1), I summarise my approach to the analysis. I set out my research questions, show how an inductive approach brings together the data, my analytical model and the theoretical frameworks that underpin my research: ANT, practice theory, and literature on social enterprises, recognising that this provides a basis for the research and that this changes during the research process. Through this, I demonstrate that the analysis is not a linear process and that throughout the process there is a need to go back and forth to examine understanding and to highlight findings, which are then used to help answer the research questions.
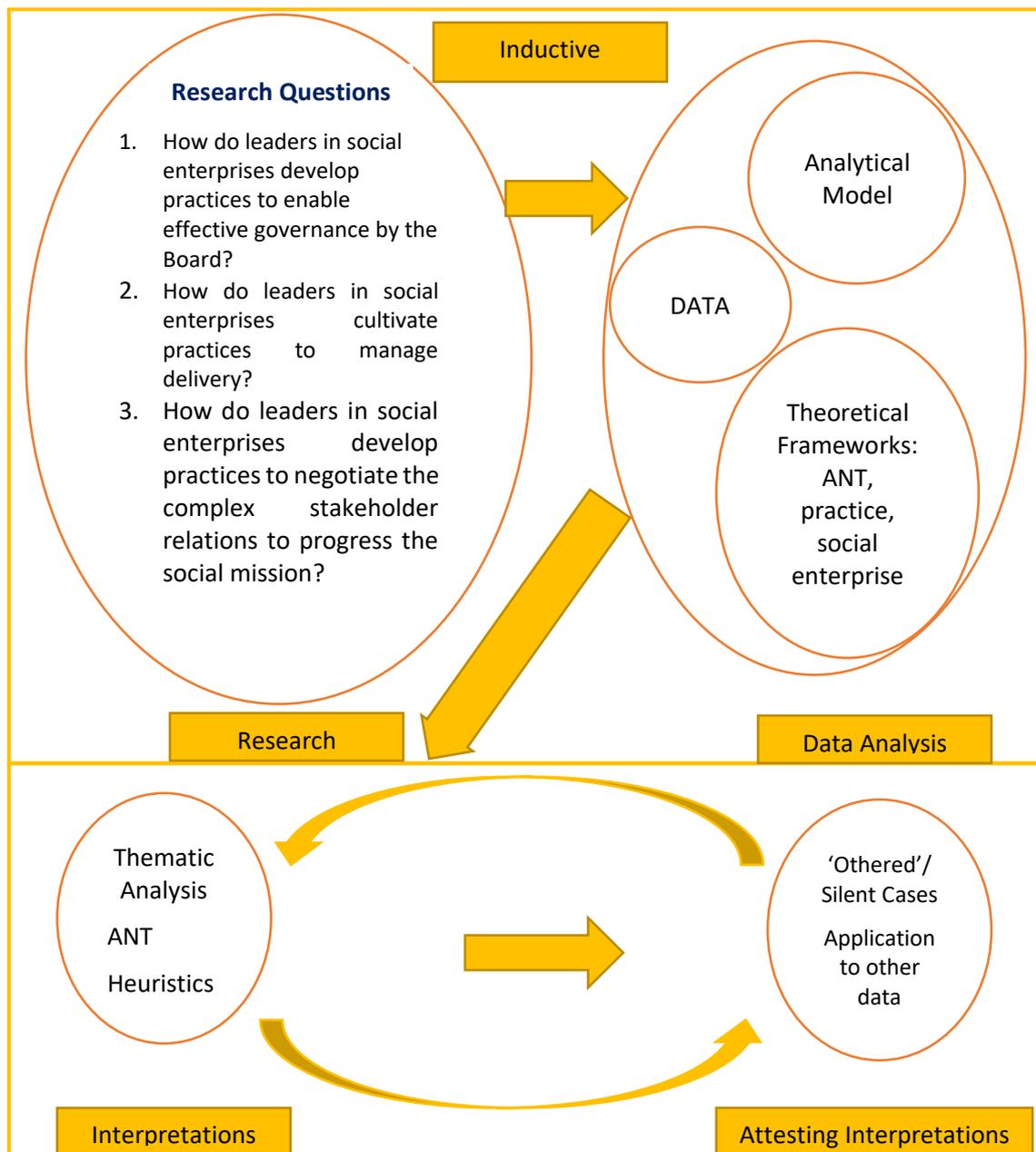
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

My analysis began as soon as I started to type up my fieldnotes in Microsoft Word. I did this at the end of each day of fieldwork or interviewing, as it helped me to reflect on what had happened. As a result, I was able to amend my interviews and fieldwork activity on an ongoing basis as I began to understand more about what was been enacted by leaders in practice, for example, identifying key nonhuman actors, such as the project planner, the funding letter, and the invitation to the parliamentary event. I also transcribed the semi-structured interviews and

interviews to the double straight away to allow me to re-engage with the conversation and gain further insight and understanding into what had been said.

After transcribing the interviews, as noted earlier, I asked the leaders to check the transcriptions. Once the participants had read them and confirmed that they showed a representation of practices as narrated at that moment of interview, I then gathered all the data together, the interview transcripts, document analysis and fieldnotes, and moved onto the full analysis of the data. Fox and Aldred (2015) regard these data as a second-order account of events as thee are interpreted by the interviews and the researcher and they represent an representative account of the quotations from the interviewees. Recognising these challenges, I ensured that I continually reviewed the research questions to ensure that the data collected aligned with them, and adopted an inductive approach to the analysis involving the literature, theory, and the data. Using Braun and Clarke's (2021a) reflexive approach to thematic analysis allowed the analysis to be both inductive and deductive, as the coding was open and organic, and did not use a coding framework it allowed for the iterative development of themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that the approach is generally used for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within the data and is widely used an as analytical method in interpretive studies. Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach has been used in a number of studies including, firstly, Berlanda et al.'s (2020) into risk and protective factors of wellbeing amongst health care staff, who adopted the approach as it enabled the research to focus on the participants' perceptions, feelings, and experiences that allow the emergence of relevant data, and Herzog et al.'s (2019) research of analysing talk and text, which argued that the approach allowed researchers to not only document what they do but to argue how and why specific methods were adopted.

Using Braun and Clarke's (2006) interpretive approach enabled the analysis of the data to be more recursive, rather than linear, thus enabling the circling back to earlier steps in light of new data or themes that needed further investigation. Braun and Clarke (2006) regard the use of

thematic analysis as a powerful method to capture something important about the data in relation to the research question that represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set.

4.10.1 Conducting the Thematic Analysis

The data analysis process designed by Braun and Clarke (2006), in their article on using thematic analysis in psychology, set out six steps: familiarising yourself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the 'report'/manuscript. Although I followed the six steps, I found that the process for carrying out the analysis was not linear but instead adopted an interactive and reflective process, where I moved back and forth across the data and the theoretical resources throughout the process. Commenting on their most recent work on thematic analysis, Braun and Clarke (2021a,) argue that the phased approach which they introduced in their 2006 book was not intended to be followed rigidly. They explain that, as one's analytic craft skill develops, these six phases can blend together somewhat, and the analytic process necessarily becomes increasingly recursive. Using this approach helped to set the stage for a more detailed analysis, using ANT sensibilities and heuristics.

4.10.2 Familiarisation of the Data

As I approached the analysis, I began by spending time reading and absorbing the data to ensure that I had a deep understanding of what it contained and to help me attune to the detail. I did this through re-reading my fieldnotes, document analysis and each interview transcript a minimum of three times. I began by looking for general patterns of meaning, for topics, ideas, categories and themes that repeated, and for points of difference (Mulcahy and Perillo, 2011). I looked for human and nonhuman actors, those that became powerful through enrolling other actors, and actors that I bumped into time and time again, as these were important for the ANT analysis that followed. I did this by highlighting actors that occurred frequently, who seemed to

exert power, those who appeared at different points in the data collection process, or those that seemed to have a direct impact on leaders' everyday practices. I used these to inform the generation of initial codes and also to identify nonhuman actors to follow to help navigate through the data.

4.10.3 Generation of Initial Codes

Once I felt confident in my understanding of the data, I began to generate initial codes. Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that this helps to identify a feature of the data (semantic content or latent) that appears interesting. Stage one involved analysing the interviews to create a set of themes that demonstrated what leaders enacted in their everyday practices. The second stage involved coding the fieldnotes and the document analysis independently of the first analysis, which allowed other open codes to be identified. I found the processes at stages one and two challenging and not straightforward, as there were contradictions, tensions, tangents and detours, with some things that did not seem to fit within the data. I noticed that I had to re-read the data and move back and forth and review the codes at each of the stages. However, once I had completed both stages, I then combined the two sets of codes to create a thematic map which provided an overall conceptualisation of the data patterns, and relationship between them (Braun and Clarke, 2006). I did this through looking for codes that were similar and different as well as any silent or 'othered' actors.

The thematic analysis allowed for each identified theme to tell a 'story', which facilitates an understanding of how the analysis fits into the broader overall story that is being told about the data, one that responds to the research questions. Furthermore, this process ensures that there is not too much overlap between themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006) and it also helped ensure that the amount of data at the ANT analysis stage was able to identify the most relevant parts from the data collected.

Carrying out the initial thematic analysis enabled initial sense-making of the data as there were many practices that were generated from the data collected. This initial analysis helped make sense of the practices, which were then grouped. It was then possible to start to tease out rich possibilities for studying practices.

As I progressed the analysis, I ensured that I identified human and nonhuman actors that exerted influence on a leader's practices. I did this through looking for powerful actors as well as any that were silent or 'othered' to see who-what is acting and, in doing so, found that it invited other things to be pulled out from the background beyond the thematic analysis. Oosterhoff et al. (2021) argue that this allows for the exploration of questions about an actor's active role in co-constituting everyday practice. Braun and Clarke (2006) advocate that this can be achieved by giving full and equal attention to each data item.

4.10.4 Searching and Reviewing for Themes

At this stage, my focus was on looking at the combined codes from stages one and two and exploring how these could be integrated into themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) see this as a way to further analyse the codes and consider how different codes may combine to form an overarching theme. I found that re-engaging with the literature and re-reading the data was important as I wanted to ensure that I was foregrounding the everyday practices carried out by leaders. I found the initial coding of the data was useful in helping to generate the themes. It was clear from this that key aspects of leaders' practices were beginning to emerge, for example, influencing stakeholders, managing projects, and dealing with uncertainty, and that these and other practices were emerging in the codes and within the detail and elements of the codes. My approach to the development of the themes involved the gathering of groups of codes that were similar and could be brought together to create a broad theme. The initial work resulted in over thirty themes being identified. However, on further analysis, I found that there was overlap and that further reduction was possible, which resulted in further nuancing, allowing the descriptive

labels to become themes, and thus refining the initial thirty to nine at the end of the process.

These overlaps also revealed more about the sociomaterial relations between actors which later

informed the ANT analysis.

Once I had reached the stage where I was comfortable that the themes could be helpful to

explore the research questions, I carried out a final review of the data to ensure that I had not

omitted something important. I also wanted to test my own assumptions and interpretations to

ensure that I had not missed anything important. I did find it challenging to know when to stop

the analysis. But believed I had come to the point of data saturation. However, Braun and Clarke

(2021b, p. 201) caution about the use of this term and instead argue for researchers

> to dwell with uncertainty and recognise that meaning is generated through
>
> interpretation of, not excavated from, data, and therefore judgements about 'how
>
> many' data items, and when to stop data collection, are inescapably situated and
>
> subjective, and cannot be determined (wholly) in advance of analysis.

They argue that coding and analysis do not inevitably reach a fixed end point but instead, the

researcher makes a situated, interpretative judgement about when to stop coding and move to

theme generation, and when to stop theme generation and mapping thematic relationships to

finalise the written report, and that any decision to stop analysis should be based on meaning –

that meaning is not inherent or self-evident in data, … in short, that meaning requires

interpretation (Ibid). Taking Braun and Clarke's (2021b) advice, I stopped this stage of my

analysis once I believed I had drawn sufficient meaning from the data.

4.10.5 Practices of Interest and Reporting Findings

I began the process of foregrounding practices of interest by looking for patterns and insights in

the data that were being enacted by leaders. Once I had completed the combined coding and

the development and refinement of the themes, I had surfaced four practices that leaders in social enterprises enacted in practice: mobilising projects (Section 5.1), delivering through networks (Section 5.2), governing performance (Section 5.3) and stakeholder advocacy (Section 5.4). In addition to the themes, I also identified extracts from across the data set that captured things of interest. I did this through noting and observing the sociomaterial relations at play during the thematic analysis and how the enactment of the complex configuration of humans and things acted/mis-acted together. The latter was important for the analysis that follows using an ANT lens.

4.10.6 ANT Analysis

With the insights gained from the thematic analysis, I then moved onto undertaking the next stage of analysis, which was informed by ANT. ANT can be employed to show how assemblages come into being by examining the socialisation of the enrolling actors into the assemblage. ANT proposes that assemblages are made up of heterogenous actors – entities that do things (Latour, 1992). A key tenet of ANT is that the social is not just human (Law, 1992). Latour (1992) argues that it is about the complete chain along which competencies and actions are distributed. It is through understanding how the assemblage starts to develop and is stabilised that practices can emerge. Leadership practices can be seen as an ongoing assembling, dis-assembling, and re-assembling of human and nonhuman actors.

I began by following the actors to trace key actors and consider how assemblages were established and stabilised. I also adopted the heuristics forwarded by Adams and Thompson (2016): *gathering anecdotes* to tell data-driven stories, and *studying 'breakdowns, accidents and anomalies'* to surface hidden actors and practices that would have remained invisible. I used Adams and Thompson's (2016) notion of interviewing objects as this is not the same as performing interviews with human participants. Drawing on the etymological roots of the 'interview', Adams and Thompson (2016) describe how the process involves both the word

'inter' and 'view' which means to see each other, visit each other briefly, have a glimpse of, concluding that to interview an object is therefore to catch insightful glimpses of it in action. This in turn allows us to understand how it associates with others and mediates the actions of other actors (Adams and Thompson, 2016). These heuristics offered approaches to analysis rather than a set of prescriptive rules to follow and, as a result, not all are applicable to a single study.

I began the analysis by using the ANT sensibility of *gathering anecdotes* (Adams and Thompson, 2016, p. 24) as it provided a way to describe what practices leaders were undertaking in practice, i.e., what happened, not why it happened. Anecdotes can be described as 'little stories', which reassemble via textual description the unfoldings of everyday events and show humans and things as they are, and as they are becoming, in order to reassemble the eventing lifeworld (Adams and Thompson, 2016). As Gourlay (2021) suggests, they differentiate between first person experiential anecdotes, and third person observational accounts, both used in phenomenology (which favours the former), and actor-network theory (which makes more use of the latter in the form of observations and reports) (Gourlay, 2021). In constructing posthuman anecdotes, Gourlay (2021) suggests that multiple sources can be used, including field observations, interviews, online sources, documents, journals and visual artefacts. Adopting this approach helped me identify the presence of both human and nonhuman actors enacting and enacted by practices" (Ibid), enabling data from across the data set to be used in the construction of the anecdotes.

The 'object interview questions', such as 'who-what is acting?', 'are some actors more or less powerful than others?', and 'what sort of work does this assemblage do or try to do?', also helped to consider leadership practice as an assemblage of associations of both human and nonhuman actors, as I wanted to ensure that I was not just attending to what humans were doing, but also tracing the associations of human and nonhuman actors as complex shifting

assemblages as leadership practices were done, undone and redone. Latour (2005) sees this as a way to understand the connections of objects with humans, shifting them from being mediators to being intermediaries to produce *scripts* of what they are making others – humans or nonhumans – do.

I started the process of analysis by going back to the original corpus of data and considered this against the outcome of the initial thematic analysis, but this time I looked again for nonhuman actors which seemed active in the practices described by participants and which I observed in order to trace the human-nonhuman actors and actions. Using this approach ensured that human and nonhuman actors were analysed no differently and were talked of using the same language (Lewis, 2007). The process involved looking for actors that dominated at different times, identifying the shifting locus of power, and understanding how the material practices were formed. Michael (2017) argues that what is important is what the nonhuman 'is' and that this depends on the nexus of relations of which it is a part, and out of which it emerges.

As I approached the analysis, it was important for me to be open and adapt to the object(s) of interest (Thompson and Adams, 2020), as it was possible for objects to surface in different ways (Adams and Thompson, 2016). Thompson and Adams (2020) argue that an object can sometimes push its way into attention. It can also drive an unexpected possibility into the exchange (Whatmore, 2003). For Bennet (2010), in her book on a political ecology of things, everyday objects are what he describes as '*thing-power'* and she suggests that researchers should linger in those moments where they find themselves gripped by objects and taking these as clues to the material vitality that they share.

As I worked with the data, I was not merely focused on identifying objects of interest, but also to account for how various human-nonhuman entanglements come into view, open themselves up to more critical questioning, and act on – and with – the researcher (Thompson and Adams,

2020). During the analysis, I ensured that I paid attention to everything, not just things that were unusual or different, but to all the things, even the ordinary and commonplace (Gibbs, 2007). I looked for who-what was enacting practices that were backgrounded or taken for granted (Gibbs, 2007), for spatial orderings, or material assemblages of subjects-objects, and those that appeared to interrupt and effect, question and promise (Fenwick et al., 2011) the minute negotiations (Fenwick and Edwards, 2012) that occurred between these connections, and searched for how these particular practices asserted authority (Mulcahy and Perillo, 2011).

I began by using my 'digital co-researchers' (Adams and Thompson, 2016) – my laptop, Wi-Fi, Microsoft Word and Excel – to help sort and cluster my data, and to find human and nonhuman entanglements. I used these co-researchers to look at why things happened and to consider *how* they occur and how they arrange themselves (Law, 2007). This approach assumed that nothing had reality, or form, outside its 'doing' in an actor–network: its assemblage, arrangement, configuration or lay-out (Hardie and MacKenzie, 2007). I looked to foreground human actors and nonhuman actors, such as funding guidance, budgets, laptops, flipcharts, etc., and to consider the intra-action of these actors, for example, project planners and leaders to create the dashboard. Intra-action understands agency as not an inherent property of an individual or human to be exercised, but as a dynamism of forces (Ibid) in which all selected 'things' are continuously exchanging and deflecting, influencing and working inseparably. These inter-actions illustrate the agency of actors within assemblages. It is through the work of these assemblages that practices get enacted. Using my co-researchers, I highlighted the associated text into Microsoft Word using the 'comments' function and then used the macros set up previously in Microsoft Excel as part of the thematic analysis to import the 'comments' into Excel.

The overall process was inductive and involved looking for those 'intra-actions' between human and nonhuman actors that created juxtapositions and choreographies in the data to surface

unexpected happenings. I found that carrying out the analysis in this way had many benefits. I was able to identify nonhuman actors as well as human actors and notice their 'intra-actions'. I was continually able to adjust the macros to further hone the analysis to enable the data to speak and for the outcomes not to be prejudged. It also provided ongoing flexibility to allow other things to emerge as layers of data were added. At the end of the process, I aligned the outcomes with the themes identified through the thematic analysis which provided a strategic view across the data. I then moved to create anecdotes to show how leadership was enacted in through an array of practices.

Sociomaterial anecdotes are used to describe and demonstrate what happened, recognising the involvement of both human and nonhuman actors. It need not be factually correct, but it must be fictionally true (Adams and Thompson, 2016). Michael (2012) suggests that anecdotes are used to 'report' or document events and thus constitute an openly ambiguous textual form: combining the real and the constructed, holding them in tension and allowing one to start from a specific incident and explore its complex and constitutive range of associations without ever seeing this exploration as uncomplicatedly representational or exhaustive. Anecdotes enable the documentation of an incident and, even where it may seem ordinary, it can highlight the unusual.

In this research, I adopted the methodology for constructing anecdotes designed by Adams and Thompson (2016) to describe how relations and associations were formed in the enactment of practice. Anecdotes were themselves assembled through a process of noticing and attuning to entities and processes that occurred often in the data. These descriptive accounts involved a process designed to gather observational threads and interview snippets and then carefully weave human and nonhuman storylines back together (Adams and Thompson, 2016) in combination with data from my document analysis.

I found the process of writing the anecdotes to be an iterative process, not a one-off event, and very time-consuming. I had to continually revisit and review the data to ensure that I was surfacing who-what was acting and to understand what the assemblage was possibly doing. Following this, I utilised the 'object interview questions' proposed to catch the traces of actors in action. These helped deepen my analysis of the anecdotes and the other data, which helped to generate an understanding of how the assemblages had come together, what ordering and reordering had taken place, who-what was acting, what actors were more powerful/persuasive, what had been invited, and what had become visible as a result of breakdowns/accidents.

The gathering anecdotes heuristic was powerful in this study, as it helped highlight the actors that became significant in the assemblage of leaders' practices. Some of these actors became visible through the interviews, whilst others became visible during my observations. Through telling the story of leadership, I was able to describe how a particular practice became enacted and the implications of that practice for leaders in social enterprise.

As described above, I used both thematic analysis and ANT sensibilities to carry out my analysis. However, this was challenging, as thematic analysis is a reductive method, while ANT is expansive. It would have been easy to default to traditional thematic analysis to identify key themes to reduce the amount of data. However, this would have hidden the important role of nonhuman actors and how these influenced and were entwined in everyday leadership practices. I found that identifying nonhuman actors opened up new opportunities to explore what it meant to be a leader, as it made visible the practices that would have remained unseen in a traditional thematic analysis approach. I discovered that the method designed by Braun and Clarke (2006) and updated reflexive thematic analysis in 2021, provided an approach that was iterative, with the initial thematic analysis providing a deep sense of the data which guided more focused efforts on specific practices of interests. I believe that combining these approaches

worked well for this research and provided rich insight that would have not been made visible in any other way.

4.11   Summary of Research Methodology and Methods

In this chapter, I have set out the methodological approach to carrying out the research to generate the data to make visible leaders' practices to be able to answer the research questions. I have shown how the adoption of a mixed methods ethnographic approach enabled the weaving together of participant observations, interviews, fieldnotes and document analysis to provide data. I have also shown how I have addressed key issues related to undertaking research with elite participants, given the potential power dynamics that could have influenced their input and the outcome of the research.

I have described how I approached and gained ethical approval for the study and also discussed concerns related to my previous experience of being a leader in the sector and my role as researcher. I have demonstrated how it was not possible to create an analytical framework in advance for the research as I had to draw meaning from the data (thematic analysis) and have shown what leaders *do* (ANT analysis) to answer the research questions. I have illustrated how I built reflexivity into the research design and how I ensured accountability and transparency of the research outcomes through the accurate recording and capturing of information. I ended by setting out the hybrid analytical approach adopted, using the approach to thematic analysis designed by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2021a), ANT sensibilities, and other heuristics to foreground leaders' practices enacted within social enterprises in Scotland. In the next chapter, the leadership practices of managing change are analysed using thematic analysis. I explore three practices: mobilising projects, delivering through networks and managing and governing effectively.

Chapter 5: Managing, Governing and Influencing

In this chapter, I present my analysis of how leadership practices are enacted by, with, and through the everyday work of leaders within the case study social enterprise as they seek to deliver projects, govern the organisation and influence stakeholders in Scotland.

Managing projects within the case study social enterprise is a key activity as this supports the delivery of the social mission. The funding received from Scottish Government and other funders is focused on the delivery of outcomes which are directly linked to the funding allocated. As a result, the case study social enterprise puts significant focus on ensuring the outcomes specified in each project is delivered by them, or through partners, to ensure that full funding can be claimed. The delivery of these funded projects involves a complex ordering and re-ordering of human and nonhuman actors in order to keep the activities moving forward to ensure the delivery of the project outcomes within the funding letter. This raises questions about the work involved to accomplish the management, delivery and reporting of such projects (see Section 5.1) and how to manage delivery through partners (see Section 5.2).

The Board has a key role to ensure that these projects are delivered and to monitor the impact of non-delivery on the organisation. This is delivered alongside the Board's wider responsibilities which includes the delivery of the organisational strategy and outcomes, and for the overall governance of the organisation. The work to accomplish the reporting required to support this involves the assembling of multiple heterogeneous actors to enact reports to the board to enable it to discharge these governance responsibilities. This raises questions about the work performed to accomplish the governance of projects and organisational outcomes (see Section 5.3).

Stakeholder advocacy is important for the social enterprise to ensure that it is able to influence policy and funding priorities to be able to deliver the social mission and to ensure this remains

a priority for funding. To achieve this influence, social enterprises need to engage with a wide range of actors, which raises questions about the work to accomplish this influence (see Section 5.4).

The work to accomplish project delivery, governance and stakeholder influence is therefore complex and requires considerable work by leaders and nonhuman actors to ensure success. The practices performed are fully entangled and distributed in leaders' everyday work and are often taken-for-granted and unacknowledged. The questions above are consistent with an ANT-led approach and helps explore the implications for leaders' practices. In the following sections, I explore four leadership practices that collectively enact ways in which projects are activated, the organisation is governed and stakeholder influence is achieved: mobilising projects (Section 5.1), delivering through networks (Section 5.2), governing effectively (Section 5.3) and stakeholder advocacy (Section 5.4). For each of these certain leadership practices came to my attention.

I begin in the first section, using 'follow the actors', the heuristic of 'breakdowns, accidents and anomalies', along with three 'object interview questions' proposed by Adams and Thompson (2016): How have particular gatherings come to be? What kinds of orderings and re-orderings can be discerned? The project planner provides an entry point to explore the leadership practices performed in mobilising projects (Section 5.1).

In the second section, I continue to 'follow the actors' and utilise the notion of 'multiple ontologies' to examine how the contract holds its shape as it becomes multiple as it is translated into a partner's reality and within the social enterprise's performance team, thus shaping leaders' knowings-in-practice in their everyday work. The funding contract offers an entry point through which to explore the leadership practices enacted to manage the delivery of projects

by delivery partners. How have particular gatherings come to be? What kinds of orderings and re-orderings can be discerned? What work is foregrounded/backgrounded?

In the third section, I again continue to employ 'follow the actors' and the heuristic of studying 'breakdowns, accidents and anomalies', along with three more 'object interview questions' proposed by Adams and Thompson (2016): What is made present/absent? Do some actors seem more powerful or persuasive than others? If so, how is this happening? The 'dashboard' affords an entry point to investigate the leadership practices performed to ensure the Board is able to deliver on its role to ensure legitimacy, accountability and effective performance of the social enterprise.

In the fourth section, I use the four moments of translation – *problematisation*, *interessement*, *enrolment*, and *mobilisation of allies* to understand how an actor-network is created and how actors undertake certain roles within the network in relation to one another. I look to unravel the relations, agency and effects of both the human and nonhuman actors to understand the practices enacted in Stakeholder Advocacy. The funding contract offers an entry point through which to explore the leadership practices performed to enact stakeholder advocacy.

The following sections will further elaborate on these and integrate this with the data in order to understand the translations that are taking place as this is central to adopting an ANT- led approach (Law, 1999). I end this chapter by providing a summary of the leadership practices that are important in mobilising projects in social enterprises.

5.1 Mobilising Projects

Within the case study social enterprise, projects begin once a funding letter has been received from the funder, for example, the Scottish Government. The funding letter sets out the amount of funding provided to deliver outcomes to customer groups, the timeframe, and other

conditions of the contract. The information in the letter is drawn from the original funding application, which is submitted by the social enterprise to the funder. The funding letter also has an annex that needs to be signed to accept the offer as outlined in the letter. Once the social enterprise has formally accepted the offer, the letter acts as a formal agreement between the funder and the social enterprise, which becomes translated within the social enterprise and externally with delivery partners as a way to manage and 'report' on the delivery of the project.

The following anecdote, a rich description of practices, drawn from my research data, is used to explore mobilising projects (Section 5.1). This anecdote describes what happens once the case study social enterprise receives a funding letter that confirms funding for a submitted funding application. It details how the project planner is enacted through the mobilising of human and nonhuman actors and how this is entangled in other practices across time and space.

Within social enterprises, mobilising externally funded projects is a regular activity, as many do not have core funding and are reliant on funding through contracts to deliver their social mission (Seanor and Meaton, 2007). As noted previously, the funding allocated within the funding letter is based on what is submitted within the original funding application and the mobilisation of the project normally involves the setting up of a project planner to manage delivery internally, and with external delivery partners.

> **Meet the Project Planner**
>
> The funding approval letter arrived from the Scottish Government confirming that the application for funding had been approved. It is sitting on Kerry's desk, along with a printed copy of the submitted funding application. Kerry, the Governance Manager, needs to prepare the project plan to manage the mobilisation of the project. Kerry opens the generic project planner on Microsoft Project and navigates to the sections on project outcomes, delivery

models, partners and funding. Kerry is now ready to begin the process of preparing the mobilisation plan.

Kerry reaches over to retrieve the printed funding application from her desk to get the necessary detail required. Kerry opens the document and flicks through the pages until she gets to the contents page. Kerry is looking for the section on project delivery as this will have the information required to populate the project planner: the project outcomes, delivery models, partners and funding. Kerry opens the project planner and navigates to the corresponding sections in the planner and populates each section with the information highlighted from the document.

Kerry knows the importance of the planner as this will be used to manage the delivery of the project and provide the overview of how partners are implementing their elements as specified in their individual contracts. It will also be used for reporting to the Board through the quarterly performance dashboards and to the Scottish Government to evidence progress against outcomes. Kerry is aware that the discussion at the leadership team will be challenging as the planner will be used to allocate staff and non-staff resources for the project.

In the next section (5.1.1), I present my data to foreground the practices enacted in assembling and re-assembling – managing delivery.

5.1.1 Assembling and Re-assembling – Managing Delivery

In this section, my data is presented that describes how the project planner is enacted through the enrolment, connecting and stabilisation of actors. Of interest are the assemblages and acts

of assembling and reassembling to manage delivery. Fenwick and Edwards (2012, p. 101) posit that assemblages in ANT are:

> produced through a set of relations that is constantly in motion. The network that appears through the linkages among these entities is a trace of a series of translations that have changed and continue to change each entity participant in a network.

My data suggests that the project planner is created using a template that is programmed in Microsoft Project, which is already set up with cells that contains sections on external delivery partners, customer groups, outcomes, approved funding and formulas, that automatically calculate differences between the planned targets and the actual achievements.

Following the project planner to understand the multiple translations that took place, I began by spending time with Kerry (2020). My fieldnote entry included the following:

> Spent time with Kerry (2020) today to understand what happens once a funding letter was received from Scottish Government. Kerry (2020) explained that she was always given a copy as soon as George (2020), the Chief Executive, received it. Kerry (2020) noted that the first job was to set up a project planner for the project, which she did using a template that had been developed using Microsoft Project. Kerry (2020) indicated that the programme was used for all funded projects and to manage other activities delivered by the Social Enterprise. She explained that to set up the planner she began by retrieving the submitted application from SharePoint and confirming that the funding in the letter was the same as the application. Once this check was made, she then extracted the detail on the project from the application which included: project title, customer groups, locations,

numbers to be delivered and funding to the project planner. (Fieldnotes,

2020)

This fieldnote extract demonstrates the enrolment of human and nonhuman actors that enacts

the project planner assemblage. It seems that the project planner enrols and then orders and

re-orders multiple actors, including the original funding application, the Governance Manager's

expertise, the funding letter, and Microsoft Project, which could be understood to be a process

of 'heterogeneous engineering' in which the stability and form of artifacts should be seen as a

function of the interaction of heterogeneous elements as they are shaped and assimilated into

a network (Latour, 1987).

The data shows how Kerry (2020) marks up the funding application using the yellow highlighter,

accesses the projects folder and project templates in SharePoint, and reads and extracts

information from the funding application (2020) in order to gather elements together that

become the project planner assemblage. Following the project planner also foregrounds the

funding application process – as it becomes visible, it appears that it becomes privileged above

the other actors within the assemblage. The funding application performs an important role

within the assemblage, as numerous details are transferred from it to the project planner. It

seems that the funding application is what Michael (2017) posits is a '*precipitating'* or '*animating*

actor' in that it is exerting its power and is being used to facilitate privileged ordering and does

so quietly and unobtrusively. The analysis shows how Kerry (2020) extracts data, such as

customer groups, outcomes, and funding levels from the application to enter it into the project

planner prior to it being finalised and printed. Kerry (2020) explained that the final printing

would only take place once she had re-checked what she had entered to ensure that it was

accurate and that there were no errors in any of the cells containing formulas. If so, she would

re-visit those and amend accordingly. At this point, it seems that the project planner assemblage

is temporarily stabilised before being translated to become 'final' and, in effect, a matter of fact.

Kerry (2020) explained that this was an important stage in the accomplishment of the project planner, as this would be the version that would be discussed by the leadership team, and, once the final amendments were completed, would become a matter of fact to then be further translated to become different mechanisms, a 'report' to the Board (Social Enterprise, 2020a) and another for the Scottish Government (Social Enterprise, 2020b).

> The final project planner was agreed with the leadership team today. Kerry (2020) explained how the planner is then used to support reporting to different groups/committees. The full project planner is presented and discussed at the monthly leadership team meetings, a 'report' in the form of a dashboard is prepared for the Board on all projects (Social Enterprise, 2020c) and a summary 'report' is provided to the Scottish Government on performance against outcomes and finance (Social Enterprise, 2020b). Kerry (2020) explained that the development of the project planner had really helped simplify the reporting as there was one source of information which could be manipulated for different stakeholder requirements. (Fieldnotes, 2020)

This fieldnote extract suggests that there are multiple translations taking place to enact 'report's to the leadership team, the Board and the Scottish Government. Kerry (2020) mentioned that when she was creating the 'report' for the leadership team it contained the full project planner so that the leadership team had sight of all the details contained in the planners and so that they could then discuss the impact of any problems with delivery and make appropriate adjustments. She also noted that she enrolled other materials, such as those gained from monthly management reporting, which provided additional narrative that she added to support the information presented, along with comments gathered through discussions with individual managers to become the leadership team project assemblage (Social Enterprise, 2020d). The

data show how the monthly management project 'reports', along with other information that may not have been in the planner, actively shaped the final leadership team project assemblage through inviting, coordinating and stabilising other actors, such as the project planner and guidance on reporting from the Scottish Government. Fenwick and Edwards (2012) describe such stabilisation of the assemblage as dynamic attempts by actors to translate one another.

Continuing to follow the project planner, Kerry's (2020) description of how it was implicated in the dashboard, which the Board reviews (see Section 5.3 below), foregrounds additional translations. These further translations involved enrolling other actors, including the data export function within Microsoft Project, Microsoft PowerPoint, and Board reporting templates to become a device to enable the information to be summarised and presented as charts and tables, to help the Board to gain appropriate assurance and to enact its governance responsibilities to become the dashboard assemblage (Social Enterprise, 2020c). The project planner is then implicated in further translations as it enrols Microsoft Project, reports, forms and Kerry's (2020) expertise to become a mechanism to provide a summary for the Scottish Government to show progress against the delivery of outcomes and financing along with a supporting narrative, as specified in the funding guidance, to become the 'Scottish Government Project Report' assemblage (Social Enterprise, 2020b), thus demonstrating the complex assemblages that has become stabilised.

This section illustrates the multiple translations of the project planner. The project planner was first translated to become the project planner for the new project, a new device, through enrolling other actors including the funding application and Microsoft Project. It was then translated to take on a different role through enrolling other actors including 'report' templates from the funding guidance and 'reports'. Further translation took place as other actors were enrolled, including Microsoft PowerPoint and Board reporting templates to become the Board dashboard. The final translation of the project planner saw it perform another role, that of a

summary 'report' to the Scottish Government and it did so through enrolling other actors, including project 'reports' (Social Enterprise, 2020e) and the funding guidance (Social Enterprise, 2020f). In the next section, I shall describe how the project planner assemblage, although momentarily stabilised, foregrounds other realities through leaders' everyday practices.

5.1.2 Negotiating Tensions and Consequences

In this section, I shall describe how the project planner becomes contested by the leadership team and how backgrounded actors are implicated in this. In Section 5.2.1 above, I demonstrated how the project planner assemblage was momentarily stabilised and printed for the leadership team, becoming a 'matter of fact'. However, Michael (2017) cautions that such stabilisation is always accomplished during a particular set of circumstances and at a particular time, which is important to consider here. Although the project planner had been stabilised for sharing, it still had to be finalised and agreed with the leadership team. Kerry (2020) mentioned that to get this agreement was very challenging, due to tensions in relation to the project's delivery. Latour (2005) sees such contestation as one that changes from being 'matters of fact' to becoming 'matters of concern', and as the constant struggles between the two states, due to the complex realities involved to obtain agreement. I watched this play out during one of my field trips.

> There was tension in the office today as a meeting had just taken place on a new project that they had won and how they were going to mobilise it. In the kitchen after the session, two of the leaders were expressing how unhappy they were with the budget for staff to deliver services for clients. From the discussion, it was clear that there would be no increases to the budget. If anything, with rising costs on both pay and non-pay, it may be reduced. Both were expressing real frustration about not having sufficient input at the

application stage, as this would have prevented the problems they were now

facing. (Fieldnotes, 2020)

This fieldnote extract highlights how leaders entered into discussions and debate on what was contained in the project planner assemblage and what it meant in terms of its delivery. Latour (2005) sees such discussion and judgement as part of the material assemblage and uses the term 'thing' to refer, etymologically, to *matters at the heart'* of an assemblage, which helps to gain an understanding of controversies and champions multiplicity. This contestation foregrounds unintentional realities about the development of the funding application and who-what are involved in its development. It shows that some leaders are either not involved or did not take the time to review the application before submission, which brought forward particular issues in relation to the funding available to pay for staff and non-staff costs due to rising costs that were not factored in at the application stage.

To understand more about the debates by the leadership team and any unintended or surprising consequences, the project planner led me to the Business Development Team and Hamish (2020). Hamish (2020) was responsible for the development of all funding applications within the social enterprise. He was also directly involved in developing the application on employability for the Scottish Government. My fieldnote entry included the following:

Spent today with Hamish (2020) to look at how the social enterprise

applies for funding and how a funding application is prepared. Hamish

(2020) explained that it can take up to 3 months from start to finish.

The application comes from the Scottish Government to deliver

services for particular client groups. Hamish (2020) explained that

there is funding guidance from the Scottish Government which is sent

out to raise awareness of the funding opportunity either directly to

the social enterprise or through a link on the Scottish Government's website. An online template application form is normally provided within the funding application guidance for completion. This is used to apply for funding. The application is normally completed by him but with input from finance, service delivery, human resources, governance and the Chief Executive's Office. It involves developing background and context, delivery models based on the client groups, customer numbers, geographical coverage/locations, staff and non-staff costs. (Kerry, 2020)

This fieldnote extract demonstrates the enrolment of a range of heterogenous actors, such as the Scottish Government's website, funding guidance, funding application template, delivery models and leaders' expertise. During our discussions, Hamish (2020) pointed out the importance of the funding guidance. He explained that it contained key information, including the background to the project, customer groups, delivery models, geographic locations, eligible and ineligible costs, and the length of the project. I asked Hamish (2020) how the project application was written. He explained that each section was allocated to one of the leadership team, including himself, as he wrote the background and context. Once each section was completed, he compiled the full draft, and it was discussed and agreed within the leadership team before being finalised and submitted by the specified date (Social Enterprise, 2020g). The outcome of the application was normally communicated to the social enterprise around three months later, often by letter or email. It confirmed whether the social enterprise had been successful in its application and, if so, provided detail on the funding allocated.

The project planner became foregrounded again as Hamish (2020) explained why there had been disagreement at the leadership team when it was discussed. He noted that the social enterprise submitted multiple applications each month to many funders. Due to the number of

applications, some leaders did not take the time to read the applications properly. As a result, tension was commonplace once funding had been approved for projects, which resulted in unintended consequences for leaders, as some did not understand what the funding guidance said in relation to eligible and ineligible costs, and some of the other details, such as the geographic coverage, specific customer groups and/or outcomes that were required (Social Enterprise, 2020f). It seems that the funding guidance is extending its power within the project planner assemblage across space and time through foregrounding the unintentional consequences for the Business Development Team and leaders, while at the same time making visible areas of controversy and debate which can support better human decision making. Mol (2002) conceptualises this power as building blocks and describes such contention as nothing more than chains of association between multiple actants, all subject to change and dissolution, therefore more precarious, more local and multiple. Fenwick and Edwards (2010, p. 103) suggest that such an actor can be considered as being:

> like a ship, they have developed enough solidity to be able to move about and still hold their relations in place. In effect, they function as delegates of these other networks, extending their power by moving into new geographical spaces and working to translate entities to behave in particular ways.

It appears that the funding guidance operates as an actor within the project planner as it is holding its form and exerting its power, shaping leaders' practices and directly influencing the project planner through the provision of detailed information, such as eligible and ineligible costs, customer groups, and outcomes. It seems that, if leaders had taken more time to read the funding guidance in detail, it would have prevented the established project planner assemblage being translated from being a matter of fact to becoming a matter of concern. In the next

section, I foreground the practices enacted by leaders as they managed the delivery of projects through the contracts with their external delivery partners.

5.2   Delivering through Networks

In the first section, Mobilising Projects (Section 5.1), I described how particular translations came to be, the actors involved in the stabilisation of the project planner assemblage, and the unintentional consequences involved. I also showed how the project planner assemblage being translated from being a 'matters of fact' to become 'matters of concern', and vice versa, by making visible the ways in which projects can be managed successfully. As outlined above, for many social enterprises, projects are delivered through external partners as there is a need to increase capacity and capability to deliver all elements of the project. For leaders, this means that they must ensure that external partners are aware of the implications of not delivering against the project outcomes, both for them and for the social enterprise. A process adopted by social enterprises to ensure the delivery of projects is for each partner to agree a legally binding contract that covers key components, such as customer groups, outcomes and funding for the project (Social Enterprise, 2020h).

In the following section (5.2), I explore three clusters of practices enacted by leaders as they seek to manage partners' project delivery through contracts: negotiating participation (5.2.1), contract or not to contract (5.2.2), and contracting as multiple (5.2.3). I use Mol's (2002) work on 'multiple ontologies', a 'more-than-human' approach used in after-ANT, to open up space for nonhuman agency as an emergent relational property (Lormier, 2007). I use this to examine how the contract holds its shape as it becomes multiple as it is translated into a partner's reality and within the social enterprise's performance team, thus shaping leaders' practices in their everyday work. In the following anecdote, I foreground how the 'contract' and leaders together enact leadership practices performed to manage partners and how this is translated through practice.

Shaping Partners' Contracts

The project has been approved by the Scottish Government and the solicitors
have prepared the legal contract template which needs to be populated with
the information on each of the partners from the funding application
submitted. Alyson, Senior Finance and Performance Manager, retrieves the
original funding application from her saved files and prints the section on
partnerships as it provides the detail that needs to be transferred to the
contract. She takes time to highlight the specific details required for each of
the six partners, specifically: the services to be delivered, the number of
clients, the locations, the outcomes, and funding.

Alyson clicks on the first legal template she prepared in Microsoft Word. She
gathers her marked-up copy from the original funding application for the first
partner and types in the name of the partner, type of services, numbers and
locations, and then scrolls down further to the section on milestones/funding
and enters the information. Once completed, she sends the contract by email
for signing and returning within ten days. The process is repeated for all six
partners.

During one of the observations, Alyson (2020) demonstrated how the contract was completed
to show the detail and the accuracy that is required on the transfer of information from the
contract to the project planner. She noted that the contract was an important component of
project delivery, as putting this in place enabled the social enterprise to hold partners to account
for the delivery of their elements of the project. It also ensured that the full project was
delivered, both through the partner contracts and also that the activity was delivered by the

social enterprise itself. Alyson (2020) mentioned that the move to legally binding agreements was significant, as the previous partnership agreements allowed partners to not deliver outcomes whilst still drawing down full funding, which had had a direct impact on the reputation of the social enterprise.

Alyson (2020) explained that the move to a more formalised process would address these issues and that the new legal contract, drawn up by the solicitors, provided clarity on what was expected and covered the main areas of delivery: service type, number of clients, locations, outcomes, and the levels of funding provided (Social Enterprise, 2020h). This ensured that there was clarity about the criteria against which each delivery partner's performance would be managed, the amount of funding allocated to deliver the outcomes, and how the funding could be claimed. The Social Enterprise Alliance (2010) advocates that setting these indicators clearly helps the organisation to assess outputs or short-term results generated directly by its programmes and activities and include the number of individuals enrolled, partner organisations, stakeholder demographics and costs. Alyson (2020) mentioned that, once the contract was prepared, it was also checked by a member of her team for accuracy before being signed and sent to the partner for them to sign and return.

5.2.1 Negotiating Participation – the Contract

In the section above (5.2), I showed how the contract became stabilised. I now examine how the contract is translated and further examine the many practices which are implicated through the multiple partners involved in delivering projects for the case study social enterprise. My fieldnote entry included the following:

> They have over 20 partners involved in delivering projects as it would not be
>
> possible for them to deliver all the outcomes themselves. They do this first
>
> through engaging with a wide range of stakeholders and choosing those who

had a strong track record and who are interested in delivering to the

customer groups to the agreed specifications. Partners are then contracted

to deliver services through a contract. (Kerry, 2020)

This fieldnote extract shows how the contract came into view, as Alyson (2020) explained why

she had so many partners involved in project delivery. She explained that they did not have all

the expertise required within the social enterprise to deliver to the different customer groups,

cope with the number of clients, or achieve the required geographic coverage. Alyson (2020)

noted that delivering through partners was now considered normal for the social enterprise,

and, to date, much of the activity had been delivered through more informal arrangements, such

as partnership agreements (Social Enterprise, 2020i). The analysis shows that, due to the

ongoing issues with non-delivery, which had impacted significantly on the reputation of the

social enterprise, a new legal agreement was drawn up by the solicitors to provide clarity on

expectations and would be legally binding.

To unpick the contract further, Alyson (2020) arranged for me to spend time with one of the

contract performance managers.

The legal contract was sitting on Michelle's desk (2020), and she invited me

to look at it. Michelle (2020) is the Contract Performance Manager. Beside

this was the funding application, which was marked up. As I reviewed the

funding application, I noticed that it was marked up with the information that

was used to complete the legal contract and it was the one that was funded

by the Scottish Government. The contract itself ran to over 40 pages and had

been agreed by their solicitors. The majority of it was in standard 'legal speak'

with a number of sections highlighted in yellow which had to be completed,

e.g., the partner organisation and what had been agreed with each partner

in terms of delivery and funding. There seemed to be little flexibility in the

contract as the task was to transfer the information into the sections marked

in yellow. The process was simple to ensure that each partner knew what

they were accountable for. This made it much easier to ensure delivery and

to stop funding if they were unable to deliver what was in the contract. The

contracts could also be varied, if required, to increase, e.g., the level of

customer services/funding or to reduce or cancel the contract. (Fieldnotes,

2020)

This fieldnote excerpt demonstrates the importance of the completion of contracts for the

successful management of individual partner's activity, as described in the funding application

and managed through the project planner assemblage. The analysis also shows how the process

of completing this for all six partners is repetitive, but that it is important as they are being

completed by the Contract's Performance Manager and not by an Administrator. It is through

the co-agency of the contract and the Contract Performance Manager that the contracts are

enacted. The contracts are legally binding, so accuracy of the contents was critical, as this would

be used to manage partners and, due to this, the CEO insisted that a Senior Manager completed

them and they were checked by one of her team for accuracy, as any errors could create

problems with compliance. They were also checked against the project planner assemblage, as

discussed above, to ensure that these correlated with each other. In the next section, I

demonstrate what happens to the contract as it becomes translated into multiple realities.

5.2.2   Contract or not to Contract – Managing Fluidity

In this section, I show how the contract is translated into a partner's reality and how it becomes

a fluid object as it is translated into the partner organisation and the performance team within

the social enterprise through enrolling other actors and it becomes different devices.

Considering the ways in which the contact is translated into these different realties led to a discussion with Alyson (2020) on the actions that each partner undertook once they received the contract. My fieldnote showed that she explained that this included checking the details in the contract and, in particular, areas such as the outcomes to be delivered and the funding allocated. The partners also checked these against what they agreed to deliver in the original funding application (Social Enterprise, 2020g). Alyson (2020) mentioned that, apart from checking the details in the contract, there was no consistency in how a partner may use the contract once it was agreed. However, she understood that it was often used to manage performance internally within the organisation.

It seems here that the contract has become a fluid object in the same way that Law and Singleton (2005) found in their study of anaemia and hypoglycaemia, which showed how alcoholic liver disease could take on different meaning and divergent shapes in different parts of the hospital. As the data show, the contract is translated to become a new device to manage each partner's performance, thus shaping new practices, as it enters a partner's reality and becomes backgrounded as other actors are enrolled, such as reporting tools, performance outcomes and expertise on performance management.

It also holds its shape in relation to geography and its function as a contract, but it also takes on a different meaning and a different shape within the organisation, for example, to manage local delivery. However, Michael (2017) cautions that such translations are not necessarily gently fluid but can be abrupt which in turn can surface other actors which are backgrounded, taken for granted or 'othered'. Alyson (2020) noted such an abrupt translation when she explained that the contract may be rejected by a partner as they may no longer wish to deliver it or believe that the level of funding offered is insufficient to cover their costs, which would mean the cancelling of the contract.

A lot of the projects that we have delivered haven't been able to cover the corporate overheads. The funding we have received for them didn't cover the full costs of the projects. A lot of our funders are happy to pay for direct costs to the projects but are unkeen to pay for those corporate overheads.

(Interview, 2020)

This excerpt foregrounds some of the considerations that partners need to take into account in relation to the delivery of contracts and the potential reasons for not signing. It foregrounds the backgrounded actors, such as spreadsheets with financial calculations and staffing levels, which would have been integral to the decision about to whether the contract should be accepted. It appears that Alyson (2020) is having to consider how the contract is being performed in the partner's reality, how it is interacting with other assemblages and enacting other practices as the contract outlines the deliverables and finances for the project. As the contract is translated into the partners' reality through the enrolment of other actors, such as local delivery plans, technology and systems, it becomes a new device to help manage and monitor delivery as specified in the contract. This, in turn, gives a window into the partners' world as it foregrounds heterogeneous actors that support and/or impact on delivery and how the contract becomes entangled in a new assemblage, an internal management tool for the organisation. The data show that Alyson (2020) must be able to deal with any contracts that are not agreed by partners and be prepared to take action to identify other ways to deliver the activity, either through a new or current partner. In the next section, I shall continue to unpick how the contract enacts different realities and show how multiple sociomaterial worlds come to be.

5.2.3   Contracting as Multiple

In this section, I demonstrate how the contract is, in fact, not a singular object or assemblage, but instead multiple, as it is translated and enrolled into other assemblages in the performance management team within the case study social enterprise's and in a partner's reality. I draw on

the research conducted by Mol (2002) in her study, reported in *The Body Multiple,* where she

shows how atherosclerosis becomes multiple as it is enacted in different parts of the hospital

within different practices, including under a microscope or through a doctor touching a patient's

leg. I draw on this idea to explore how the contract is a fluid object, as described above, and

how it is multiple as it becomes a way to manage activity by external partners and internally to

manage performance and finance.

Journeying with the contract to understand what happened once the contracts were signed by

partners led to a discussion with Alyson (2020) and the performance management team.

> Interesting session observing the performance team meeting discussing
>
> contract performance with one of their partners. The contract was only part
>
> of what was considered at the meeting as there was reference to the funding
>
> guidance and a written 'report' received on progress against the contract.
>
> There was also internal information that was used by the team, including
>
> previous financial claims, funding guidance, and a copy of the performance
>
> planner to provide information on the overall project. It was clear that the
>
> contract did not sit in isolation and that the team also had to utilise their own
>
> expertise on performance management to agree the performance of each
>
> partner and any required actions. (Fieldnotes, 2020)

This fieldnote excerpt shows that the contract is translated into the 'doings' of the performance

management team through enrolling other actors, including the performance planner, funding

guidance, the partners' progress 'reports', financial claims and expertise (in performance

management, finance and engagement) to become part of the performance management

assemblage. This performance management assemblage then goes through further translation

through the collection of information from these meetings which is written up and entered into

the project planner assemblage, as discussed in Section 5.1, to enable reporting to the leadership team and the Board through the 'dashboard' (see Section 5.3).

During one of my observations, I benefited from attending one of the external partner performance meetings to see how the contract became translated into a partner's reality and becomes enrolled with the performance 'report'.

> Observed a partner meeting today to see how the social enterprise managed progress against what was agreed within the contract. The meeting was attended by Michelle (2020), the Contract Performance Manager, David, the Director of Operations, and Andy, the Project Manager from the partner organisation. At the meeting the Contract Performance Manager discussed a progress 'report' that was presented by the partner on progress against what was agreed in the contract. It showed that they were 12% behind on the number of customer outcomes delivered but were on track with expenditure. The Project Manager asked lots of questions on the reasons for this to get clarity, which resulted in a number of actions being agreed. (Fieldnotes, 2020)

This fieldnote extract foregrounds how the translation of the contract into the performance 'report' (Social Enterprise, 2020j) helps to enact a different reality, the partner's world, and therefore, how it works to manage delivery. Michael (2017) sees this translation as enabling coordination, or at least the management, of different realties and their practices. The data show that the contract has become fluid and is translated as it is enacted in a partner's reality and how it is not a single reality but is instead multiple, as the contract becomes enrolled in multiple assemblages and is doing different things in different places. It illustrates how the contract is translated through the enrolment of other actors, such as spreadsheets, technology,

'reports' and finance expertise to enact the progress 'report' assemblage to inform on outcomes delivered as part of the performance management process. The contract is then further translated within the case study social enterprise through the enrolment of other actors, such as the expertise of the service delivery team, referral forms, customer information, technology and numbers of clients to be recruited to enact a 'report' on progress to be discussed and actions agreed to address poor performance – "12% below target" (Social Enterprise, 2020j). It could be argued that the contract has become a 'shape-changing object' (Law and Singleton, 2005) as it is translated within the finance and performance management teams.

The data suggest that Michelle (2020) is attempting to manage the delivery of the project with partners with no real insight into the reality in which David and Andy are operating. Law and Singleton (2005), in their article on object lessons, see such enactments as existing in entirely different spatial logics or realities, and those spatial realities have complex relations with one another. It seems that Michelle (2020) is unaware of any financial, operational or staffing issues that may be affecting the contract being signed or the outcomes to be delivered. Law and Singleton (2005) argue that there is a need to attend as much to the mutability of what lies invisible below the waterline as to any immutability that arises above the surface. The data suggest that Michelle (2020) is reliant on the information provided by the partner, which may not be visible, and that other material arrangements amplify these sorts of invisibilities (such as financial or staffing issues) or push them further into the background. She mentioned that the performance meetings with partners can, at times, be difficult, as partners are not open about what is going on and do not provide proper reasons for slippage against the contract, which makes it difficult to agree what actions are required to get the planned delivery back on track. In the next section, I foreground the process enacted by leaders as the 'dashboard' assemblage is enacted.

5.3   Governing Effectively

In this section, I explore how the enactment and reporting of projects and managing organisational performance emerged as a key practices. Within the case study social enterprise, projects are mobilised once a funding letter has been received and the reporting integrated into other project and governance reporting activities, which is accomplished through the convening, connecting and enrolling of heterogeneous actors, such as systems and processes, technologies, partners and leaders. These reporting and governing practices are emergent and fluid as they do not always go to plan and are influenced and shaped by the power of visible and backgrounded human and nonhuman actors. As highlighted in the first section, one of the key actors foregrounded in the data was the project planner, as it appeared often and seemed to become entangled with the 'dashboard' in complex ways and influenced the doing of the governance 'dashboard'.

In the following anecdote, I foreground how the 'dashboard' and leaders together enact governance leadership practices and how this is translated through practice as part of a governance performance assemblage. I adopted an ANT-led approach and begin by interviewing the 'dashboard' as a way to speak with things and to give it a voice (Adams and Thompson, 2016). I also continue to 'follow the actors' and use the 'four moments' of translation, the heuristic of 'studying breakdowns, accidents, and anomalies', along with the following 'object interview questions' forwarded by Adams and Thompson (2016): What is made present/absent? Do some actors seem more powerful or persuasive than others? If so, how is this happening?

> **Developing the 'Dashboard'**
>
> The 'dashboard' for Corporate and Performance Reporting is new and was requested at the last Board meeting as the Chair, John, had expressed disappointment that there was not a simple 'dashboard' in place that pulled together organisational and project performance. George wasn't clear what

John was looking for and decides to call John to get clarification on what he would like the 'dashboard' to include. John explains that, in his last organisation, in the private sector, that a 'dashboard' was a key management tool and describes what he understands a good 'dashboard' to contain: organisational priorities, targets, and actual actions delivered and projects by business area risk-rated. He advises that the information contained in the 'dashboard' should come directly from the annual action plan and reporting that is required by each funder and that it should highlight the risk involved in project delivery in each business area. John is adamant that the 'dashboard' should be built up from organisational action plans and the detailed performance of each project enabling the information to be used in multiple ways so that the source of reporting to the leadership team and the Board is the same. John advises that the 'dashboard' should contain at minimum the deliverables by strategic priority, and this should be broken down for each quarter and the number of projects by business area analysed by risk.

Introducing the 'Dashboard'

The final 'dashboard' is titled Corporate and Project Reporting and has been created in Microsoft PowerPoint. It provides an overview of progress against organisational delivery and a risk assessment of projects currently being delivered by business area. The 'dashboard' has two charts and one table. At the top left there is a pie chart which sets out the five strategic areas for the organisation. Each section of the pie chart is colour-coded and overlayed with a percentage indicating the number of actions for each priority. Below this is a spider diagram. Again, this is organised around the five strategic

priorities but within the spider diagram it has a blue line indicating the number of actions to be delivered and a green line showing the number that have been delivered in that quarter. It currently shows a gap between what was planned and what was actually delivered.

To the right there is a table with five columns and eight rows. The first column is the business area and below this is each business area delivering projects. The next three columns are for risk rating the projects using green, amber and red for each of the business areas. The last column shows the total of all projects delivered. At the bottom of the table, the last row provides an overview of the total number of projects in each category based on risk. It shows: 51% at green – low risk, 27% at amber – medium risk, and 22% at red – high risk, as noted in the table on "Live projects between January and May 2017 by risk rating" in Figure 2 below.

Deliverables to be achieved in 2017 by Strategic Priority

- 1. Lead with vision
- 2. Deliver excellence through people
- 3. Deliver excellence through effective communication and collaboration
- 4. Deliver effective, efficient and valued services
- 5. Promote a safe and healthy environmen

Progress against quarter 2 planned deliverables
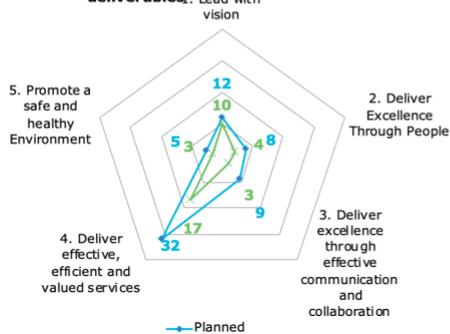
Live projects between January and May 2017 by risk rating

Business Area	Number of Low Risk Projects	Number of Medium Risk Projects	Number of High Risk Projects	Total
Employability & skills (Scotland)	11	3	6	20
Employability & skills (England)	0	2	2	4
Sustainability (Scotland)	12	4	2	18
Sustainability (England)	1	1	0	2
Community justice (Scotland)	2	3	0	5
Community justice (England)	0	1	1	2
Total	26 (51%)	14 (27%)	11 (22%)	51

Figure 2: Board 'dashboard'

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As I started to follow the 'dashboard' (see Figure 2), several negotiations and multiple assemblages began to emerge.

5.3.1 Discharging Authority – Persuasive Actors

I now focus on the practices that emerge as the 'dashboard' is stabilised to support governance. During one of my interviews with John (2020), the Chair, he explained that 'reports' provided to the Board did not always have the clarity that was required or were not simple enough to understand. I asked George (2020), the CEO, to explain why there was not already a 'dashboard' in place and what was normally provided. He explained that the Board received a summary 'report' which contained information on key projects, finances and strategy in the form of a paper. He mentioned that this allowed him to choose what information he provided, which enabled him to keep operational detail away to prevent the Board from getting involved in the day-to-day management of the organisation and to remain focused on governance. The need for the 'dashboard' had also come to light during an interview with John (2020): there was no 'dashboard' in place. There wasn't any sort of metrics, KPIs, dashboards and there was no management information systems at leadership or Board level (Interview).

The data show that the development of the 'dashboard' was not something that had come from the leadership team or the CEO but was prompted by John (2020), the Chair. It appears that John (2020) has become a powerful actor within the development of the 'dashboard', as he invited, convened and stabilised heterogeneous actors, including technology, computer programs, the project planner and leader's expertise to ensure that he and the Board are getting a clear overview of how the organisation is performing in relation to the delivery of organisational priorities and projects. The data show that he wanted clarity on key metrics and the development of management information that could be used for the Board and for the leadership team. It illustrates how George (2020) had to re-design the 'report' that had previously been provided and to take direction from John (2020) on its contents.

To demonstrate how the 'dashboard' was enacted in practice, I took a lead from the 'four moments' of translation, as this provided a more structured way to work through an understanding of a specific set of translations. The data show that John (2020) began by setting out the problem – *'problematisation'* – that is to say, the need for a 'dashboard' for the Board. Fenwick and Edwards (2012) see this problem-setting as being about what subjectivities and interests are allowable within specific networks and what is included and excluded. In defining the problem, then, John (2020) is enacting a powerful form of 'gatekeeping'. The next moment is *'interessement'* – to be 'interposed' (Callon, 1986), which involves generating interest from other actors, such as technology, systems and expertise. The data show that John (2020) introduces the 'dashboard' from a previous organisation and describes in detail what he expects a new 'dashboard' to show: organisational priorities, targets versus actual actions delivered, and projects by business area that have been risk-rated.

To enact the 'dashboard', other actors, which include the project planner, Microsoft PowerPoint, technology and expertise, have to join and be aligned within the actor network – *'enrolment'* (Callon, 1986). Nespor (2012), in his article on devices and educational change, proposes that the enrolment can include the representation of dispersed entities in stable, mobile, and combinable forms (textual or electronic). The data show that John (2020) did not want something created just for the Board but for the source data to be used to populate the 'dashboard' for the Board, the leadership team and the Scottish Government. John (2020) is clear that the source information for the 'dashboard' should come directly from each project and the delivery of organisational outcomes and should be created bottom-up, using the project planner as this would support the Board to be able to monitor indicators to ensure strategic alignment. This is consistent with the approach used by Bonde et al. (2018), in their study of governance in healthcare, where there was a difference between a strategic-led governance approach versus a local approach. The research found that the approach to building a strategic

framework for values-based healthcare should be accomplished through developing and using indicators and by aligning these strategically.

The final stage is *'mobilisation of allies'*, where a primary actor undertakes the role of a spokesperson for 'passive network actors; and mobilises them (Callon, 1986). Fenwick and Edwards (2012) suggest that it is through these mobilisations that networks are stabilised, however temporarily, and made manageable and mobile. This is evidenced in a study by Laasch et al. (2020), in their study into mobile applications as learning translations, which showed how app-enabled learning may create real-life actor networks by priming an actor-network pedagogy for 'learning in the wild'. The study found that, at the moment of mobilization, the learner becomes the network and the network becomes the learner; they become indistinguishable. My data suggest that the project planner acts as the primary actor, as John (2020) is clear in his instruction that the input for the 'dashboard' has to come through systems that are already in place. The study by Smith et al. (2017) showed how the role of the primary actor enables learning to take place between delegates through peer learning and how the primary actor constantly ensures that this happens. In the same way that the project planner is constantly shaping the performance of the 'dashboard', the planner becomes the 'dashboard' and the 'dashboard' becomes planner. In the next section, I consider the Practices enacted by leaders as the 'dashboard' is stabilised and presented to the Board.

5.3.2   Attuning to Power and Politics

In this section, I explore the practices enacted to become attuned to the power and politics of the 'dashboard' as it was established and presented to the Board. This helps illustrate the notion of translation and how some actors become more powerful and persuasive than others and have more connections.

The data foreground that governing performance (Section 5.3) is a tension as the Board interacts with the 'dashboard', moving it from being 'matters of fact' to 'matters of concern'. To further untangle the multiple assemblages that enact governance, I explore how the 'dashboard' becomes, or the becoming of the 'dashboard', to foreground the practices that emerge as a result. I do so through observing which actors invited action and framed thinking, as well as the other assemblages that began to emerge. I draw out practices that help to illustrate the complexities involved in the power and politics at the board. My fieldnotes included the following:

'Dashboard' in Action

The Board considered the new 'dashboard' at its meeting today. It is the first time that the Board has been able to review this following the direction from John, the Chair of the Board, on what it should contain. George (2020), the CEO, introduced it during the agenda item on organisational and project performance. He began by outlining what it contained – a pie chart showing the percentage of deliverables achieved by priority to date, the number of deliverables by organisational priority – actual versus target for the quarter and finally, projects by business area risk rated. Once George (2020) had finished the introduction he handed back to John (2020), the Chair of the Board.

John (2020) then invited other Board members to make comment. One Board had a question in relation to the spider diagram and why it showed that in a number of the strategic priorities, e.g., deliver excellence through people priority, as it had achieved only half of the planned deliverables to date. John (2020) then asked a second question in relation to the risk-rating

of projects and why 22% of projects were in the high-risk category. John (2020) invited George (2020) to respond to the questions.

George (2020) turned first to the question on organisational deliverables. He began by outlining the fact that the chart only provided a summative view of where the organisation was in relation to the delivery of its strategic priorities. It was not possible to provide the detail required to explain why things were not delivered but he would be happy to do so. George (2020) explained that a number of activities had been delayed due to a lack of funding to invest in the recruitment and training of people and the processes required to further transform the organisation. He then went on to answer the question on risk. He confirmed that eleven projects were at red risk and the main reasons being that they had been unable to attract the number of clients to the projects which then impacted the level of payments that could be drawn down from the funder.

Once George (2020) was finished answering, John (2020) asked George (2020) further questions about what action would be taken to address non-delivery of the strategic priorities, to recruit clients and to manage budgets to enable investment. George (2020) indicated that he did not have the operational detail to hand but would prepare a full 'report' on these questions for the next Board meeting. (Fieldnote, 2020)

Continuing to follow the 'dashboard', I attended a Board meeting to see how it was enacted in practice. My fieldnote showed the following:

An interesting session today observing how the Board used the new
dashboard to hold the leadership team to account for project delivery. The
meeting got very heated on two areas within the dashboard – project
outcomes and risk. Additional information was requested on why the project
outcomes were behind where they should be in this quarter and why if the
outcomes were not on target that the budget was overspent. Initially, only
short answers were provided, but Board members were not happy with the
responses. There was further probing and what came to the surface were
two partners who were not delivering against contracted outcomes. There
was also a recent wage increase which had not been factored in which was
now causing an overspend. It was noticeable that this detail was not provided
in the 'dashboard' or any other 'reports' to the Board. After the meeting, I
asked Kerry (2020) about it and she indicated that, at previous meetings,
before the dashboard was in place, it was easier for these issues to remain
hidden, as previous 'reports' only showed what was happening at a top-level
and in summary form only. (Fieldnote, 2020)

As foregrounded in this fieldnote, the dashboard is an important part of the governance process
and a vehicle for the Board to contest delivery and provide strategic input and for the leadership
team to then translate this into action to manage the organisation. From an ANT standpoint,
there are politics involved in the performance of the dashboard due to the ways in which
objects, activities or practices become objects of contestation (Barry, 2001). Stenger (1997)
suggests that this is caused by the way in which something moves and turns around a topic and
that it only exists when there is an active issue which allows all kinds of 'others' to object to the
stories being told. It appears that the dashboard is a matter of fact that has become matter of

concern, as Board members question the content and challenge the leadership team on delivery of both organisational and project outcomes.

The data show that, through the questioning by the Board, new actors – finance, stakeholder performance, and wage increases – are foregrounded on the reasons for not delivering organisational outcomes and for projects that are at either rated as an amber or red risk. The data suggest that the Board are not taking the dashboard at face value, as 'absolute truths' (Latour, 2005), but are instead challenging and questioning the information presented. Latour (2005) regards these discussions as *Dingpolitik,* as these did not simply involve humans but include the many concerns with which they are entangled. 'Matters of fact' are translated in terms of their complex relationalities, as 'matters of concern', and there is an open 'invitation' to contribute to an assemblage that is extended to all those assemblages that have a claim.

During the observation at the Board meeting, it seemed that the dashboard did not sit in isolation but was part of a new assemblage enrolling other actors. Moreover, in such re-assembling, the dashboard is implicated in layers of translations in order to help to enact complex assemblage of governance. The data show that Board members invited other actors, the finance 'report' (Social Enterprise, 2020k) and information on how to recruit potential clients, to gain further insight into the 'matters of concern'. Once the actors were enrolled and the assemblage stablished, the data show that this is used to challenge the leadership team in relation to organisational performance, finance and customer recruitment, thus enabling the Board to ask questions. Following the meeting, I spoke to John (2020), where he explained that he believed that the dashboard only provided the Board with a snapshot of how the organisation and projects were performing. He recognised that this was based on political decisions made by the leadership team on what should or not be included, as the actors enrolled would have a direct impact on the dashboard. This was also evident in interviewing the dashboard as some

actors were foregrounded and others backgrounded which directly impacted on the version presented to the Board.

The data show that the leadership team did not provide information on a range of management or staffing issues unless raised by the Board and so would remain hidden unless questioned. It appears that the leadership team members have considered the information that would be presented in the dashboard and have taken time to try and ensure that it is sufficient to meet the needs of the Board, but also that it keeps them away from operational matters, enabling them to upwardly manage the Board. Spear et al. (2009), found in their study into the governance challenges of social enterprises, that boards had difficulties controlling management as there were inadequate systems to spot when things went wrong and management tried to cover things up. The development of the dashboard provides the stable base to manage the leadership team and is integral to governance as it cannot be separated from the context in which it is presented. For Latour (2004), the dashboard relations are 'matters of fact' that are political renderings of 'matters of concern' as it only described what was happening. He cautions that:

> reality is not denied by 'matters of fact'. 'Matters of fact' are not all that is
> given in experience. 'Matters of fact' are only very partial and, I would argue,
> very polemical, very political renderings of 'matters of concern' and only a
> subject of what could also be called states of affairs. (pp. 231–232)

In the next section, I shall consider how the project planner is integral to and influential in the performance of the dashboard assemblage.

5.3.3   Powerful Actors

In this section, I explore how the project planner, as discussed in Section 5.1, comes to the fore again as it is enacted as soon as funding has been confirmed for a project. In this cluster of Practices, the project planner becomes entangled with the 'dashboard'. I continue to follow the project planner, which led to spending time with Kerry (2020) to understand how the dashboard was going to be built following John's (2020) instruction. She explained that George (2020) had spoken to her and had outlined that the dashboard had to provide an overview of the number of actions delivered against the five organisational priorities and the number of projects by business area and risk-rated. As Kerry (2020) described the process for developing the dashboard, it was evident that a number of nonhuman actors became present and were enrolled in the dashboard assemblage, such as the funding application, the project planner, and the operational plan. My fieldnotes included the following:

> Information was gathered using internal data from the project management system – Microsoft Project which was used to record and manage data on organisational and project performance to create project planners. Reporting was set up at the start of each calendar year to record progress against strategic outcomes. Project performance monitoring was set up as soon as a project had been approved, a funding letter provided, and it had moved into mobilisation stage. At that point a project planner was established to manage the delivery of the strategic priorities/actions and also for each project. (Fieldnotes, 2020)

The fieldnote extract shows that the project planner is the primary actor and enrols a range of actors, including the data reporting and exporting tool on Microsoft Project, Microsoft PowerPoint, technology and expertise, and that at no point during the discussions at the Board meetings was any reference made to the contents of the project planner or the other actors

involved in the dashboard. The project planner is an actor-network, active in the assemblage that has come to be the dashboard, but remains invisible although it directly shapes the dashboard. Following Latour (2005), this suggests that this is because the project planner has become a centre of calculation, where heterogeneous actors of the emergent network come together, connect, stabilise and can return to the world as an actor-network where each element has its role and its relations to recreate. Latour (2005) argues that it is at such 'centres of calculation' that specimens, diagrams, logs, questionnaires and paper forms of all sorts are collected and tied together as new 'compressed' two-dimensional representations. Latour (2005) suggests that these can then be merged into a single representation and, through these processes, become simpler inscriptions which in turn produce stable knowledge.

The data show that the project planner assemblage is an integral and powerful influence on the dashboard and demonstrates that the output from the project planner to the dashboard is carried out reductively. The Microsoft Project undertook a number of calculations to create the charts and a table to present the information in a simplified way for the Board, which, in turn, directly influences the thinking by the Board based on these representations. These calculations enabled the enactment of two charts organised around the five strategic priorities: *lead with vision; deliver excellence through people; deliver excellence through effective communication and collaboration; deliver effective, efficient and valued services; and promote a safe and healthy environment.* The first showed the percentage of activities delivered by priority, and the second, a spider diagram, which used different colours to show the total number of deliverables and the actual number delivered to date. A table was also provided, which provided an overview of each business area, the number of projects in each category, risk-rated using red, amber and green to demonstrate risk status (Social Enterprise, 2020c).

The data show that the calculations prompted the Board to contest the contents. It shows that George (2020), the CEO, is unable to provide the detail required to answer all the questions

posed and how this marginalises other actors, including the original funding application, project

partners, and clients, who remain backgrounded due to the translation of the project planner to

become the dashboard assemblage for the Board. In the next section the process enacted by

leaders as stakeholder advocacy is performed.

5.4 Stakeholder Advocacy

For social enterprises, influencing and engaging with stakeholders, funders and politicians is a

key part of their role to ensure that the organisation remains visible and that the social mission

is evidenced in policy and funders prioritise support for the social mission. The approach to

stakeholder engagement differs across social enterprises, but often starts with the mapping of

those with whom the organisation is engaged – stakeholders, funders and politicians – and an

exploration of the level of engagement – familiarity, favourability and advocacy – to understand

how to target resources in areas where influence is not strong.

In Section 5.1, I followed the funding letter from the Scottish Government and showed the

practices enacted to mobilise projects. To foreground the practices for Stakeholder Advocacy, I

investigate this using the four moments of translation – *problematisation*, *interessement*,

enrolment, and *mobilisation of allies*. I use these moments to describe the process of translation

set out by Callon (1986) and represent this as a set of little stories that are held together by

ambivalences and oscillations (Law, 2004) and not as a single narrative. I use these to understand

how an actor-network is created and how actors undertake certain roles within the network in

relation to one another. I look to unravel the relations, agency and effects of both the human

and nonhuman actors to understand the practices enacted in Stakeholder Advocacy. Using these

four moments provided a new way to study sustainable innovation and the collaborative

processes performed.

The following anecdote, a rich description of practices, drawn from my research data, is used to explore the practices enacted by leaders as they seek to carryout stakeholder advocacy. This anecdote describes what happens once the case study social enterprise receives funding letters that has declined a funding bid or the amount of funding has been reduced. It details how stakeholder advocacy is performed through the mobilising of heterogeneous actors and how this is entangled with practices.

Understanding Stakeholder Advocacy

Leaders are meeting today to review how they are carrying out stakeholder engagement. Around the room there are flip chart pages pinned to the walls. There are black marker pens on the tables. George opens the session outlining that the task today is to understand the organisation's relationship with stakeholders who have had an influence on organisational funding. He points to the flipchart sheets on the wall and asks them to pick up a marker pen. On the flipchart there is a heading at the top: partners, politicians and funders. The pages are split into four columns. The first is stakeholder name, the second is familiarity, the third is favourability, and the fourth is advocacy. The leadership team is asked to name eighteen stakeholders, six for each category, and to place an 'X' in the box on their assessment for each stakeholder under the three categories of familiarity, favourability, and advocacy in relation to funding. A stakeholder could have an entry in all three.

There is a lot of chatter as people discuss who the stakeholders are and their assessment. It is noticeable that there are a lot of entries in the partners, funders and less in the politicians. As they work through the assessment of each group of stakeholders, it is noticeable that the flipcharts are showing a

predominance of entries for 'familiarity' and 'favourability' outcomes. George asks the room how they view this? Two members of the leadership team comment that they are pleased with this as it shows that they are well thought off and stakeholders 'on the whole' like what the social enterprise does.

George bends down and picks up a pile of papers from the desk. He holds them up and notes that in his hand were applications for funding that had been turned down despite the funders being familiar and favourable about the work of the social enterprise they still did not actively advocate for it. The flip chart sheets show the lack of prioritisation on politicians by the team, clearly demonstrating the level of influence across the Scottish Parliament. It is only through the identification of all stakeholders who have influence, interest or are a funder and moving them to become advocates for the organisation that it is possible to generate funding to deliver the social mission.

5.4.1 Unpicking (Un)certainty

In this section, I explore the practices that emerge as the outcome of the funding letter becomes problematised in the everyday work of leaders in social enterprises and what this means for stakeholder advocacy. Taking the lead from the first stage of translation, *problematisation*, the analysis begins with a problem being recognised. In Landri's (2021) study, the problem set out was to describe how translation foregrounded the controversies and renewed efforts "for better measures and a more effective regime of accountability" (p. 114). In the same way, this section seeks to translate the different actors involved in stakeholder advocacy through creating new alliances and users, and new actants using these four moments, recognising Landri's (2021) view that problematisation' can only be a reality if it passes several 'tests', including *interessement*,

enrolment, and *mobilisation of allies*. I use the funding letter that proposed a cut to funding as the problem to be addressed (Social enterprise, 2020l).

The funding letter came to the fore during one of the interviews with George, as mentioned above, where he was very animated about the potential impact of the proposed cut to funding contained in the letter. He expressed real concern about his leadership team's understanding of the importance of influencing stakeholders, the potential impact of individual stakeholder views, and the impact if they did not actively advocate for the organisation.

> You know, just turning up and saying, "Hi, we're (social enterprise) and we're great," isn't good enough … Everyone was telling me; everyone knows what we do. Everyone was very positive about what we do. What I was able to demonstrate was that they were legends in their own minds and about they did, and they hadn't really gone out and checked who knows who we are, and what do they feel about what we do. (Interview, 2020)

This interview extract demonstrates George's exasperation and the fact that he does not believe that the information on stakeholder views on, for example, politicians articulated by the leadership team is accurate. He is clear that this needs to be addressed to ensure that the leadership team and the wider organisation has access to the information that they require to be able to influence and inform individual stakeholders going forward. George mentioned that it had also been discussed at the first leadership team meeting following receipt of the letter and that it was clear that the team did not agree with the reasons as to why it had happened. George believed that this was down to stakeholders not being engaged with properly or having up to date knowledge and understanding on what the social enterprise was delivering and the outcomes being achieved.

Mechanisms of translation may align to how problems end up being addressed. For example, Fenwick and Edwards (2012) suggest that this is achieved through processes of framing and deletion, or the selection, privileging and categorisation of elements. The analysis shows that stakeholders are segmented and privileged into three broad areas of partners, funders, and politicians, and then categorised into three columns to understand the difference between familiarity, favourability and advocacy, to create clarity and to help understanding. My fieldnotes including the following:

> Interesting day observing work on stakeholder mapping. Lots of discussion
> and debate and very different views on how each stakeholder was viewed. It
> was clear that some leaders believed that some organisations had a more
> positive view than was demonstrated, either through the amount of
> successful funding bids or grants showed or new relationships developed.
> Lots of discussion about funding policy, tender documents, and individual
> relationships with stakeholders. (Fieldnotes)

The fieldnote illustrates that leaders are not in agreement on the status of their relationship or involvement with individual stakeholders or what this means for the social enterprise. It also foregrounds other actors that could impact future funding letters, including funding policy, tender documents and relationship status. During discussions with George, he mentioned that he wanted a full picture to be built for each stakeholder under three headings: partners, funders, and politicians, as each of these stakeholders has different strategic priorities, funding drivers and commitments, which may have an impact on whether they would advocate for the social enterprise. The analysis shows the work enacted to map stakeholders in order to influence priorities, funding and other commitments is a key practice. In the next section, I shall continue to take the lead the four moments of translation and consider moments two and three,

interessement and *enrolment*, to further unpick the everyday practices enacted in Stakeholder Advocacy.

5.4.2   Generating a Shared Understanding

Fenwick and Edwards (2012) posit that *interessement* is an attempt to impose and stabilise the identity of the other actors defined through problematisation. An example is provided by Michael (2017), who describes how the electric vehicle in France was first problematised as the public was failing to fulfil their desires for a more ecological France, and how they were then *interested* in the identity centred on electric vehicles as a solution to the problem. Landri (2021) explains that to 'inter-esse' comes from a Latin expression meaning 'to be in between', or to impose. It involves the building of devices of interest to other actors, which at the same time, may weaken, or cut, their ties to other entities that try to define them differently. To enact the benchmarking exercise, then, leaders 'Interesse' to fulfil their desires to improve advocacy by stakeholders for the benefit of the social enterprise.

During my interview with George, he outlined how stakeholder engagement works and described the benefit of managing stakeholders effectively.

> I've always got a very clear view of how stakeholder engagement works and
> it's, surprise, surprise, it's based on how relationships work. It's got three
> elements to it, and, and it moves in a journey almost. It's based on familiarity,
> favourability and advocacy and on the basic premise of, people can't like you
> if they don't know you. They can't like what you do if they don't know what
> you do. They can't like what you do if they don't understand what you do.
> Once you get that level of familiarity established then you can work on
> favourability because, actually, once you fully understand it and interrogate
> it, question it and ruminate over it and become comfortable with it and see

the impacts of it, they become favourable towards it and through sustained

favourability you get advocacy. Where people are saying, "Oh, actually, if it's

justice you need to speak to those guys. We've done work with them."

(Interview, 2020)

This interview extract demonstrates the complexity of stakeholder engagement and that it

involves a 'journey' of moving from familiarity through favourability to advocacy. It is only at the

advocacy stage that stakeholders are likely to recommend the organisation for engagement,

funding or involvement in project delivery. George mentioned that, for an organisation to be

familiar, it has to be provided with and have a basic level of information and insight into it what

it does, which is often provided through strategy (Social Enterprise, 2020m), website (Social

Enterprise, 2020n) and customer information (Social Enterprise, 2020o). To be favourable

requires the provision of further information, such as organisational outcomes and information

on services to clients, which is normally provided through annual reports (Social Enterprise,

2020k), information on project performance (Social Enterprise,2020d), and communications

activities, which arise through close working with the social enterprise. Finally, advocacy,

requires the sharing and understanding of more detailed information on the wide range of

services offered, project delivery plans and contracts, which are enacted through strong and

increasingly personal relationships between leaders.

During the interview with George, he introduces the notion of a 'benchmarking exercise' as a

way to help the leadership team understand why stakeholder advocacy is important, what is

involved and how to do it. To carry out the benchmarking exercise requires the generation of

interest from other actors – *interessement*. Fenwick and Edwards (2012) argue that this requires

a new alliance, collecting the actors together and developing mechanisms for the undermining

potential competing associations. Such mechanisms are defined in and distributed through a

new 'infrastructure'". In the same way, interest is generated from other actors, including the flipchart, pens, desks, chairs and leaders' expertise to perform the benchmarking exercise.

Moving on to the third of the four moments of translation, this section considers the moment of *enrolment* in enacting the benchmarking exercise on stakeholder advocacy. Fenwick and Edwards (2012) suggest that enrolment involves assembling elements and devices, forms of social interactions which will enable the actors to perform the identities required of them within the network. They argue how this requires material investments, strong alliance and the skills of policy implementers to make systematic changes feasible (Ibid). An example of enrolment was provided by Nespor (2012), in his article exploring devices and educational change, who notes that techniques can range from mobilisation in the flesh, assembling strikers for a mass rally, for example, or translating students into mobile practitioners for a discipline – to the representation of previously dispersed entitles in stable, mobile, and combinable forms. In the same way, the analysis shows how other actors are enrolled to enact the benchmarking exercise on stakeholder advocacy, including the flipchart, which is marked up using the pens, and which has four columns along the top, stakeholder name, familiarity, favourability, and advocacy, and three sections down the left, partners, politicians, and funders. At this point, the funding letter becomes foregrounded again as George reminds the team that the reasons that the work must be performed is due to the contents of the last funding letter received from the Scottish Government (see Chapter 5). George asked them to keep this in mind as they were completing the exercise.

During the session, participants work together to place an 'X' in the boxes against each stakeholder (partner, funder, or politician) which enrols other actors, including projects that have been jointly delivered with partners, meetings with politicians and partners, political party manifestos, funding announcements, submitted funding bids, and individual expertise. Michael (2017) describes such enrolments as the successful placing into designated roles of given

entities, these entities are dissociated from previous relations and placed into new desired associations so that they can perform appropriately within a network. The analysis shows that the participants' marking of the 'Xs' in the columns on familiarity, favourability and advocacy are directly influenced by the enrolment of these new actors as each stakeholder is discussed. The analysis illustrates the invitation, negotiation and stabilisation of heterogeneous to enact the stakeholder mapping which is a key practice for leaders. In the next section, I continue to take the lead from the four moments of translation and consider the fourth, *mobilisation of allies*. I use these to further unpick the everyday practices relating to Stakeholder Advocacy that are foregrounded as the outcome of the benchmarking exercise is realised.

5.4.3   Mobilising for Success

Here, I continue to move through the four moments and now turn to mobilisation of allies. Callon (1986) provides an example of such mobilisation in his study of the fishermen in St Brieuc Bay, when some representatives approve the restocking of a scallops project on behalf of all the fishermen.

To enact the benchmarking exercise on stakeholder advocacy, multifarious actors are convened, coerced and stabilised. The section above shows how the exercise foregrounded the position of stakeholders – partners, funders and politicians – against the three areas of familiarity, favourability, and advocacy. Fenwick and Edwards (2012) argue that, following such translations, these actors can appear to become stabilised: the network can settle into a stable process or object that maintains itself, it appears naturalised, purified, immutable and inevitable, while concealing all the negotiations that brought it into existence. The analysis shows that, once the benchmarking exercise had been performed, there are fewer entries in the third column on advocacy than in the other two on familiarity and favourability, which illustrates the lack of engagement with politicians.

It also shows that through the co-agency of the leaders and actors, such as the rejected applications, a new mechanism is enacted to help the leadership team understand the position of partners, funders and politicians and the level of influence against familiarity, favourability and advocacy as a result of the benchmarking exercise. The outcome invites George to take the pen, which he uses to mark a large 'X' in the last column, to highlight the gap in influence. He also picks up the rejected applications to show the impact of a lack of advocacy by partners, funders and politicians on the funding of the social enterprise. At this point, the funding letter becomes foregrounded again as George explains that, in his view, the proposed cut to funding was a direct result of a lack of advocacy within the Scottish Government for the social enterprise. He re-iterated that this was the prompt for the benchmarking activity and that he has already seen success from the exercise through recent winning applications.

During an interview with George, he mentioned what had happened when they did this for one specific set of stakeholders.

> So, the piece we did with justice, for example, was drilling down across the contract managers, the partners, the community justice partnerships, the Senior Civil Servants in justice and the Cabinet Secretary, and we divided them up and over 12 months we devised and worked clearly on an engagement strategy with them. Each one of us knows exactly who owns what stakeholder and we also have a clear understanding of where that stakeholder should sit in relation to their interest and influence for us. And, if they are not there, we do that by surveying them and understanding how well they understand us, how positive they feel towards us, how supportive they would be of us. If they are not where they should be, we work out a very clear engagement strategy to move them to somewhere else in the matrix.
>
> (Interview, 2020)

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The interview extract shows how the stakeholder benchmarking exercise on the justice sector shaped how the social enterprise thought about and then took action to increase advocacy. It also illustrates the co-agency of leaders and actors, and shows how the organisation identified important stakeholders, such as Contract Managers, partners, Community Justice Partnerships, Senior Civil Servants and the Cabinet Secretary. It illustrates how leaders are allocated individuals to engage with over a twelve-month period to ensure that the social enterprise remained visible and that the social mission is advocated in policy, funding and political activities.

The analysis also shows how new actors, such as a survey and the engagement strategy, are enrolled to obtain a more in-depth understanding of how stakeholders view the social enterprise, which provided a new device to move stakeholder through the matrix from familiarity, favourability to advocacy along with the steps to be taken. George was quick to point out that they had already had a positive outcome from the work, as the social enterprise appeared in committee papers in terms of an exemplary of restorative and rehabilitative justice (Interview, 2020), and how important this was for the role of the social enterprise as it sought to develop future services, commenting that things don't happen just because someone has got a bright idea. They happen because you've got a platform that you've built over a period of time to enable you to have those conversations" (Interview, 2020).

This interview extract illustrates how the social enterprise has to continue to come up with 'bright ideas' to be able to deliver their social mission. It shows that the organisation has to be able to build strong and effective relationships and be able to develop effective communication channels in order to inform and influence the partner, funder or politician so that the social enterprise is on their radar when policy or funding decisions are made. Oborn et al. (2013, p. 272) found that:

leaders have a unique ability to enrol colleagues due in part to their ability to

relate to each other through accepted historical and institutional structures.

This can lead to unique coalitions that span existing collegial networks

thereby reconfiguring the policy context. Rather than it being seen as an

entirely political contest, enable characteristics of scientific rationality,

professional expertise and lay participation to infuse the policy process.

The analysis shows that, to move stakeholders from favourability to advocacy, multifarious actors had to be coalesced, coordinated and stabilised to enact a new mechanism, a stakeholder influencing strategy, to ensure that key stakeholders were targeted and that there was an identified leader to manage the relationship. Fenwick and Edwards (2012) suggest that it is in the final moment of mobilisation the few come to speak to many. There is one united voice and a new settlement which is no longer questioned. This illustrates that the final mobilisation stage enacts stakeholder advocacy which is a key practice for leaders. In the next section, I provide a summary of the chapter, outlining the practices that were foregrounded through the analysis on the three clusters of practices: mobilising projects (Section 5.1), delivering through networks (Section 5.2), Governing Performance (Section 5.3) and Stakeholder Advocacy (Section 5.4).

5.5   Summary

In this chapter, I have analysed three leadership practices: mobilising projects (Section 5.1), delivering through networks (Section 5.2), governing performance (Section 5.3) and stakeholder advocacy (Section 5.2), which are enacted by leaders as projects are managed and governed and leaders influence funders and policy makers. To do so, I drew on four objects as entry points into my data and analysis: the funding letter, the project planner, the contract, and the dashboard, which helped to foreground a number of practices. These practices show that, in order to mobilise projects, govern and enact stakeholder advocacy, each of these objects, together with a range of human actors, went through multiple translations.

In the first section, mobilising projects (Section 5.1), key practices emerged on ways to find a path and to order and re-order materials to stabilise the project planner, recognising the important role that technology plays within the material assemblage, and how this was translated into 'reports' for the leadership team, the Board and the Scottish Government. Also, to understand the role of backgrounded actors, such as the funding application, as this had a material effect on the project planner assemblage.

In the second section, delivering through networks (Section 5.2), practices were foregrounded on how to manage partner performance through a legally binding contract, with information being drawn accurately from the funding application. This also highlights how to deal with the fluidity of these contracts if partners had difficulties delivering or turned down the contract and how these contacts were translated into partners' realities, recognising that these contracts were multiple and took on different meanings in different realities.

In the third section, governing performance (Section 5.3), showed practices on how to develop the dashboard assemblage, to meet the demands of the Chair and to enable it to perform its role in supporting governance of the case study social enterprise. It illustrated learnings on how to build the dashboard, and, to do so in a bottom-up manner, from the project planner assemblage. It also illustrated how politics were enacted through the Board Chair becoming a central point of action in the development of the dashboard and how they managed areas of contestation to ensure that the Board members remained focused on the strategic plan and did not get involved in operational detail.

In the fourth section, stakeholder advocacy (Section 5.4), the analysis foregrounded practices on how to understand the level of stakeholder influence through the lens of favourability, familiarity and advocacy and the benefits of doing this effectively. Also revealed was how,

through the co-agency of leaders and actors, such as funding policy, tender documents and individual relationships, stakeholders could become advocates for the social enterprise.

Overall, the analysis of these leadership practices has shown that, although enacting projects is what "leaders do", these practices are performed through complex assemblages of social and material elements that work together to become stabilised and de-stabilised, assembled and re-assembled in leaders' everyday work. Therefore, leaders need to navigate these movements and shifts amidst very complex assemblages.

The analysis illustrates how ANT provides a way to uncover leadership practices that would not have become visible by using traditional 'competency-based' approaches. It shows how leaders have to consider the agentic force of things, the co-agency of human and nonhuman actors, the ordering and re-ordering of actors within assemblages, such as the project planner, and how technology is used to translate these into 'reports' to the leadership team and the board. Furthermore, it illuminates how leaders develop practices on how to be aware of backgrounded actors, such as the funding letter, as this directly influences and shapes reporting to the board, and the management of performance by partners. It end by demonstrating the importance of developing practices to understand stakeholder advocacy to ensure delivery of the social mission of the organisation. In the next chapter, I consider how leaders develop practices in order to develop stakeholder influence.

Chapter 6: Discussion

6.1   Introduction

The research undertaken in this doctoral thesis was to examine what practices leaders in social enterprises are enacting in practice. To explore this broad overarching research enquiry, two specific research questions were formulated:

1. How do leaders in social enterprises develop practices to enable effective governance by the Board?

2. How do leaders in social enterprises cultivate practices to manage delivery?

3. How do leaders in social enterprises develop practices to negotiate the complex stakeholder relations to progress the social mission?

The aim of this study was to explore how leaders developed their practices, while recognising the internal and external constraints that leaders face on. a day-to-day basis to deliver their social mission. I adopted an ANT-based approach to gain an understanding of the relational materiality of leadership practices though my analysis of the data, as presented in Chapter 5. The analysis suggests that leadership is enacted in diverse ways as leaders wrestle with everyday work. Reckwitz (2002) agrees, and suggests that it is only possible to understand leadership through the relationality that is established between actors in order to define the components of leadership. It is through these findings that the three research questions are answered.

The findings chapter foregrounded leadership practices that were directly related to the research questions, and was supported by the use of a variety of different theoretical lenses. The chapter considers the practices performed in mobilising projects (Section 5.1), delivering through networks (Section 5.2), governing effectively (Section 5.3) and stakeholder advocacy (Section 5.4).

This section focuses on the outcomes of the research as a whole and is presented by responding to each of the three research questions, in turn. It draws from the literature and theory presented in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 and the analyses presented in Chapter 5 to address the research questions. Where appropriate, reference to the relevant chapters and sections are provided in brackets to illustrate the connections that are being made in this discussion with the material presented in Chapters 1 to 5.

6.2 Research Question One

1. How do leaders in social enterprises develop practices to enable effective governance by the Board?

The case study social enterprise, an enterprising not-for-profit organisation [ENP] (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2019) is a specific legal form that requires governance that supports the delivery of grants and/or contracts from public sector bodies and other organisations (Ridley-Duff, 2008). Low (2006) argues that social enterprise governance of this type should be based on a stewardship model to ensure financial sustainability rather than a democratic model usually found in grant dependent organisations. Larner and Mason (2014) suggests that the governance should also support the creation and maximisation of social benefit. The findings show that leaders need to provide assurance to the Board to meet these specific requirements through reporting, such as via dashboards, to support its members with their governance role in holding the leadership to account for organisational and project delivery (Section 5.2). However, such dashboards do not present what may have been backgrounded by management in the preparation of them, such as qualitative reports from partners or cancelled contracts (Sections 5.2 and 5.3), or take into account the contesting of such papers by the Board, which could see the dashboard move quickly from being matters of fact to becoming matters of concern as the Board enrol other actors, such as finance reports and the recruitment of clients, to further translate the dashboard assemblage to become part of a governance assemblage (Section 5.3).

To meet the demands of governance, Ebrahim et al. (2014) posits that social enterprises must be able to handle the trade-off between their commercial ambitions with their social activities and not lose sight of their social purpose. The findings support this, as it shows that the dashboard reporting took account of the organisational priorities and the delivery of projects to ensure that it was able to deliver activity in order to claim payments for the outcomes delivered aligned to the social mission and agreed within the funding letter (Section 5.2). Ebrahim et al. (2014) also argue that the social enterprise must also be accountable for delivering both financial and social results and ensure that these dual performance outcomes are complementary rather than contradictory. The study shows that the case study social enterprise has to combine both charitable and business activities, and the dashboard which is used to hold management to account to ensure that they are able to delivery these dual goals (Section 5.2). Bull and Crompton (2006), however, caution about transferring business models from the private sector as they do not always fit with social enterprises and suggest the use of a balanced scorecard to provide a more holistic view of the organisation. The findings however show that the Board benefited from the dashboard as it was entangled in actions to contest performance and enabled a deeper understanding or organisational and project performance (Section 5.3).

Spear et al. (2009) found that these Charitable Trading Activities (CTAs) also offer specific governance challenges, such as the development of multi-level governance structures which place new demands on board members, such as the coordination of strategic programmes, and the understanding of business models. The Social Enterprise Alliance (2010) also found that leaders needed to present a realistic picture of the vision and the associate risk and rewards on these factors and present this on paper to ensure understanding. My findings support this, as it shows how the Board wanted to access reporting that enabled performance reporting from base data, the project planner (Section 5.1), which involved alignment with individual projects and reporting to be built up layer by layer so that it performed in different ways and could report to

different groups (Section 5.3). Pouyat (2010) points out, in her article on good board governance in social enterprise, the importance of Boards carrying out this governance role to ensure that expectations are met in relation to performance and to ensure that risk is managed appropriately in order to provide clear direction for leaders. The findings show that board members did not take things at face value and contested decisions, inviting management to foreground additional information, such as partners reports to fully understand performance and gain assurance that things were on track and risk was being managed effectively (Section 5.3). Ridley-Duff and Bull (2015), however, cautions leaders on disregarding the agency embodied in the interface between members of the organisation and the Board, as current charity law limits participation to external participants and suggests that this reinforces the view that employees are subordinate to the authority of the Board. This was evidenced through my research as leaders report organisational performance to the Board, and the Board holds the leadership team accountable for delivery, thus leaders need to be cognisant of this power dynamic and the agency enacted.

This notion of agency, however, is not just related to the boundary between leaders and the board, but is extended further within this research, as it is not just about the Board and the organisation, but also the multifarious nonhuman actors that are caught up in the enactment of leadership. Raelin (2016) suggests that such agency appears during times of a crisis or where these is inadequate knowledge about what to do. The findings show that leaders had to contend with the Board when the dashboard was presented and contested and how actors, such as technology, reports, translated people enact data charts and visualisations, through regimes of data categorisation and ordering, amplifying and ordering certain projects and people, performing specific leadership practices (Section 5.3). Oborn et al. (2013) argue that these actors are not passive but are mediators as they make a difference, it matters when documents or technology is enrolled, as the network is undone and redone. In the study by Landri (2021, p.

91) on educational leadership, management and administration using ANT, he found that to

achieve this work, not only humans are involved, but also the multiplicity of nonhuman entities

as they help get the work done and include diaries, documents, files, phones, computers and

digital platforms. The findings show that when new actors such as partner reports were enrolled

that this performed a new assemblage the board governance dashboard to help it discharge its

governance responsibilities.

The analysis shows that through the dashboard the Board is assured that the projects are

delivering the outcomes required as set out in the funding letter (Section 5.3). Ebrahim et al.

(2014), in their research into the governance challenges of social enterprise found that reporting

in this way was important as it enables the Board to be confident that beneficiaries participating

are aligned with the social enterprise's social purpose. Although the findings evidence effective

performance management (Section 5.3) there is no evidence in the dashboard of reporting on

new business development or other innovations. Spear et al. (2009) cautions on this focus on

monitoring organisational priorities and projects, as the culture can prevent a move for the

social enterprise to become more entrepreneurial and to think more about developing a

sustainable business through evaluating new business opportunities and managing risks.

The findings show that, through various translations, the dashboard was, at times, an important

tool for the Board, used to contest performance and to hold the leadership to account to ensure

good governance (Section 5.3). They illustrate how the dashboard, with its charts and table

(Section 5.3), was able to help leaders navigate, control and collaborate with the Board. Watson

et al. (2021, p. 215), in their article on observational research in governance processes, regard

such reporting as a way for numbers to act as mediating objects and help managers to control

boards through information asymmetry, which reveals a more subtle and interactive process

where information forms part of an elaborate repertoire that is used to bring about influence.

It shows that leaders were able to influence the Board through providing responses to questions

that provided assurance and using the numbers presented in the dashboard as a way to ensure the Board were kept away from operational detail (Section 5.3). However, it also shows the importance of the Board contesting what is presented as management have made choices in what to present and what to keep backgrounded (Section 5.3). This supports findings by Spear et al. (2009) who found, in governance challenges for social enterprises, that there is a paradox at the heart of this governance arrangement as managers have time and overall control of the main leavers, and do so, through progressing their own interests rather than the interests of other stakeholders including the board which can result in the Board not effectively challenging what is presented and becoming 'rubber stampers'.

The findings shows how the Board challenged operational delivery to ensure that it had a detailed understanding of both organisational and project performance (Section 5.3) to support understanding of what was happening in so that it could provide effective strategic leadership. Ebrahim et al. (2014) argue that this is important for the governance of the organisation. Spear et al. (2009) agree with the board getting more involved in the detail, but cautions about only considering strategic matters as they see this as being dangerous. Without knowledge of what is emerging from practice and knowledge of operational matters, they argue that it would not be possible to create an effective organisational strategy (Ibid).

The research also foregrounded that the leaders were unaware of all the powerful actors involved, for example, the Board Chair actively influenced and shaped the reporting to the Board (Section 5.4). It also illustrates that the project planner was a powerful actor in the performance of the dashboard as it brought together, negotiated and lined up actors that ensured that there was a direct relationship between the funding letter (Chapter 5), the contract (Sections 5.2) the reporting to the Board through the dashboard assemblage (Section 5.3). A study by Watson and Ireland (2021), into the processes and practices of strategizing in the boardroom, found that effective governance should always take into account the sociomaterial relations of all of the

powerful actors involved, as a dashboard could show that the organisation is doing well but might be ineffective in other ways.

6.3 Research Question Two

2. How do leaders in social enterprises cultivate practices to manage delivery?

The findings show that leaders assemble multiple heterogeneous actors to mobilise projects, such as the skilled bodies, contracts, the funding letter and the project planner. It shows that leadership is not down to an all-seeing, 'heroic' leader but is enacted through a collective rather than an individual responsibility (Raelin, 2016).

It also illustrates how the project planner became translated into a mechanism to manage delivery through a legally binding contract, and then it was further translated for the Board to become a way for it to contest delivery and support its governance responsibilities. Gravels (2012) suggests that managing performance is this way is a critical success factor for Chief Executive Officers in social enterprises as this helps demonstrate outcomes and impact.

Following Landri (2021), my study suggests that the spreadsheet assemblage in this research project became a set of processes rather than a static entity – it was constantly being made and remade through the work of typing and untying, composing and recomposing. The practices of these leaders were made clear through the sensibilities that ANT's relational materialism offers, as they invite [researchers] to understand leadership practices as an assemblage of intermediaries but mostly mediators (Landri, 2021). This supports Gherardi's (2000) view that practice is a system of activities in which knowing is not separate from doing.

The findings suggest that leaders need to manage projects effectively to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the social enterprise though coalescing, connecting and stabilising multiple actors, including organisational protocols, the contract, the funding letter and project planner

(Sections 5.1 and 5.2). This aligns with the study by Bull and Crompton (2006), into business practices in social enterprises, which found that organisational success was built on addressing and controlling projects and having systems in place to monitor and evaluate projects. It also supports findings from Oborn et al. (2013), from their study on adopting a sociomaterial approach to examine distributed leadership in health policy development in the UK, which found that an emphasis should not only be placed on the leader's role in the process, but on understanding the sociomaterial relations involved as the processes, and practices that draw together the leadership assemblage is always ongoing and provisional, and that any modification to actors such as data points, historical structures, and relations, may cause these assemblages to shift significantly, thereby mediating these practices significantly.

The analysis here shows how the historical use of partnership agreements caused problems with delivery which involved partners continuing to claim full funding to support the financing of their organisations despite not delivering all the outcomes. Ebrahim et al. (2014), noted the importance of this in their study into the governance challenges of social enterprises, as they found that there was conflict between the need to deliver services based on financial benchmarks and the social outcomes required which led to tensions in delivery resulting in non-delivery of outcomes. This illustrates the reasons as to why leaders had to change the way in which partners' activities were being managed through moving away from partnership agreements to using legal contracts and managing the complexity involved in doing so. To achieve this, the findings show that leaders had to convene, negotiate and enrol heterogeneous actors to accomplish this work, including technology, such as Microsoft Project, project planners and skilled bodies (Section 5.1). Fenwick and Edwards (2012) argue that foregrounding these assemblages made up of a multiplicity of actors helps make visible the rich assortments of mundane things at play and how they are connected.

Similarly, the translation of the information from the funding application to the contract was highlighted as being important by leaders, as this would become the assemblage which would be used to manage activity and hold partners to account. Gravels (2012) found that managing performance this way was important, as some managers were reluctant to manage robustly as it wasn't in line with the values of being a social enterprise. It also foregrounded a number of enrolled seemingly mundane things, such as highlighter pens (Section 5.1). This also supports findings from Bull and Compton (2006) who found that managing contracts were key to ensuring delivery and to support growth, as many social enterprises were considering the setting up of strategic business units to ensure effectiveness. The analysis also illustrates the translation of the contract internally to manage activity and allocate resources, which caused challenges due to time not being taken to scrutinise the original bid and the funding guidance not being taken into consideration (Section 5.1).

The analysis shows that leaders were aware of the importance of managing contracts but were also acutely sensitive to the requirement to report performance to the Board on both project and organisational performance and the scrutiny that would arise as a result (Section 5.3). This finding supports those of Watson et al. (2021), in their exploration of the processes and practices of governance, which found that such reporting is important for good governance, as it shows compliance with a normative code, with effectiveness assessed in relation to the performance of the organisation. It also supports the findings from a study by Spear et al. (2009) into the governance challenges of social enterprises, as it found that the board has overall control of the organisation from a governance perspective but cautions that some boards become rubber stampers with management having the majority of the levers. The findings in this study, however, did not fully show this, as the Board Chair used his power to develop the dashboard from primary data, so that there was one source of data used for all reporting including the dashboard for the board to provide evidence of delivery at both organisational priority and

project levels. (Section 5.3). Furthermore, the findings suggest that the reports were also used to demonstrate the delivery of outputs to funders (Section 5.1). This supports findings by Ebrahim et al. (2014), in their study into the governance of social enterprises, which found that boards had to be accountable for both charitable and business-related activities and did this through the reporting of outputs to the Board and other stakeholders.

The analysis shows that the case study social enterprise did not deliver services independently but worked with other partners to deliver services through agreeing legal contracts. This finding aligns with outcomes from the study by Hodges and Howieson (2017), which found that collaborations should be formed to share risk and reward using prime and sub-contractors but that this needed to be balanced with time being taken to identify who to collaborate with, in what form, and to ensure the development of high levels of trust within any such alliance. Rees et al. (2022), found in their study into leadership of communities and place, that such approaches creates a particular kind of relationship horizontally within the sector which is loosely tied to perceived competitive relationships which may result in a feeling that the playing field is not level, and as a result, can reduce trust and cooperation across different organisations. The findings support this, as it shows that partners can chose to decline a contract if it does not have sufficient confidence in the level of funding to deliver the outputs required or for any other internal reason backgrounded by the organisation (Section 5.1).

6.4   Research Question Three

3. How do leaders in social enterprises develop practices to negotiate the complex stakeholder relations to progress the social mission?

The findings show that leaders' practices are enacted through the involvement of loosely connected assemblages of events, organisations, interests, activities and material objects that traverse government, stakeholders, partners, leaders and managers (Section 5.4). The analysis

shows that such agency is distributed across multiple sociomaterial practices and actor-networks to enact stakeholder advocacy and shows that sometimes, it is only with hindsight that leaders fully understand the power of their influence as exercised (or stymied) by shifting material arrangements that intertwine all that they do in the decisions that affect the delivery of the social mission. Bratianu and Orzea (2010), in their study into organisational knowledge creation, suggest that such leadership is not based on rigid and fixed control mechanisms, as knowledge is created through dynamic interaction and a commitment from all actors.

The findings show that leaders need to take steps to influence funders, policy makers and politicians to ensure that their social mission is known, understood and promoted (Section 5.4). This supports the findings by Borzaga and Solari (2004) who found that managers in social enterprises need to concentrate on the external arena through lobbying regulators and politicians in order to create a shared, positive view of their mission in society. It is further supported by Never (2011,) in his study into understanding constraints on nonprofit leadership tactics in times of recession, as he suggests the use of champions to cultivate connections with policy makers to progress the organisational mission in order to provide greater stability to the resource horizon. With Rees et al. (2022), suggesting that this also provides an understanding of the power and politics involved in informal structures/collective leadership in order to provide insight and influence policy which recognises the multiplexity of actors involved.

Although the analysis illustrates that such assemblages can help mitigate the impact of policy and funding changes, this reveals only part of the picture. Leaders can influence funders, stakeholders and politicians more effectively by stepping back to understand how these players view the social enterprise in relation to familiarity, favourability and advocacy (Section 5.4). The need for advocacy is evidenced in a study by King (2010), which found that progressive social change only happens if social enterprises make advocacy a fundamental part of the organisations programme to influence stakeholders. It also supports Schorr's (2010) view that

stakeholder communication should be a priority and should include personal engagement and communication with all key stakeholders, such as funders, partners and others. Wolk (2010) suggests that one of the keys to effective influence is having performance dashboards (see Section 5.3), as these can support the external view of the social enterprise as stakeholders can see the organisation holding itself to account, and this can help build trust and help deliver enduring solutions to societal problems.

Leaders also need to be able to recognise the co-agency of leaders and things, and be able to convene, negotiate, and stabilise stakeholder influencing assemblages whilst at the same time be able to wrestle with the varying degrees of power and influence of actors, whether visible or invisible, and their willingness to align or not with other actors and agendas. This is necessary to be able to prevent, as much as possible, the social enterprise and its social mission from being rendered invisible to funders, policy makers and politicians and to overturn funding decisions. In The Body Multiple, Mol (2002) sees this interplay between politics and reality as ontological politics, as it is produced through sociomaterial practices that are contingent, historical and situated, resulting in multiple performances of reality. The notion of ontological politics challenges the conditions of possibilities that exist in different worlds, as there are different (political) reasons for enacting one world over another and is a way of describing the dynamics of multiple worlds, and how worlds of practice coexist or compete (Mol, 1999). The analysis in my study shows how leaders had to contend with these multiple realities as the internal view of the social enterprise by leaders was positive due to the way leaders understood funder's perceptions around outcomes delivered (Section 5.1). However, the stakeholder analysis (Section 5.4) shows that despite the belief that stakeholders thought positively about the social enterprise, the reality was that this was not translated into successful funding bids (Section 5.4). This supports findings by Hopkins (2010) on the importance of managing multiple stakeholder relationships as he argues that good leadership is necessary in this area due to the complex and

dynamic environment and that leaders need to have distinct skills and behaviours to manage these effectively as these are quantitatively different from the private and public sectors. This is further evidenced in a study by Hodges and Howieson (2017), that found that leadership was conceptualised as a process of creating and sustaining meanings in negation with, and influenced by others involving influence and credibility. They note that there is a shift away from traditional leadership roles to a more collaborative, network approach and that these roles require greater political awareness, more collaborative and engaging behaviour and strong influencing skills (Ibid).

Throughout the study, it is possible to appreciate some of the insights into how stakeholder influence emerged as leaders sought to move them from being favourable to becoming advocates for the social enterprise through understanding the backgrounds and interests of MSPs and stakeholders (Section 5.4), which showed that the enactment of such agency is a complex process that requires leadership across diverse groups of stakeholders, with different and often conflicting interests (Oborn et al., 2013). Although the research outcomes support this, my findings go further, illustrating that the complexity of leadership also involves nonhuman actors, such as bids, funding letters and contracts, and that it is through the co-agency of 'people and things' that practice is enacted and that leadership is distributed across multiple sociomaterial practices (Raelin, 2016).

In the next section, I shall provide an overview of the findings to demonstrate how leadership practices emerge through their everyday work and show how competencies do not take into account the situatedness and materially of leadership practices.

6.5   Overarching Research Question Findings Overview

The findings in this study have questioned the assumptions and narratives relating to leadership in social enterprises. Overall, the analysis has offered a new way in which to consider leadership

through an ANT-lens, revealing how leaders' practices are emergent, situated, contested and materially mediated rather than being simply a set of competencies. My research further elaborates Gherardi's (2001) notion of practice through examining their everyday work and that human and nonhuman actors are invited, convened and stabilised to enact these practices and that knowing is not separate from doing. The findings foreground the relationality of leadership and promote the understanding of leadership as a process of shared making of meaning that is intrinsically social and relational (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2012) and moves the discourse away from a focus on traits, behaviours, abilities or competencies to a way to view leadership as a social phenomenon (Raelin, 2016). Carroll et al. (2008) agree and suggest that the pervasive use of competencies presents a risk of leadership becoming a mechanistic imperative which doesn't capture the 'lived experience' of leadership day to day activities. With Gravells (2012) arguing that competencies alone are an insufficient indicator of leadership success. Carroll et al. (2008) argues that this is due to the very nature of competencies as they articulate only that which is objective, measurable, technical and tangible which my research has shown is problematic as leadership in social enterprise could not be coherently interpreted as pertinent to competency criteria.

The findings show that leadership theories and frameworks such as transformational, ideological, pragmatic, transactional and authentic does not fully recognise the human and nonhuman actors entangled in leadership practices (Raelin, 2016). Adopting a distributed and participative approach recognises that leadership is inclusive and collaborative and involves multifarious actors.

Adopting a practice-based approach has shown how leadership work is accomplished through the everyday practices of leaders. It shows that knowing is constituted and reconstituted every day in practice and, as a result, is always provisional. Orlikowski (2002) argues that this

recognises that knowing is an enacted and provisional capability which means that it is inappropriate to treat knowledgeability as given and stable and always ready-to-hand.

Using ANT and thematic analysis together has provided an innovative approach to understanding leadership through both the enactment of human and nonhuman actors, such as the project planner being entangled in multiple leadership practices (delivery partner contracts and the dashboard), the role of technology as an actor within multiple practices, the project planner and the dashboard and the entanglement of the funding letter in stakeholder advocacy, which demonstrates the influence of nonhuman actors with the stakeholder community. This illustrates the benefits of combining ANT and thematic analysis and shows that it is not possible to fully remove nonhuman actors when considering leadership practices. All of this reveals the complexity involved with leading a social enterprise and offers insight into the 'messiness' of leadership practice.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1   Conclusions

This research set out to explore practices enacted by leaders in social enterprises. Research to date has mainly focused on competency-based models for leadership development (Carroll et al., 2008; Moreau and Mertens, 2013; Saxena, 2018), and has not fully considered how human and nonhuman actors perform and shape the assemblages through which such practices are enacted. I was therefore interested in examining leadership from an ANT-led, practice-based perspective to understand how leadership is enacted on a day-to-day basis. The study involved leaders working in a case study social enterprise in order to understand how practitioners made sense of leadership through their everyday practices by examining clusters of practices enacted in work. Adopting this approach enabled the identification of key practices for leaders working in or entering the social enterprise sector, as this recognises that leadership is situated and materially mediated.

The findings in this study show that leaders have to find ways to navigate through the multiple challenges of leading a social enterprise caused by the ongoing uncertainty of funding, due to policy changes, funding cuts and other external unknown changes and events (Borzaga and Defourny, 2004; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2015; Teasdale, 2012; Caligiuri et al., 2020). It also illustrates that leadership in social enterprises is shaped by leaders' day-to-day work, which Mauksch et al. (2017) suggest allows for a clear sense of the 'everydayness' of leadership work along with the paradoxical aspects of human practice and the subtle workings of power. As Raelin (2017) adds, that leadership needs to have immersion into the practices that are embedded within social relations between people and objects and their institutions, and that learning should be associated with the lived experience. Yet, this is not fully recognized in the literature, as the current discourse tends to focus on the notion of the 'heroic leader', and previous studies, such as Landri's (2021), do not fully recognise this type of leader who delivers

results through power, personality and abilities. Within ANT there is no place for 'superheroes', as leadership should be seen as emerging in a flow of entanglement of humans and nonhumans (Landri, 2021). Landri's (2021) study of head teacher leadership shows that both things and leaders together enact practices across multiple assemblages, and that leaders' practices were shaped by heterogeneous actors. In the same way, my research found that it was important to understand what an actor is by answering who-what was giving direction to leadership, which helps to become more attuned with the materialities of leadership work (Pickering, 1995; Raelin, 2016, 2017) and how leadership emerges and unfolds through day-to-day experience (Raelin, 2017). It seems that leadership is performed through the co-agency of human and nonhuman actors and is not just dependent on the leader rather than on who-what is acting.

The assemblages that perform an array of leadership practices, as documented in this thesis, demonstrate the effort required to stabilise assemblages that are illustrative of how managing and governing practices are enacted in leaders' day-to-day work. The findings show how leadership is enacted as sociomaterial practices, and the importance of tracing and disentangling the assemblages that enact change, which configures leadership and enables transformation (Oborn et al., 2013). The emergence of new actors, such as technology, contracts and dashboards, in social enterprise leadership spaces, creates new ways to think about leaders' practices.

My research shows that leadership is enacted through the materiality of nonhuman actors, such as the contract, project planner and dashboard, and how this materiality contributes to the way leaders develop their practices. It also illustrates how mundane actors, such as pens and flip charts, can shape these practices as other actors are enrolled that enact practice, and how actors, such as the contract, are fluid as they are enrolled in different realties, such as the partners' worlds and within the social enterprise, to perform new assemblages enacting new practices. Adopting a sociomaterial sensibility of translation also helps to understand the

complexity of change and that the realisation of ideas, projects and reforms, as these processes are not linear and therefore cannot be taken for granted.

The conclusions and recommendations in this chapter offer some considered insights for leaders, policy makers and funders relating to the research questions (Chapter 4). The chapter includes methodological reflections, the strengths and limitations of the study, how the study will be disseminated, my contribution to knowledge, and the implications for future research. I then conclude the thesis with closing reflections on this study.

7.2   Methodological Reflections

Overall, the research contributes to the discourse on leadership in social enterprises through the theory, methods and application adopted in this thesis. There have been few studies that have combined ANT and practice theory to consider leadership in social enterprises. The thesis also expands and adds to the theoretical narrative and offers rich insight into leadership practices in social enterprises.

In this study, the focus was on tracing how material and social practices produce realities of leadership in social enterprise through drilling down into the practices, in time and place, rather than just the self-reporting of leaders. Practices were traced in leaders' everyday work using observations, documents and interview data, which enabled a picture to be foregrounded of the practices performed by leaders in social enterprises. The use of thematic analysis to help organise the data set at the outset helped manage the large amount of data collected. The approach enabled the data to be analysed reflexively to identify clusters of practices that were important and complex, and to explore the relations within these clusters to examine specific micro-practices. ANT was used in Chapter 5 to look at the materials enacting leadership, for example, the 'funding letter', the 'project planner' and the 'dashboard'. This allowed for the

detailed exploration of the materials enacting leadership, such as technology, people, buildings, and policies.

7.3 Strengths of the study

In this section, the strengths of the research are outlined, describing the benefits of choosing the case study social enterprise and participants involved, the use of ANT to foreground the materiality of leadership practices, and the use of thematic analysis to organise the data.

The study involved a well-established social enterprise in Scotland who are responsible for delivering a wide range of Scottish Government and other externally funded services. It had experienced challenges caused by changes to government policies, funding issues, and COVID-19, but had successfully navigated through these uncertain times. The individual participants were all managers involved in the leadership of the organisation and those who had wrestled with challenges caused by the inability to invest in systems, processes and other 'things', such as technology, which had directly impacted on the ability of the social enterprise to deliver services and remain sustainable.

All participants gave their time willingly, and, through the observations and interviews, provided authentic accounts from their individual perspectives. During the visits, many leaders spent time outside of the observations speaking openly about their role and the challenges, which were captured within my fieldnotes. The additional access to the Board and leadership team minutes, strategies and plans, website and bids provided rich and meaningful data that complemented the study. The period also coincided, in part, with the COVID-19 pandemic, which provided a unique opportunity to engage with leaders during this time. The ANT approach enabled the materiality of leadership to be foregrounded, as it was clear from the findings that nonhuman actors directly impacted the everyday work of leaders, which showed the materiality of individual actors.

The ANT analysis adopted the concept of 'follow the actors', which enabled key actors to be foregrounded and followed across different chapters to demonstrate their work across different practices. The ANT analysis provided space for human and nonhuman actors to be treated equally, which foreground actors of importance. The addition of the inductive analysis forwarded by Braun and Clarke (2006) added a different dimension – this helped to sort the data, as the six-step approach was useful to guide the necessary iterative process in performing the analysis.

7.4   Limitations of the study

In this section, the limitations of the study are outlined, which include the challenges of using both ANT and thematic analysis to analyse a large volume of data, and the conflicting nature of these approaches. Also, the implications of choosing the social enterprise who are of a set size and turnover in Scotland are considered. The social enterprise had a turnover of over fifteen million pounds and had been in existence for more than two years, this may have been considered a limitation of the research, as it focused on a more established social enterprise. The outcomes of the research may also have been different if smaller social enterprises, or those who had only recently being established, had participated as this would have changed the everyday work enacted by managers in practice. However, the aim of the research was not to compare leadership practices across social enterprises of different sizes, but instead to place an in-depth focus on specific leadership practices to promote a greater understanding of these practices on a day-to-day basis. As such, the research followed an ethnographic approach, where such forms of understanding are best developed by detailed observations of fewer settings, rather than collecting data from a greater number of participants.

The research itself was an iterative process, as I set out to explore how leaders' practices unfolded in their everyday work. The research strategy attempted to gather data using mixed methods: interviews, observations and document analysis. However, spending more extended

time in the field would have added a deeper exploration of the subject matter. Also, the use of ANT in combination with thematic analysis proved to be challenging, as the approaches were sometimes at odds due to ANT adopting an expansive approach to its methods, while thematic analysis follows one that is more reductive. On the surface, these approaches appear to be incompatible, adding further to the complexity of the research. However, adopting Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach to thematic analysis was extremely beneficial to the research in that it enhances the ANT-led element to the research. For example, while I understood the benefits that ANT would bring to conducting practice-led research, at first, I struggled to identify the actors that were enacting the most powerful assemblages in the leadership practices. Enrolling Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach to analysing the interview data allowed me to reveal the actors that were having a significant impact on the leaders' everyday practices through the sociomaterial assemblage of my interpretative engagement with the texts and my process of noticing which were mediating the leaders' practices most substantially. Using this reflexive approach to analysis enabled the foregrounding of actors that appeared frequently and were powerful in shaping leaders' practices. It also foregrounded the co-agency of human and nonhuman actors that shaped leaders' practices.

Reflecting on the early stages of the research, it would have been helpful to spend more time considering the questions used within the interviews to ensure that key nonhuman actors were foregrounded more effectively as this would have ensured that nothing significant was missed, as my natural tendency is to follow humans rather than 'things'. This was important, as ANT sensibilities assert that agency is manifest only in the relation of actors to each other and that material objects exert agency in a similar way to humans (Latour, 2005). It would have also been beneficial to be more overt with participants on the theoretical lens that I adopted so they might have better understood the probing around nonhuman actors and to spend additional time at the introductory meetings to explain the research process more fully. At times, leaders

questioned why I was asking questions about a particular actor, such as the project planner, and could not quite grasp how this mediated their practices. Andersen et al. (2015) suggest that, for researchers, it is important to explain the participatory nature of the research and the importance of nonhuman actors and how it is through the entanglement of human and nonhuman actors that practice is enacted.

The number and types of data collected through the study were vast and complex, and this proved to be challenging due to the interpretative approach used. Braun and Clarke (2021a) suggest that this is due to the inductive situated nature of the interpretative reflexive process. Coding is open and organic, with no use of any coding framework. Themes should be the final 'outcome' of data coding and iterative theme development. However, this did allow the analysis to be undertaken using two different sensibilities for working with the data: ANT and interpretative thematic analysis, which, as described above, provided an additional richness. A similar approach was used in a study by Laasch et al. (2020), who examined responsible practice in the wild using mobile apps for learning, in which thematic and ANT-led approaches were combined to generate data to foreground how actor networks could contribute to learning in the wild. In my study, the ANT approach enabled the foregrounding of the complex and messy assemblages of human and nonhuman actors that enacted leadership practices, while the thematic analysis identified themes from which the voices and experiences of leaders were foregrounded.

7.5   Implications of the study

This chapter discusses the insights related to the research questions (see Chapter 6) and describes how this research contributes to new knowledge and understanding of how certain practices are enacted and how leaders learn and navigate these complex practices. The study builds on existing research relating to leadership in social enterprises (Social Enterprise Academy, 2010; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2015; Gravells, 2012; Caligiuri et al., 2020) to make a

unique contribution to the discourse. There are implications from the study for leaders entering and working in the sector and for policy makers and funders who are responsible for shaping policy, distributing funding, and designing policy itself.

The findings presented here have been generated by working with leaders in the case study social enterprise in Scotland, but have wider implications for how leaders in other organisations develop their practices to be able to manage the delivery of strategic priorities and projects and to enable the Board to discharges its responsibilities around legitimacy, accountability and effective performance. The study contributes to knowledge through foregrounding:

1. The use of project planners, entangled in sociomaterial assemblages, that enable multiple uses of data sourced from key documentation, such as the funding contract to shape and influence decision making and how this has been performed into reports for the Board and Scottish Government and dashboards for the Board to govern.

2. The way in which leaders developed their practices through learning from what was not working and putting in place new approaches to manage partners delivery, such as the legal contract and replacing partnership agreements, which did not hold partners to account for the delivery and enabled them to claim funding where outcomes had not been delivered.

3. The development of dashboards assemblages to support the Board's role in ensuring legitimacy, accountability and effective performance through inviting, coalescing and stabilising multiple actors such as the project planner to deliver good governance.

4. The importance of understanding stakeholder advocacy to ensure stakeholders become active advocates through gaining a deep understanding of the interests and activities of key individuals who shape and influence policy and funding.

5. The way in which leaders developed their practices through understanding the co-agency of human and nonhuman actors through their everyday work, and were not

confined through the use of competencies as this does not recognise that knowing and doing are inextricably linked.

These contributions reflect the aim of the research, which was to understand how leadership practices are enacted through the everyday work of leaders and challenge the competency-based approaches typically adopted by the sector. The literature reviews undertaken and the findings presented here demonstrate the complexity associated with leading a social enterprise and how leadership is not dependent on individuals or relationships alone, but is instead about assemblages of relationships that are both material and social in nature, produces as effects of these actor-networks.

The thesis argues that leadership is enacted through assemblages of 'people' and 'things', that it is relational, situated, and practice-based. It shows that nonhuman actors, such as contracts, policies, funding bids, project planners and dashboards, shape leaders' practices. It illustrates how leaders need to consider how their everyday work assemblages influence policy makers, funders and politicians as, without this, it is likely that social enterprises will not be visible, with the potential impact on the delivery of the social mission and clients.

The study contributes to the body of research into leadership in social enterprises through making the case for approaching the understanding of leadership within social enterprises from an ANT-led, practice-based standpoint. It has the potential to improve leadership practice in the sector if the recommendations from this study are implemented.

7.6   Implications for policy

The research has identified policy implications which could be taken forward to support the social enterprise sector. Policy makers should:

1. Recognise the impact of material actors such as project planners, contacts and dashboards in shaping leadership practices. Policy makes could develop/update policy and funding guidance to recognise the actors entangled in the delivery of contacts/programmes and provide support for the development of project management tools, contract templates to enhance leadership accountability and effectiveness.

2. Promote an increase in accountability and transparency by leaders through encouraging the adoption of digital dashboards to recognise the complex assemblages involved in performance management and reporting. Policy makers could develop guidance as part of the funding allocation process to encourage organisations to build data reporting from the bottom up to support transparency at multiple levels, and to provide updates and insights into projects and organisational performance in order to support resource allocation and effective reporting.

3. Foster inclusive and distributive leadership through enabling collaborative approaches to delivery that recognises a single organisation may not have the expertise to deliver all elements, encouraging the building of collaborations to increase both capacity and capability to deliver activity and spread any associated risk. Policy makers could strengthen guidance and provide funding to lead organisations to support delivery of outcomes and the management of projects

4. Support digital literacy and technological development through more effective planning and include this as part of funding guidance and contractual assemblages. Policy makers could build in the requirement and funding to support digital leadership capabilities and investment in technology to ensure organisations are able to develop and adopt digital tools and platforms to enhance efficiency, communication and drive data-led decision-making.

7.7   Implications for Future Research

This study has found similar findings to other research that has been carried out into leadership in the social enterprise sector (Social Enterprise Academy, 2010; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2015; Gravells, 2012), which implies that the sector has either not been in the place to adopt the findings or that there has not been the resources or interest in addressing ongoing leadership challenges. Future research could examine the reasons for this and how this could be better incorporated into policy on funding and the development of social enterprises and other types of social enterprise so that there were sufficient resources available to enable implementation. Other areas could include the different needs of those entering the sector for the first time, those who have been in the sector for a significant length of time, and also succession planning. Further research could explore knowledge transfer from other sectors using a sociomaterial approach and consider how gaps in practice could be filled. In the longer term, studies exploring the impact of digitisation and how leaders fully enable this from a strategic and operational perspective with a focus on what this means for leaders and delivering services to clients would be helpful. From a methodological and theorising standpoint, my research invites further studies to explore everyday work practices using ANT which draw on more and different heuristics than those used in this thesis in the social enterprise sector and potentially beyond.

7.8   Recommendations

In the following two sections, I outline several ways that leaders' practices in social enterprises could be taken forward, which take into account the findings from my thesis. I start by presenting recommendations for leaders practising in social enterprises and then turn to policy makers and funders and propose recommendations that would support social enterprises to be able to enact these recommendations.

The recommendations from the study for leaders:

1. Practice-based approaches performed by leaders in this study show that competency-based approaches do not take into account the complexity and messiness of leading social enterprises. Leaders could be encouraged to question their existing practices and move the discourse away from competency-based approaches, based on managerial concepts and frameworks, such as viewing stakeholder engagement through competencies which focus on the abilities of the leader rather than through the co-agency, for example, the leader and political manifesto/policies, and the ways in which these practices are performed through actor-networks.

2. 'Non-heroic' leadership, identified through the research, shows how practices could be nurtured in ways that recognise leadership as distributed and that all actors – people, processes, and systems – play their part in, and are entangled with, the actor-networks enacting practice.

3. Changes to policy and funding priorities are continual within social enterprises, which may impact on the sustainability of the social enterprise and its clients. Practices could be cultivated through considering the human and nonhuman actors that need to be invited, convened and stabilised to explore ways to minimise the potential impact of future funding decisions to generate a better understanding of stakeholders and funders through these actor-networks, which include personal interests, policies, manifestos and parliamentary committee paper priorities, that influence and shape views and contributions to policy and funding options.

4. Governmental priorities change, leading to Civil Servants having to redistribute funding without fully understanding the impact of cuts on individual social enterprises and to services to clients. practices can be fostered in order to enable leaders to untangle and understand the complexity of funding decisions and the multiple heterogeneous actors/assemblages entangled and distributed within funders environments when

resources are allocated. Actor-networks could be enacted to assemble heterogeneous actors as part of this, to influence such decisions, including outcomes delivered and impact on clients.

5. The governance of social enterprises is important, as the Board holds the leadership team to account for both strategy and organisational delivery. Practices could be advanced on approaches to reporting that understands and embraces the fluidity of the practices enacted to build dashboard actor-networks, and do so, through inviting, coordinating and assembling digital data which can be translated for the Board to contest performance, and to prevent the Board from getting involved in operational detail.

6. Project management is integral to the success of a social enterprise, as the majority of funding is delivered in this way. practices could be nurtured on ways to manage the actor-networks enacting these projects and adopt digital actors, such as Microsoft Project as a project management tool to help assemble the multiple actors enacting these assemblages and use this to support the translation of these actor-networks to become 'reports' to the Board, leadership team and funders.

7. Delivering projects through partners is often carried out by social enterprises as there is not always the capacity or the capability in house to deliver the full contract. Practices could be fostered on the management of these individual partner contract actor-networks, recognising the fluidity of these contract assemblages, and how they are translated and take on different meanings in different settings.

The recommendations from the study for policy makers and funders:

1. Policy and funding priorities change on an ongoing basis, which can lead to uncertainty for social enterprises as they seek to deliver their social mission. Consideration could be given to the impact of changes to actor-networks, and all those actors/assemblages that

enact policy and funding, as this causes breakdowns within social enterprises as services are stopped or re-aligned, resulting in organisational change. Consideration could be given to the way policy and funding is developed to attune to the impact of such changes with the outcome of these decisions on social enterprises and allow sufficient time to create actor-networks through the assembling of multiple heterogeneous actors, to plan changes effectively.

2. Governance of the social enterprise is an important factor as this ensures delivery of the outcomes within the funding contract. Consideration could be given to how reporting is provided to funders and policy makers through ensuring that systems and processes are in place to enable high quality reporting actor-networks which are enacted through the inviting, coalescing and stabilising of multiple actors/assemblages, for example, project data using technology to enable translation into governance dashboards for the Board.

3. Project management is important to ensure effective delivery of outcomes. Consideration could be given to the way digital project management actor-networks could be performed to better support more effective project management and reporting on outcomes.

4. Digital delivery of services to clients increased during the period of this study. The benefits and opportunities realised by these developments could be considered as they provide ways to enhance and transform the delivery of services through digital actors, and also to ensure that actor-networks are assembled to support social enterprises to perform these changes.

7.9   Dissemination

The findings and recommendations from this study will be disseminated in a one-page briefing along with a five-to-six-page document through providing a link to the University of Stirling's research hub and/or a PDF copy. It will be distributed through relevant networks, including social

enterprise umbrella bodies, individual social enterprises and related organisations, and government policy groups. It will also be shared through my professional networks and groups through direct contact and social media platforms, including Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. These will also be used to target appropriate individuals and groups who would be interested in the outcomes of the research. Participants will also receive a copy of the findings and recommendations of the research, and, where possible, I will seek to publish the findings in appropriate peer-reviewed journals.

7.10 Closing Remarks

Seeking to understand leadership in social enterprise through ANT and practice theory has been interesting and challenging, as I sought to trace the connections between heterogeneous actors and made visible aspects of practice that are often taken for granted or backgrounded. The thesis argues that 'knowing' and 'doing' are inextricably linked and that leadership is relational and involves 'people' and 'things'. In reviewing the literature around leadership in social enterprise, much of the narrative misses the role of the nonhuman actor and how it impacts on leadership practices. The findings show that nonhuman actors have agency, and, as a result, can have a material impact on the social enterprise. It shows that nonhuman actors, such as funding letters, project planners and dashboards, shape leaders' practices and, without due consideration to such actors, leadership development for leaders entering or operating in the sector will be unable to fully understand the materiality of leadership.

This research has provided valuable insights into the complexity and messiness of leadership which may not have been foregrounded if an ANT-led, practice-based approach had not been taken. It presents challenges for leaders on how they consider the practices enacted within social enterprises and how to develop their practices through recognising the importance of everyday work as a site of learning. The findings also have impact for policy makers and funders on how they can use actors, such as funding guidance and financial resources, to act as catalysts

for change and as a support to leaders in social enterprise to develop these practices. Although these findings are perhaps most directly applicable for charitable trading activities [CTAs], they also have implications for leaders in other social enterprises, as they continue to wrestle with the ongoing challenge of changes to policy and funding and also the impact of COVID-19. The research thus contributes to an emerging body of interpretative research which reflects the relational and dynamic nature of leadership in social enterprises.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Participant Recruitment Guidance for Gatekeepers

The guidance has been prepared for the Chief Executives (Gatekeepers) to provide information on the research and guidance on suitable participants.

1. **Research Project Title**
   Leadership Practices in Social Enterprise

   The research is being undertaken to identify leadership practices used by leaders in Social

   enterprises.

2. **Research Participants**
   The target participants are Chief Executives/Directors/Senior Managers working in a Social

   Enterprise. Participants will be asked to participate as follows:

   - Chief Executive/Director (Operations)
     - Will be asked to participate in a semi-structured interview lasting 1.5 hours and to be observed for a period of 2 hours.
   - Directors (Other)/Senior Managers
     - Will be involved in an interview where you will be asked to describe what you do on a day-to-day basis as if you were explaining the to a 'double' who would be undertaking the role. You will also be asked to keep a daily journal for 4 weeks and to participate in a focus group lasting 1 hour.

   All participants should have been in role for a minimum of 12 months. Individuals with less

   than 12 months direct experience will not be eligible to participate. There are no restrictions

   based on any or other protected characteristic.

3. **Timeframe for recruitment**
   The study is looking to recruit participants between January 2020 and March 2020.

4. **Expenses/Payments**
   There will be no payment for taking part in the project.

5. **Name of researchers/student their status and their Faculty. If a student (UG, PGT and PGR) supervisor name and contact details should also be included**
The researcher carrying out the research is Jacqueline Hepburn.

Contact details: j.m.hepburn@stir.ac.uk.

The research supervisor is Richard Simmons.

Contact details: r.a.simmons@stir.ac.uk.

6. **Who has reviewed the research project?**
The ethical approaches of the project have been approved through the University of Stirling

General University Ethics. Ethics Approval Reference: [insert].

7. **How to take part?**
To take part please contact:

Jacqueline Hepburn at j.m.hepburn@stir.ac.uk or on mobile no: 07714060250.

Appendix 2: Participant Information Sheet

I would like to invite you to take part in the study as I am carrying out research to understand the leadership practices to lead a Social Enterprise. I am undertaking the study as I have been a senior leader in a Social Enterprise and have experienced the challenges of carrying out a leadership role in the sector. I have over 25 years' experience in education and training with experience across the private, public and third sectors which I am able to bring to the study.

1. **Why have I been invited to take part?**

   You have been invited to participate in the study because you are a senior leader in a Social Enterprise who has direct experience of leading an organisation. From the experience you will be able to provide insight and information into the research to inform the practices required by leaders in the sector.

2. **Do I have to take part?**

   No. You do not have to take part. If you do decide to take part, you can withdraw your participation at any time without needing to explain and without penalty by advising the researcher of the decision. If you withdraw, we will not collect any more data from you. However, any data collected up until the point that you withdraw will be kept and used in the data analysis. You will be given the information sheet to keep and be asked to complete an electronic consent form.

3. **What will happen if I take part?**

   • Chief Executive and Director from each organisation x 4
   - • You will be asked to participate in a semi-structured interview which will take approximately 1.5 hours. You will be asked to provide an opportunity for me to observe you for 2 hours as you go about your day-to-day activities.
     OR

   • Directors/Senior Managers 3 from each of the 2 organisations x 6
   - • You will be involved in interview at the double where you will be asked to describe what you do on a day-to-day basis as if they were describing it to a 'double' who would be undertaking their role. They will also be asked to keep a daily journal for 4 weeks describing the activities that

were undertaken setting out the people and things that were involved and their impact on everyday activities.

4. **Are there any potential risks in taking part?**

There are risks associated with taking part in the study.

- During the study it may be possible that poor practice is identified. If it is the case, the findings will be anonymised to ensure that neither the individual nor the organisation can be identified. The inclusion of the data is important as the study focuses on general learning from both poor and good practice. Feedback on any issues found will be provided confidentially and anonymously to the organisations in a spirit of continuous improvement. Only where the law has been broken, or if people are placed in imminent harm, would it be necessary to report poor practice by individuals or organisations.
- All risk associated with the identification of poor practice will be managed in conjunction with the Chief Executives. It will be achieved through maintaining confidentiality and impartiality throughout the research process. At the end of the study and prior to publication, contact will be made with participants and the individual organisations to share the outcomes of the research. It will help identify any issues which may arise as a result and will provide time to carry out any mitigating actions required. It will be followed up twice at 3 monthly intervals following publication of the research to carry out a further check and to take further mitigating action as required.

5. **Are there any benefits in taking part?**

There will be no direct benefit to you from taking part in the research and there will be no payment for taking part in the project.

6. **PERSONAL INFORMATION: Legal basis for processing personal data**

As part of the project, I will not be recording personal data relating to you.

7. **What happens to the data I provide?**

Your data will be stored anonymously using codes for each participant. The codes for participants which will only be known by the researcher and the transcribers. It will ensure that there is no direct correlation between the contribution and the individual as it is not necessary for the research undertaken. All information which is transcribed by either the researcher or transcribers will be held securely on Stirling University's research drive, a secure data centre – DataSTORRE - on the Stirling campus and will be destroyed after 10 years. I will ask you for permission to use any direct quotes.

8. **Recorded media**

   I will utilise audio recordings to capture the interviews as part of the research. These recordings will be transcribed and analysed to inform the outcomes of the research. Quotes will be extracted from these audio recordings which will be used in the thesis.

9. **Will the research be published?**

   The research will be published on Stirling University's website as it committed to making the outputs of research publicly accessible and supports the commitment through our online open access repository STORRE. Unless funder/publisher requirements prevent us, the research will be publicly disseminated through our open access repository. Individual participants will be able to access the study on request to the researcher. I may publish papers on the outputs of the study. If it is undertaken all participants will be directly informed that it is taking place. However, participants will not be identifiable in any report/publication.

10. **Who has reviewed the research project?**

    The ethical approaches of the project have been approved via The University of Stirling General University Ethics Panel.

11. **PERSONAL INFORMATION: Your rights**

    You have the right to request to see a copy of the information we hold about you and to request corrections or deletions of the information that is no longer required. You have the right to withdraw from the project at any time without giving reasons and without consequences to you. You also have the right to object to us processing relevant personal data, however, please note that once the data are being analysed and/or results published it may not be possible to remove your data from the study.

12. **Who do I contact if I have concerns about the study or I wish to complain?**

    If you would like to discuss the research with someone you can contact me at j.m.hepburn@stir.ac.uk or my research supervisor Richard Simmons at

r.a.simmons@stir.ac.uk. If you wish to speak to someone not directly involved in the research please contact – Dr. R. Dockrell, Head of subject group at r.b.dockrell@stir.ac.uk.

You have the right to lodge a complaint against the University regarding data protection issues with the Information Commissioner's Office (https://ico.org.uk/concerns/). The University's Data Protection Officer is Joanna Morrow, Deputy Secretary. If you have any questions relating to data protection these can be addressed to data.protection@stir.ac.uk in the first instance.

You will be given a copy of the information sheet to keep.

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix 3: Email to Participants

Email to Participants 1 – Chief Executive/Director/Senior Manager

Dear

I am contacting you to ask if you would be willing to be involved in a research project I am undertaking as part of my Doctorate in Education. I will be carrying out research to identify leadership practices used by leaders in Social enterprises in Scotland. I would like to invite you, as a senior leader, to be a participant in the study. I would like to be able to observe you carrying out your role for two hours and to ask you to participate in an interview which will last 1.5 hours to inform the outcomes of the study.

I have attached a participant information sheet which provides further details on the study and its aims. I would be grateful if you could let me know if you would be willing to be involved.

Thank you in advance

Kindest regards

Email to Participants 2 - Directors/Senior Managers

Dear

I am contacting you to ask if you would be willing to be involved in a research project I am undertaking as part of my Doctorate in Education. I will be carrying out research to identify leadership practices used by leaders in Social enterprises in Scotland. I would like to invite you, as a senior leader, to be a participant in the study. I would like to be able to interview you to understand the day-to-day role you undertake to inform the outcomes of the study.

I have attached a participant information sheet which provides further details on the study and its aims. I would be grateful if you could let me know if you would be willing to be involved.

Thank you in advance

Kindest regards

Appendix 4: Consent Form

Electronic Consent Form for studies

Research Project Title: Leadership Practices in Social Enterprise

GUEP Approval Number: 777

	Please tick box
I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet explaining the research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time during the study without giving a reason, and without any penalty. I understand that if I withdraw no more data will be collected from me. However, any data collected up until the point that I withdraw may be kept and used in the data analysis.	
I have been given a unique identifying number and know whom to contact should I wish to withdraw my data.	
I understand that my responses will be kept anonymous and I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses.	
I agree to take part in the study	

Appendix 5: Data Collection Table

Material	Type	Purpose	Process	Access
Observation notes	Handwritten notes	To record the human and nonhuman actors which enact leadership practices to address the overall question and the 3 sub questions.	Handwritten notes were transcribed at the end of each observation. The notes were anonymised to ensure not site or individual was identified. Each participant was identified either by a number or pseudonym.	Handwritten notes accessible by the researcher and by supervisors as necessary [could add note here – and this applies to the other rows that we did not access any of this data in the end.
Interview recordings	Audio recordings	To gather a record of the interviews to allow for them to be transcribed. It enabled immersion in the materials and helped to identify important actors. It addressed the overall question and the 3 sub questions.	Recordings were made using a digital recorded and were transcribed by the researcher. The data was anonymised during transcription so no individual could be identified.	The recordings and the transcriptions will be accessed by the researcher and by supervisors as necessary.
Transcription log	Spreadsheet	To allocate a numerical code to each audio recording to ensure anonymity. In line with ethical guidance the data will be destroyed in line with guidelines.	Gather data on the transcription of the anonymised interviews. Provide a log of the information, file names and locations.	Files will only be accessed by the researcher.
Document Analysis	Table	To support analysis of company documentation to address the overall question and the 3 sub questions.	Gather data on each site.	Table accessible to the research and by the supervisors where necessary.
Research diary	Handwritten notes to support reflective practice	To record on the reflections from the field and other observations from the research perspective. Supported the researcher to consider actors that were not visible during observation. Also enabled the researcher to consider their individual influence and impact on the research.	Gathered reflections and insight on the data gathering process.	Notes only accessible to the researcher. Reflections anonymised for use in thesis.

Appendix 6: Individual Participant Interview

Agenda

1.	A brief introduction to the research, myself then to why I am undertaking the study.
2.	Confirmation of consent and ethnics
3.	An overview of the research questions and structure of the session
4.	Individual interview
5.	Close and thanks

Interview Questions

Prompts for the Interview

1.	Think of the things that you do at work. What do you do on a day-to-day basis that shapes your leadership practices? Tell me about the things that impact on your day-to-day work?
2.	Describe an experience in your day-to-day work. How did it shape your leadership practices? What did you learn from it and how will it shape how you lead in the future? Tell me about any policies, processes, systems and technologies etc. that has an impact on your day-to-day activity?
3.	How has your leadership practices changed over the last 2 years What new practices have you undertaken? What influenced and shaped it? Has there been other factors apart from people that have impacted on this?
4.	What practices are most valued within your workplace? How have you developed these practices? How has this been shaped by people or by other things?
5.	What has most influenced and shaped your leadership practices? Describe an experience that illustrates it and who and what was involved?

Interview to the Double

Agenda

1.	A brief introduction to the research, myself then to why I am undertaking the research.
2.	Confirmation of consent and ethnics
3.	An overview of the research questions and structure of the interview
4.	The interview at the double:

- Participant describing what they do on a day-to-day basis in detail. Describing it to someone taking over their role.

5.	Close and thanks

Questions

1	Could you introduce yourself and tell me about your own experience of leading a social enterprise?
2	Could you describe what you do on a day-to-day basis to provide information for someone taking on your role? Describe the activities and actions you undertake?
3	Can you describe the people and things that are involved in your day-to-day role that you have not covered so far? What impact have they had on your day-to-day actions and what are the implications of it for you as a leader?
4	Any other comments?