

An Inspection of
**Community Safety
Partnerships**

November 2006





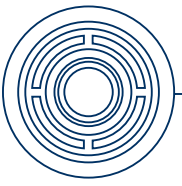
An Inspection of
**Community Safety
Partnerships**

November 2006

Presented to the Houses of Parliament by the Secretary
of State for Northern Ireland under Section 49 (2) of the
Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002.

**Criminal Justice Inspection
Northern Ireland**
a better justice system for all

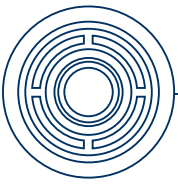






Contents

List of Abbreviations	iv	
Chief Inspector's Foreword	v	
Conclusions	vii	
Recommendations	x	
Part 1	Inspection Report	
Chapter 1	The history and future of Community Safety Partnerships	3
Chapter 2	Structure and Membership	9
Chapter 3	Relationships	15
Chapter 4	Accountability, Community Engagement and Equality	21
Part 2	Appendices	
Methodology		29
Community Safety in Britain (England and Wales)		32
Community Safety in Britain (Scotland)		35
References		35



List of abbreviations

CJI	Criminal Justice Inspection
CSPs	Community Safety Partnerships
CSPPs	Community Safety and Policing Partnerships
CSU	Community Safety Unit
DPPs	District Policing Partnerships
DPPBs	District Policing Partnership Boards
LAN	Local Authority Networks
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
PDOs	Partnership Development Officers
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
RPA	Review of Public Administration



Chief Inspector's Foreword

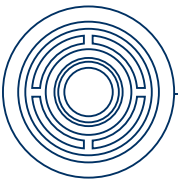
Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) are not on the list of organisations which Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJI) has statutory power to inspect. However, we were invited to carry out this inspection by the Northern Ireland Office.

The inspection aimed to examine a number of key areas including the following:

- the institutional strengths and weaknesses of CSPs against CJI's common core themes of openness and accountability, partnership in the Criminal Justice System, equality, learning and results.
- the aims and objectives of CSPs, and the performance management system which underpins them and measures their effectiveness
- the relationship between the CSPs and the DPPs at local level
- the contribution of the CSPs to the proper and effective functioning of the Criminal Justice System in Northern Ireland and their impact in terms of local community confidence
- whether greater value could be added to the criminal justice system by some restructuring of the institutional architecture of the CSPs and DPPs particularly in light of the Review of Public Administration (RPA).

This inspection was not an inspection of the Community Safety Unit (CSU), the Policing Board, or the Northern Ireland Office (NIO). Nor did we inspect District Policing Partnerships or local councils. However, all of these bodies play central roles in the existence of CSPs and it is therefore inevitable that during the course of this report, comment is made on each of them. We would like to thank each of them for their co-operation during the inspection.

We recognise that CSPs are relatively new bodies and have had to develop and function in something of a vacuum given their lack of a statutory basis. Many of the weaknesses we identify in the course of this report stem from that fundamental problem. We should in this context stress how impressed inspectors were by the commitment and dedication of those working in the community safety field, including members of CSPs, officials in the CSU and of course CSP co-ordinators. In particular it is appropriate to pay tribute to the members of CSPs at all levels who have given of their time and expertise over the course of the last



three years. We sensed from CSP members a great enthusiasm for the concept of community safety which, regardless of the future of the CSPs, should not be lost. We also feel it is important that the work of the CSP co-ordinators be noted. Co-ordinators find themselves in the difficult position of having three different reporting lines – to the local council, the CSU and of course the Partnership itself. Despite these difficulties, in the course of this inspection, we received significant assistance from co-ordinators and heard little but praise for them from CSP members. It does not seem to us that CSPs could have functioned without them. We would like to thank CSP members, co-ordinators and the CSU for their assistance with this inspection.

This inspection was led by Paul Mageean, who was assisted by Ann Duncan and other inspectors from CJI. The methodology employed in the inspection is explained in an annex to this report. An additional annex contains information about community safety structures in Britain.

Kit Chivers

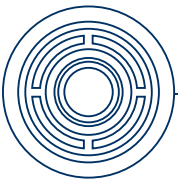
Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland






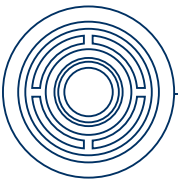
Conclusions

1. We would suggest that the optimum position post RPA would be to have one operational community safety/policing tier in each council area. This is not a recommendation that envisages DPPs “taking over” CSPs or vice versa. We believe some new thinking is required that will take account of lessons learnt from the experience of both DPPs and CSPs. The ending of the period of indicative funding from 2008 and the implementation of the RPA seems to us to be an opportune moment to revision the landscape of community safety. We would recommend policy makers to look again at the vision laid out in the Patten report and echoed to some extent in the Criminal Justice Review.
2. A gap in the make up of CSPs identified by inspectors during our inspection was the community sector (for more see Chapter 2). The identification of local issues of concern is not something that should be done by the NIO or statutory agencies but should be done by local community and political representatives. This constituency must be central to any reconfiguration of community safety.
3. Inspectors found broad consensus that the level of bureaucracy in CSPs (often three tiers replicated in twenty-six district councils across Northern Ireland) was disproportionate, unwieldy and unnecessary. One tier in each area, perhaps supported where appropriate with task groups, should be sufficient. An exception may be appropriate in the case of Belfast.
4. CSPs have now been established in most areas for almost three years. In our view it is essential that after this period of time, membership of each tier is reviewed. Given that in each area action plans have been drawn up covering the allocation of the indicative funding for the next two years, it seems to Inspectors to be an appropriate time to review membership and this might also allow for an increase in the membership of those from a community background.
5. Inspectors are not satisfied that sufficiently robust arrangements have been put in place to monitor attendance and ensure follow-up if required. While each partnership has a constitution and code of conduct, and attendance is mentioned in the code of conduct, action does not appear to have been taken against those who regularly do not attend. Such arrangements should now be put in place.
6. We are not able to confirm exactly what has happened with the sharing of minutes between CSPs and DPPs but it seems to us the minimal and sensible step to avoiding duplication is to ensure that minutes are shared regularly. We do not believe this should be limited to public DPP meetings.



7. We were encouraged by the development in one area of putting an update on the work of the DPP as a standing item on the agenda of the operational tier of the CSP. This should be replicated in all areas and should be mirrored at DPP meetings. In this context further consideration needs to be given to co-ordinating meetings and deadlines to maximise the potential of this development.
8. Inspectors believe that it would be useful for planners to examine the extent to which CSP and DPP planning timetables could be synchronised allowing each partnership to contribute meaningfully to the planning of the other and allowing each partnership to take account of the priorities being set by the other. It seems to us that the Joint Planning Group proposed by the MoU between the Board and the Unit could usefully progress this recommendation. We also believe that the Group could also act to oversee the implementation of the MoU and the relevant recommendations made in this report.
9. The membership of CSPs provides a huge resource of expertise to the CSU which is not properly exploited. We would encourage thought being given as to how best to develop this. One idea may be to have meetings of chairs of CSPs perhaps on an annual basis to discuss upcoming issues and obtain the views of the CSPs on these matters.
10. Every effort should be made to provide some stability in the CSU, at least in relation to the staff that have most interaction with the CSPs. It may also be useful to consider the use of long-term secondments from other agencies (including voluntary sector organisations) with expertise in community safety to the CSU.
11. We recommend that the indicative funding be released in an annual bloc to the CSPs once proper financial safeguards are in place with the relevant partners to allow some flexibility for the CSP to meet the commitments outlined in the action plans. Short of that, we would urge CSPs to examine the option of obtaining their funding in advance every quarter.
12. In our view, the CSU should be monitoring much more closely the performance of each of the CSPs. While we recognise that the lifespan of the CSPs in their present form may be limited, we nevertheless believe that the introduction of appropriate targets and performance indicators at this stage is both necessary for the measurement of the CSPs as they currently exist, and will also prove useful for whatever model is introduced in the wake of the RPA. We do not consider the fact that the partnerships are voluntary to be an adequate reason for the failure thus far to measure either their performance or their impact. Regardless of their status, by the end of the financial year 2007/08, the CSPs will have spent a considerable amount of public money. Inspectors are concerned to note that at this stage it will prove difficult, if not impossible to measure the impact of that spend on community safety, either across Northern Ireland as a whole or in specific district council areas.

- 
13. Some mechanism must be found prior to the roll-out of the RPA to provide an intersection between the efforts of CSPs to tackle community safety with the views of the community about where and how those efforts should best be targeted and these efforts must be supported by the use of up to date information and data.
 14. We recommend local CSPs develop local communication strategies. These need not be extensive or sophisticated documents but sufficient to help those on the CSPs to raise the profile of the local partnership. We would also encourage the CSU to provide some limited additional resources to CSPs for communications purposes.
 15. Inspectors considered that there was scope to open up some meetings of CSP strategic tiers in the same way as DPP meetings. Given the likelihood of local journalists attending such meetings, this seemed a straightforward and expense free way of raising the profile of CSPs.
 16. In addition, we were surprised to find that in most areas CSPs do not publish annual reports. This goes both to the issue of profile and also to that of accountability. A short report detailing what the CSP has achieved could be produced relatively cheaply and would provide some degree of openness in terms of local residents.
 17. Allowing the public access to the minutes of CSP meetings might be a way to raise the profile of the partnership, prove its worth and increase engagement with communities.
 18. Inspectors recommend that immediate steps are taken to introduce a system of proper equality monitoring for CSPs. In those areas that allow applications from local community groups, the process should include those applications. It should in all areas include the spend of the CSP budget and the communities it benefits.
 19. We believe that the membership of elected representatives should reflect the relative political strength of the parties on the local council and should be carried out using the d'Hondt method.



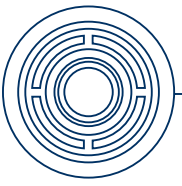
Recommendations

- As regards the future relationship between CSPs and DPPs, the optimum position post-RPA would be to have one operational community safety/policing tier in each council area. We would recommend policy makers to look again at the vision laid out in the Patten report and echoed to some extent in the Criminal Justice Review.
- After three years' running, membership of each tier of the CSPs needs to be reviewed. This might also allow for an increase in the membership of those from a community background.
- More robust arrangements should be put in place to monitor attendance at CSP meetings and ensure that non-attendance is followed up.
- Co-ordination between CSPs and DPPs needs to be improved:
 - a) Minutes of meetings, including private meetings, should be shared between members of CSPs and DPPs.
 - b) The work of the DPP should be a standing item on the agenda of the operational tier of the corresponding CSP, and vice versa.
 - c) The Joint Planning Group established under the MOU should examine the extent to which CSP and DPP planning timetables could be synchronised.
- Once proper safeguards are in place with the relevant partners, indicative funding should be released to CSPs in an annual bloc to allow some flexibility for CSPs to meet the commitments outlined in the action plans.
- The CSU should monitor the performance of each of the CSPs more closely.
- CSPs should develop local communication strategies.
- CSPs should publish short annual reports.
- Immediate steps should be taken to introduce a system of proper equality monitoring for CSPs.
- The elected representative membership of CSPs should reflect the relative strength of the parties on the local council and should be determined using the d'Hondt method.

PART



Inspection Report



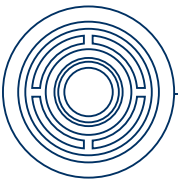
CHAPTER 1:

The history and future of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs)



- 1.1 Community Safety Partnerships have their origins, as with much in the recasting of the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland, in the Good Friday Agreement. The Agreement recommended two reviews of policing and justice. The first, which was independent and led by Chris Patten, was to examine the future of policing. The second, the Criminal Justice Review, was government-led but included independent assessors and examined the future of the criminal justice system.
- 1.2 The Patten Commission reported first in September 1999. In the course of its report it recommended the establishment of District Policing Partnership Boards (DPPBs). These were to be established by local Councils and composed of a majority of local elected representatives with the balance being made up of independent members. Their remit was to be advisory, explanatory and consultative. They were also to “monitor the performance of the police in their districts, as well as that of other protective agencies such as the fire service, environmental protection, public health and consumer protection authorities.”
- The DPPBs were also designed to be forums for promoting a partnership of community and police in the delivery of community safety. In other words, the idea was that if particular problems were identified which were beyond the ability of the local police to resolve, then the DPPB would play a role in co-ordinating a response across the relevant agencies.
- 1.3 Six months after the publication of the Patten report, the Criminal Justice Review published its findings. By that time the government had already signalled its intention to establish District Policing Partnerships along the lines proposed by Patten, but appeared to signal a narrowing of their focus to pure policing, at least while awaiting the outcome of the Criminal Justice Review.¹ The Review, when it reported in March 2000, addressed the issue of local partnerships in the following terms:
- 1.4 “We believe that there are good reasons for combining the functions of community safety and policing within one local body. To do so would avoid putting too great a burden on local councils (and we

¹ Hansard, 19th January 2000 Col 846



were aware of the plethora of existing bodies to which local authorities are expected to contribute) and would enable a single body to consider the community safety and policing needs of local communities. Policing is an important aspect of community safety, but not the only aspect, and community safety can in turn contribute to effective policing. We wish to recommend a broader role for these bodies, which would focus on community safety.”

1.5 The Review then recommended the establishment of Community Safety and Policing Partnerships (CSPPs). It was suggested that these be chaired by local authority elected members and composed largely as Patten had suggested but with the possibility that representatives from the private sector, trade unions, the voluntary sector be invited to sit on the partnership which should work with the statutory, community and voluntary sectors.


1.6 The recommendation of both the bodies set up to advise on the policing and criminal justice aspects of the Agreement was therefore that in each district council area one local partnership be established dealing with these issues.

1.7 Following the publication of the Criminal Justice Review report the Government indicated that it did not fully accept the recommendations relating to the establishment of CSPPs. In its formal response to the Review the Government stated that although it accepted the idea of an inter-agency approach to community safety it felt that it would be

premature to make firm decisions on the future shape of community safety since there was to be a review of public administration which in all likelihood would impact significantly on local government structures. In a briefing paper to the short-lived Northern Ireland Executive, it was suggested that the Government chose not to follow the recommendations of the Review because District Policing Partnerships were not conceived of as service delivery bodies. This seems to reflect a view which inspectors came across during this inspection among many of those that we interviewed that DPPs were only about holding the police to account, while CSPs were about problem solving at a local level. While there may be some validity to this view, it does not necessarily reflect the vision of the Patten report or the Criminal Justice Review.

1.8 The Governmental response to the Review also included a legislative aspect in the form of the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002. Section 72 of that Act provides for the establishment of local CSPs. That section has not yet been brought into force. It essentially sets out a framework which allows for the CSPs to be set up by the Secretary of State. Section 72(3) of the Act does seem to suggest that membership of statutory CSPs is to be restricted to organisations exercising statutory functions – in other words the statutory sector.

1.9 Despite the fact that Section 72 has not yet been commenced, CSPs have now been established in all 26 district council areas across Northern



Ireland. They have been established on a purely voluntary basis. Most have been in existence for at least two years. While each differs to some extent, approximately half have at least two tiers – strategic and operational – and some also have task groups which tend to be operate on a particular issue, often on a time limited basis. Each has a community safety co-ordinator who is generally employed by the local council although funded by the Community Safety Unit, which is a division of the Northern Ireland Office. The CSU also provided funding to set up the CSPs and continues to fund their activities. Each Partnership has recently been granted indicative funding from the CSU for the next two years ending in April 2008. The CSU also provides guidance and advice to the CSPs and has a forum for CSP co-ordinators to meet on a regular basis. The structure and membership of the CSPs is discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

1.10 The Government also legislated to give statutory effect to District Policing Partnerships. DPPs were established by the Police Act 2000 where their functions were defined as follows:

- To provide views to the District Commander on any matter concerning the policing of the district;
- To monitor the performance of the police in carrying out the policing plan and the local policing plan for the district;
- To make arrangements for obtaining the views of the public concerning the policing of the district and the

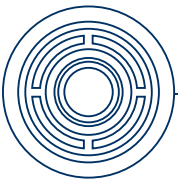
cooperation of the public in preventing crime; and

- To act as a general forum for discussion and consultation on the policing of the district.

1.11 DPPs are made up of nineteen, seventeen, or fifteen members, always with one more political than independent members. The political members are appointed by the local council and the independents are appointed by the Policing Board from among persons nominated by the councils. The Board has a statutory duty to ensure that the independent members appointed are representative of the community in each district council area.

1.12 DPPs were established in 2003. They are staffed by DPP managers who are based in local councils. DPPs report to the Policing Board and to the local council.

1.13 Currently therefore there are two distinct partnerships operating in the area of policing and community safety. Each has a relationship with the local council but each also has a relationship with a “parent” body – either the Policing Board or the Community Safety Unit. The existence of two such partnerships has raised significant concerns in many quarters about the possibility of duplication of work and the question of the relationship between DPPs and CSPs is addressed in detail later in the report. While Inspectors were therefore alive to this issue prior to the inspection, we were taken aback during the course of the inspection at the number of other partnerships which exist at local government level




and which have the potential to impact on community safety issues. There are Local Strategic Partnerships, Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships, Area Partnership Boards, Belfast Regeneration Office, Rural Area Partnerships and others. This does not take into account the regular and necessary interaction with central government departments and other agencies which takes place across all 26 council areas and impacts on community safety. One senior council official in Belfast told us there were more than 70 strategies which impacted on Belfast alone. Inspectors, in the course of this inspection, found it difficult to get a full picture of the extent of such bodies and their local impact. We can only guess at the difficulties posed for community groups and representatives by this level of local bureaucracy. Genuine partnership with local communities requires rationalisation of these structures.

- 1.14 We realise that the Review of Public Administration has begun to focus minds on rationalising governance at both local and central levels in Northern Ireland and the prospect of a community planning duty was raised throughout our inspection as a possible panacea for the plethora of partnership bodies and for the CSP/DPP issue. The new community planning duty will oblige local councils to consult with their constituents to identify priorities for their areas. Statutory agencies will then be required to work with councils in developing a community plan to map out how such aims will

be achieved. We agree that there is significant potential in community planning for the future of both DPPs and CSPs.

- 1.15 In the context of community planning, Inspectors were told that a likely structure for post RPA local government partnerships was to have a community planning strategic partnership which would have responsibility for managing the community plan. Beneath this strategic tier there could be a number of themed operational tiers dealing with matters such as health, housing etc. These tiers would have responsibility for implementing the relevant aspects of the community plan and would be held to account by the strategic tier. The strategic tier and the council would ensure local democratic accountability.
- 1.16 The development of this community planning process, combined with the new larger council areas over the next two years, appears to us to provide an opportune moment for policy makers to reconsider the architecture of local policing and community safety. It is already clear that, with the PSNI moving to a much smaller number of DCUs to mirror the RPA, there will have to be some rationalisation of DPPs. CSPs will almost inevitably have to follow suit.
- 1.17 In light of the above and the findings of our inspection, there are a number of potential options for the future of community safety and policing at local council level.



1.18 It could be that CSPs and DPPs could continue their present existence, albeit in a rationalised form to reflect the post RPA realities. In other words, policing and community safety would not be included in the community plan. For a number of reasons it seems to us that this is not a viable option. Policing and community safety are vital aspects of the lives of citizens in Northern Ireland. Devolving responsibility to the new councils to develop in conjunction with communities plans for the well-being of their areas without allowing them responsibility for policing and community safety will, in our view, stymie the potential of the community planning process.

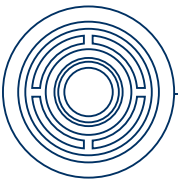
1.19 If the community planning process does take account of policing and community safety, then it seems to us that the continued existence of partnerships with reporting lines, not to the community planning strategic tier but to the NIO or the Policing Board, may well be problematic both in terms of democratic accountability but also in terms of avoiding the “over-administration” which the RPA is seeking to address.

1.20 It may be that the most beneficial solution is to incorporate community safety and policing fully into the community plan thus leading to the creation of a policing and/or community safety operational tier sitting beneath the strategic tier and reporting to it. In these circumstances, neither the Policing Board nor the CSU would have any direct role in the management of these tiers although we would envisage a continued role for either

or both in terms of providing guidance and expertise and a forum for the sharing of best practice.

1.21 The final outworking of the RPA is a matter for others and we imagine these matters are currently being considered. It was also not part of our role to consider the future of DPPs and we can pass no comment on their performance to date. However, it is true to say that Inspectors picked up significant levels of frustration amongst DPP members that the partnerships were not working properly nor fulfilling the full range of their statutory functions, primarily because of a claimed lack of adequate funding. It is also the case that there has been considerable concern about the low rates of attendance at public meetings of DPPs (see Chapter 2).

1.22 Whether or not, in the context of policing and community safety being incorporated within the community plan there would be a need for the maintenance of two separate partnerships is a matter for further consideration, but continuing this structure does seem to fly in the face of the notion of simplifying and rationalising bureaucracy. It was suggested to Inspectors by some of those interviewed that a combined structure could not accommodate the two differing approaches exemplified by CSPs and DPPs, with the DPP primarily concentrating on holding the police to account locally while CSPs tended towards a problem solving and multi-agency approach. We do not believe that there is necessarily any inconsistency between accountability and



partnership, a view which appears to have been shared by both the Patten Commission and the Criminal Justice Review, which considered these issues in considerable detail. It is also important to point out that the statutory remit of DPPs relates to the monitoring of the police rather than holding them to account. This is distinct from the obligation on the Policing Board which is explicitly about holding the Chief Constable to account. We are also not attached to the notion that only the police should be held to account locally. If community planning is to work with community safety as one of its themes, it is important that the performance of all of the statutory community safety actors be monitored locally. The key in our view is to provide a structure which allows for the identification of local issues of concern to the community, the devising of plans across relevant agencies to deal with those problems, and ensuring that the agencies stick to those plans.

In these circumstances we would suggest that the optimum position post RPA would be to have one operational community safety/policing tier in each council area. This is not a recommendation that envisages DPPs “taking over” CSPs or vice versa. We believe some new thinking is required that will take account of lessons learnt from the experience of both DPPs and CSPs. The ending of the period of indicative funding from 2008 and the implementation of the RPA seems to us to be an opportune

moment to revision the landscape of community safety. Policy makers could do worse than look again at the vision laid out in the Patten report and echoed to some extent in the Criminal Justice Review.

The key aspect of this process in our view is community involvement. A gap in the make-up of CSPs identified by Inspectors during our inspection was the community sector (for more see Chapter 2). The identification of local issues of concern is not something that should be done by statutory agencies but should be done by local community and political representatives. This constituency must be central to any reconfiguration of community safety.

Structure and Membership



Structure

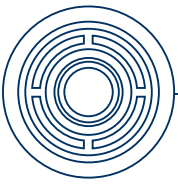
- 2.1 Approximately half of all CSPs have strategic and operational tiers. While the number of members of these tiers varies considerably from area to area, it is not unusual to have between ten and twenty members on each tier. A large number of CSPs also have task groups which are usually ad hoc groups with a time limited lifespan established to tackle a particular issue.

Inspectors found broad consensus that this level of bureaucracy was disproportionate, unwieldy and unnecessary. In our view, one tier in each area, perhaps supported where appropriate with task groups, should be sufficient. An exception may be appropriate in the case of Belfast.


- 2.2 Inspectors found a lack of clear understanding about the differing roles of the strategic and operational tiers, often at its most acute among the members of those tiers. As one member of a strategic tier told us, “just calling something strategic does not mean that it is”. It appeared to

Inspectors that what seemed to have happened was that those charged with establishing the local CSP had simply followed the guidance issued from the CSU on structure with little adaptation to the local context despite the guidance exhorting them to “consider very carefully the structure which will best fit their needs”. In small areas, the number of CSP meetings which statutory agencies had to attend resulted in officials being “run ragged” according to one senior council official.

- 2.3 There was often confusion about what the proper role was for each tier. In a number of areas, CSP co-ordinators had wisely organised planning days which members of both tiers attended and which afforded an opportunity to tease out and discuss some of the problems involving relationships between the tiers. Inspectors were told that these days had succeeded in resolving some of the tensions but implementation of new arrangements was often in its very early stages. Inspectors were surprised to note that in some areas minutes had not been shared between the two tiers. In one area members of the strategic tier told us that they did not know what the operational tier did.



- 2.4 Inspectors also came across frustration amongst members of strategic tiers at their apparent inability to be strategic. Notionally, at least, those who sit on the strategic tier are senior members of their respective organisations, and yet we were told of a feeling that they could not devise strategy for their local CSP because at one level, the strategy had already been set by the NIO community safety strategy for Northern Ireland, and the operational tier was setting the agenda locally and implementing it. This feeling of being relatively powerless was one which we came across in a number of areas and led to at least one member telling us that he was considering whether it was worth his while continuing his involvement. Others told us that while “they have had some good discussions” they are not sure what has actually been achieved.
- 2.5 At the operational level, there appeared to be a much clearer shared sense of the purpose of the CSP. Operational tiers generally speaking were smaller and had a heavier representation from the statutory sector. There was a sense at the meetings we attended that those involved were keen to simply get on with the work with or without direction from the strategic tier. Indeed at a number of operational tier meetings which Inspectors attended we were impressed with the partnership working which was being undertaken and operational tier members generally seemed more positive about their involvement with the CSP and what the CSP was actually achieving.
- 2.6 Inspectors were however concerned at the dysfunctional nature of some partnerships. It appeared to us, and this was confirmed in conversations with CSP members and CSU officials, that the notion of partnership working had not yet taken hold in CSPs. As one official indicated to us “the CSP members are there to see what they can get out of it for their organisations. This is still really silo working.” One strategic tier member was explicit on this point and told us that he was there because he had been told to go by his organisational superior and while he was glad to help the CSP out, he felt no accountability to the partnership. We appreciate that this sort of corporateness can only grow with time but we are concerned that after two or three years it has not yet taken hold. It is likely that one of the reasons for this is the lack of a secure and statutory footing for CSPs and the mixed lines of accountability for CSPs to local councils and the Community Safety Unit.
- 2.7 When Inspectors pointed out this apparent weakness it was put to us that, despite it, one of the positive spin-offs of the CSPs was that partnership working was encouraged even outside the confines of the partnership. In other words, agencies within the CSP could link up on work outside the formal business of the CSP. We have no doubt that this is a possible consequence of having the CSPs in existence as a forum where so many players in the community safety area can come together to discuss matters of mutual interest. However, when we asked for concrete examples of this type of



spin-off there seemed little that could be identified.

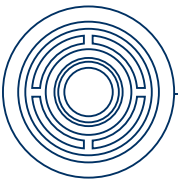
Membership

2.8 The membership of CSPs also varies from district council area to area. Generally speaking, membership is drawn from the voluntary, statutory and political sectors. An analysis of membership lists from 24 of the 26 CSPs showed that the statutory sector accounted for 50% of all members, with the voluntary sector and elected representatives making up approximately 20% each. The private sector and community sector accounted for only about 3% each while trade union representatives made up only 1% of CSP members. It is not surprising that the statutory sector predominates in the partnerships and indeed their presence is both appropriate and necessary as they are key in terms of providing solutions to many of the community safety problems that might arise. However, Inspectors were concerned with the relative absence of grass roots community groups. It was clear that in a number of areas community representatives were often included on the task groups which were established with specific time limited tasks in hand. This is a welcome development and Inspectors were shown evidence of task groups which had had considerable success in dealing with specific projects. We also came across good examples of CSP co-ordinators making specific efforts to engage grassroots community groups and to seek their views on how best to progress community safety issues.

However, it is also vital that community representatives have a voice at the strategic and operational tiers where key decisions are made. Their presence at these levels becomes all the more important when considered against the backdrop of the implementation of the RPA which has the potential to dilute the links between CSPs and ordinary communities.

2.9 While each partnership had carried out a community consultation, Inspectors and indeed CSP members were not always convinced that this achieved an accurate indication of the key community concerns in their area. It was also clear that some statutory players viewed the absence of community representatives as a problem. At one operational tier meeting attended by Inspectors, a proposal was put to the meeting and the police representatives present were asked for an indication as to what the community in their area would think about it. The police officers involved appropriately pointed out that they could not speak for the community and urged that the CSP meet community representatives directly. Identification of issues of concern to the community is a matter for the community.

2.10 Inspectors were told about the difficulties of getting representatives from the community that could be seen to represent the whole of the community. The concern was expressed to us that the inclusion of more community representatives could lead to unwieldy numbers on each partnership. Inspectors accept that this is a potential problem but




not one that should prove insurmountable, given the positive benefits that would accrue from having a more direct community input.

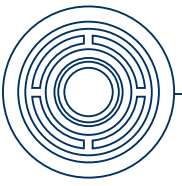
- 2.11 The preponderance of statutory agencies also appeared to Inspectors to restrict debate at the CSP meetings we attended in respect of particular issues – community restorative justice being one. It also appeared that other members seemed to defer to statutory agencies, particularly the police, in terms of their expertise in community safety issues. The debate at meetings we observed was often led by the police and other statutory players with limited input from other members.
- 2.12 Inspectors were also told of a feeling in one area that the membership of their strategic tier was becoming “jaded”. **CSPs have now been established in most areas for almost three years. In our view, it is essential that after this period of time, membership of each tier is reviewed. Given that in each area action plans have been drawn up covering the allocation of the indicative funding for the next two years, it seems to Inspectors to be an appropriate time to review membership and this might also allow for an increase in the membership of those from a community background.**

Attendance

- 2.13 Inspectors received differing accounts about the level and consistency of attendance of members of the various tiers of CSPs. While most of those Inspectors spoke to indicated that attendance levels were generally good, and indeed it was clear that a central core of members did attend regularly, perusal of minutes for meetings suggested regular absentees, and non-attendance rates running at around 30%. In one area, we were told that attendance at the strategic tier was regularly less than half of the full membership. In addition, we were told that attendance levels of elected members and representatives of voluntary groups could be poor while those representing statutory organisations had a better record. As against this, we were also told that there was often a high turnover of personnel amongst the statutory representatives.
- 2.14 In most areas attendance was monitored but there did not always appear to be a clear policy of what to do if members did not turn up for several meetings in a row. One co-ordinator told us that attendance lists were circulated to the various member groups to let them see whether their representative was turning up. Others told us they informally “kept an eye” on attendance and would contact the offending party or their organisation if the problem became acute. It seemed this tentativeness arose from a feeling that, because the partnerships were voluntary, so was attendance.



Inspectors are not satisfied that sufficiently robust arrangements have been put in place to monitor attendance and ensure follow-up if required. While each partnership has a constitution and code of conduct, and attendance is mentioned in the code of conduct, action did not appear to have been taken against those who regularly do not attend. Such arrangements should now be put in place.



Relationships

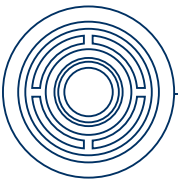
The relationship with District Policing Partnerships (DPPs)

- 3.1 We have already referred above to the history of CSPs and DPPs and the difficult relationship which has existed between them. When Inspectors began this inspection they identified this relationship as one of the key issues with which they would be concerned. Inspectors did find that this relationship was a difficult one and there were strong views on each side of the debate as to what the optimum model should be at local council level in terms of policing and community safety. We have indicated in Chapter one the various options that exist in our view post implementation of the Review of Public Administration. We have also referred to our view that the relationship between CSPs and DPPs is only one example of the potential for duplication of work which exists at this level, given the plethora of partnerships and local strategies in place.
- 3.2 While it may be that in the context of implementation of the RPA, some of the fundamentals regarding the relationship between CSPs and DPPs

will be resolved, Inspectors have a number of comments which may help to ease the relationship between the two in the interim.

- 3.3 In March this year, in an attempt to ensure a more productive relationship between the CSPs and DPPs, the Policing Board and the Community Safety Unit developed a Memorandum of Understanding. This was a welcome, if perhaps belated, development. It envisages new structures to improve communication between the Board and the Unit at a strategic level and the partnerships at an operational level. Inspectors were most concerned during this inspection with the relationship between the two sets of partnerships at operational level.²
- 3.4 The MoU recommended that at least one member of the DPP sit as a member of the CSP strategic tier, and that those DPP representatives should ensure proper communication on relevant issues between the CSP and DPP. Sharing of minutes was also recommended as was the establishment of a Joint Planning Group to take forward proposals for joint work. There was also a

² It is important to bear in mind that the fieldwork for this inspection took place in May and early June, which while post dating the Memorandum of Understanding was perhaps too early to get an accurate and fair view as to whether it was being properly implemented.




suggestion that DPP managers and the CSP Co-ordinators meet twice yearly.

- 3.5 Inspectors were not surprised to find a considerable degree of tension between the two partnerships. Generally speaking we found DPP members to be of the view that there was no need for two partnerships and that CSPs should either fade from the scene or be amalgamated in some way into the policing structures. This appeared to reflect the views expressed on a number of occasions by the Policing Board. There was also a sense amongst DPP members that their functions beyond simply monitoring the police had been stymied by a lack of funding whereas CSPs seemed to have significant amounts of funding. Indeed in at least one area the local DPP had applied to the CSP for funding. There also appeared to Inspectors to be a stronger corporate identity amongst the DPP members, which is perhaps not surprising given their basis in statute, and their close links to the Policing Board.
- 3.6 CSP members tended to the view that there was room for two partnerships and felt that CSPs played a particular role which DPPs could not fill. There did seem to be a limited understanding in CSPs of the role for DPPs which was laid out in statute, in that most CSP members seemed to think that the only DPP role was to hold the police commander to account locally. In fact of course the remit of DPPs is supposed to be considerably wider and this lack of understanding may well have led to further problems in

the relationship between the two partnerships. There was also a widely expressed view that CSP members were making regular efforts to try to improve communication between the two sets of partnerships but this was rarely reciprocated. In addition, a number of CSP co-ordinators told us that they could engage in a proactive way with communities across their boroughs but if they were seen to be representing the DPP this would not necessarily have been the case.

- 3.7 Inspectors found that generally speaking there was a good working relationship between the CSP co-ordinators and the DPP managers. Often these two members of staff shared office space and were generally housed in the same department of the council. This facilitated sharing of information and good communication at least between the secretariats for both partnerships.
- 3.8 However, as indicated above this awareness of each other's roles and responsibilities did not appear evident when talking to members of either partnership. Accepting that the MoU was only signed in March of this year, Inspectors were still surprised at the mutual lack of knowledge of the other's activities displayed by members of both partnerships. This was in spite of occasional and sometimes significant joint membership. While the situation varied in terms of the sharing of minutes in the four areas we visited, in all four areas members of both partnerships told us they did not regularly receive minutes of the other's meetings. This was sometimes in direct contradiction to what the



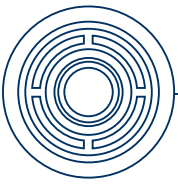
CSP co-ordinator or DPP manager had told us. **We are not able to confirm exactly what has happened with the sharing of minutes but it seems to us the minimal and sensible step to avoiding duplication is to ensure that minutes are shared regularly. We do not believe this should be limited to public DPP meetings.**

- 3.9 It was also the case that members of both partnerships were generally not able to discuss in any detail the work of the other partnership. This was worrying in and of itself but was particularly so because members of each partnership readily acknowledged the possibility and indeed the reality that work could sometimes be duplicated or at the very least carried out in a way which did not inspire confidence that either partnership had an overall view of the totality of community safety work taking place in an area.
- 3.10 This appeared to be the case even where there was some degree of joint membership. It seems therefore that the bare fact of some joint membership is not of itself delivering that which it was presumably designed to – an avoidance of duplication and a maximizing of the opportunities of joint working. Those who have shared membership should be expected to play this particular role as opposed to merely attending two sets of meetings. It also seemed to Inspectors that the knowledge and experience of CSP co-ordinators and DPP managers were not being exploited sufficiently in this regard. Given the fact that in most areas

these individuals are probably the most informed about the work of the two partnerships, utilising them in what often appeared to be a purely managerial/administrative capacity seemed unproductive.

We were encouraged by the development in one area of putting an update on the work of the DPP as a standing item on the agenda of the operational tier of the CSP. However, at the operational tier meeting which we attended we were concerned that draft DPP plans were tabled for comment from CSP members but in fact the deadline for comment was the date of the meeting. We understand that sometimes deadlines are immovable but nevertheless, if it is felt appropriate to have a DPP update on the agenda, then perhaps further consideration needs to be given to co-ordinating meetings and deadlines to maximise the potential of this development.

- 3.11 Indeed this apparent clash between CSP and DPP planning deadlines was a theme which Inspectors came across regularly during the inspection with a number of officials and members of both partnerships complaining that the planning cycles for the two partnerships were not in sync. **While there may be limited benefits for redressing this in light of the two year action plans adopted by the CSPs to spend their indicative funding, Inspectors nevertheless believe that it would be useful**



for planners to examine the extent to which timetables could be synchronised allowing each partnership to contribute meaningfully to the planning of the other and allowing each partnership to take account of the priorities being set by the other. It seems to us that the Joint Planning Group proposed by the MoU between the Board and the Unit could usefully progress this recommendation. We also believe that the Group could also act to oversee the implementation of the MoU and the recommendations made in this report. As indicated, even the sensible and minimal steps like the sharing of minutes seem to be taking place, if at all, on an ad hoc basis and in a way which is not contributing in any real way to joint working or even the avoidance of duplication of effort.


The Relationship with the Community Safety Unit (CSU)

3.12 It is important to stress that CJI were not involved in an inspection of the CSU. However, the CSU is a vital player in the development and maintenance of CSPs and the relationship between it and the partnerships is an important part of the life of the CSPs. It is perhaps inevitable that, given the context of this relationship, there should be some degree of tension between the two and indeed such tension can be constructive. Inspectors found considerable evidence of this tension, although we were also repeatedly reminded of the significant work of Partnership Development Officers

(PDOs), who act as the CSU's point of contact and guidance for CSPs. We are not convinced, however, that the relationship is working as successfully as it could.

3.13 There were a number of matters raised with Inspectors which seemed to be symptoms of a sometimes problematic relationship. We were repeatedly told of unrealistic deadlines being set by the CSU for the submission of action plans, for financial returns and the completion of other pieces of work. We were told that the CSU were too "hands on" and were also occasionally told that there was insufficient guidance. We should note that in relation to at least some of these issues the CSU takes a very different view to the CSPs. However, this level of disagreement does indicate that there is room for improvement in the relationship between the CSU and the CSPs. Some of what follows is an attempt to address that more fundamental problem.

3.14 There was considerable confusion about the status and role of the CSU. One complaint which we heard involved an unfavourable comparison between the CSU and the Policing Board. We were told that the Board championed the interests and agenda of DPPs in a way in which the CSU did not do in relation to CSPs. Of course the CSU is simply a branch of the NIO and does not enjoy the same legal or political status as the Policing Board. It cannot engage in this type of activity. However, this misunderstanding feeds a feeling of dissatisfaction amongst CSPs and adversely affects the relationship with DPPs.



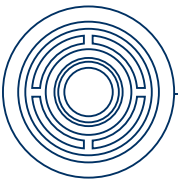
3.15 We were surprised at the extent of this misunderstanding given the fact that there are regular meetings between CSP co-ordinators and CSU staff including the head of the CSU. These LAN meetings, we were told, had a tendency to become confrontational and degenerate into an opportunity for CSP co-ordinators to complain about the CSU and the meetings appear to have become unproductive. Some co-ordinators told us that there had been an improvement in the LAN meetings recently and a number also remarked on the useful meetings which they had with their PDOs and the other co-ordinators within his/her remit.

3.16 We are concerned that the exact purpose of LAN meetings remains unclear to Inspectors. We understand that they have not been used to share best practice, and indeed that no formal mechanism exists to allow this. If LAN meetings are simply to allow the CSU to update co-ordinators about community safety issues we fail to see why this could not be done more productively by email. There will still of course be a need for co-ordinators to meet with the CSU occasionally but perhaps with a more focused agenda dealing with real problems affecting the CSPs and allowing the CSU to bring ideas and assistance to the meetings. We understand that efforts are made to allow CSP co-ordinators to place items on the agenda and we would encourage the continuation of that practice.

3.17 A further complaint we heard in relation to the CSU/CSP relationship was the lack of consultation of co-

ordinators by the CSU. Again we are concerned that the LAN meetings have not afforded this opportunity. Both co-ordinators and CSP members raised this issue, sometimes in the context of concerns that the CSU tended to dictate on policy matters as opposed to consult. This again may be a result of the fact that CSU is a branch of the NIO and is simply reflecting governmental priorities. We were however told that recently PDOs have begun much more effectively to consult with co-ordinators and this has been welcomed. **It does seem to Inspectors, however, that the membership of CSPs provides a huge resource of expertise to the CSU which is not properly exploited. We would encourage thought being given as to how best to develop this. One idea may be to have meetings of chairs of CSPs perhaps on an annual basis to discuss upcoming issues and obtain the views of the CSPs on these matters.**

3.18 A further aspect of the sometimes difficult relationship between CSPs and the CSU seems to result from what was described to us as the high turnover of staff in the CSU. The CSU, as already indicated, is a branch of the NIO and is staffed by civil servants whose limited expertise in community safety was also highlighted by a large number of those we spoke to. There are regular changes of personnel in government departments and this is perhaps an inevitable consequence of the status of the CSU. **Nevertheless every effort should be made to provide some stability, at least in**



relation to the staff that have most interaction with the CSPs. It may also be useful to consider the use of long-term secondments from other agencies (including voluntary sector organisations) with expertise in community safety to the CSU.

- 3.19 The funding arrangements between the CSU and CSPs were also the subject of considerable comment. As already indicated, up until this financial year the CSPs were able to disburse very limited amounts of money, normally spent on small scale projects, sometimes of a few hundred pounds. Inspectors were told of considerable frustration amongst members of CSPs that their decisions to approve such projects had to be subsequently approved by the CSU. In most areas projects which were to be funded by the CSP were paid quarterly in arrears upon providing evidence of the appropriate work being undertaken. The project would generally have a cost centre in the local council financial system which would pay out to them simultaneously with the CSU releasing the money to the local council.
- 3.20 However, that situation has now changed with two years' indicative funding being provided by the CSU to each CSP. This funding is however tied to action plans which each CSP has had to develop and which have in turn had to be approved by the CSU. The action plans indicate how the indicative funding is to be spent over the course of the next two financial

years. However, although there is an option to obtain the funding quarterly in advance, most CSPs have not availed themselves of that and will only get the funding every quarter in arrears. This has also led to considerable concern amongst CSP members. A number of CSP members pointed out to us that they had responsibility for significant budgets in their professional life outside the CSP yet their involvement in this limited amount of spending was very tightly controlled. It was put to Inspectors that it would be much preferable simply to release the indicative funding to the CSP and allow it to disburse it. We understand that the CSU is itself subject to tight financial controls but it does seem to us that some loosening of these tight financial controls would be appropriate. We also understand that the reluctance to do so might be explained at least in part by the fact that CSP is not a legal entity but presumably one of the partner agencies (perhaps most appropriately the council?) would be prepared to account for the monies released to the CSP. This would allow a greater degree of flexibility to the CSP. **We would therefore recommend that the indicative funding be released in an annual bloc to the CSPs once proper financial safeguards are in place with the relevant partners to allow some flexibility for the CSPs to meet the commitments outlined in the action plan. Short of that, we would urge CSPs to examine the option of obtaining their funding in advance every quarter.**

Accountability, Community Engagement and Equality



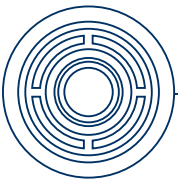
Accountability

4.1 One of the consequences of the decision not to put CSPs on a statutory footing has arguably been a failure to instil a corporate identity within each CSP. While most have some relationship with their local council, they function at some distance and are not strictly council committees. They receive funding from the Northern Ireland Office via the Community Safety Unit, and are clearly accountable to the CSU for monies spent, but they are not managed by the CSU or part of it. The partnerships generally (there are some exceptions) operate on a voluntary basis and have no clear legal status beyond that. While this has some attractions in terms of independence, it also raises a number of difficulties.

4.2 As already indicated, there is no question but that the limited monies provided to CSPs from the CSU have been carefully husbanded, but in terms of accountability for the work of the partnership itself, the position is less clear. The reluctance which Inspectors detected in relation to the issue of monitoring attendance and taking appropriate action in relation to those who regularly failed to

attend, also seemed to be present when we discussed with CSP members, co-ordinators and indeed the CSU the need to determine the impact of CSPs. In other words, it seems reasonable to Inspectors, to try and determine, three years into the life of CSPs, whether they have made any discernible difference to the lives of those in the local areas for which they have responsibility. This is especially so given that a local councillor in one area told us that the efforts of the CSP in his area were a “drop in the ocean” and a leading council official in another area told us that while good work was being done, it was only “skimming the surface” of the problem. While of course we were also told by others that CSPs were making an impact, it is difficult to make a judgement on their success or otherwise in the absence of sufficient objective data.

4.3 In England and Wales, where Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships have been established on a statutory footing, challenging local targets have been set for each partnership. These targets include crime reduction, reassuring the public, reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, building confidence in the criminal justice system,




increasing voluntary and community engagement, especially amongst those at risk of social exclusion and reducing race inequalities and building community cohesion. No targets have been set in Northern Ireland and indeed the attitude of the CSU, as explained to Inspectors by one CSU official, is that “No action is taken on non- performing CSPs. As long as they are delivering projects it’s all that matters”.

- 4.4 Inspectors were told in a number of areas that CSP members themselves were “beginning to think about what impact the CSP is having” but we are concerned that this thinking is being left to each CSP. **In our view, the CSU should be monitoring much more closely the performance of each of the CSPs. While we recognise that the lifespan of the CSPs in their present form may be limited, we nevertheless believe that the introduction of appropriate targets and performance indicators at this stage is both necessary for the measurement of the CSPs as they currently exist, and will also prove useful for whatever model is introduced in the wake of the RPA. We do not consider the fact that the partnerships are voluntary to be an adequate reason for the failure thus far to measure either their performance or their impact. Regardless of their status, by the end of the financial year 2007/08, the CSPs will have spent a considerable amount of public money. Inspectors are concerned to note that at this stage it will prove difficult,**

if not impossible to measure the impact of that spend on community safety, either across Northern Ireland as a whole or in specific district council areas.

- 4.5 It appeared to Inspectors that evaluation of local projects funded or supported by the CSPs was generally being carried out. However, these tended to be relatively minor projects, which even if successful, would on their own have only a limited impact on community safety issues.
- 4.6 Linked to the issue of performance is of course the issue of democratic accountability. As already indicated, while the CSPs generally have a relationship of sorts with local councils, the input of councillors and local community groups can be quite limited. In a number of areas, Inspectors were told of a frustration amongst local elected representatives that they did not always feel part of the decision making process within the CSPs. In one area for instance they did not sit on the operational tier but were restricted to the strategic tier. While this may be understandable in a context where the strategic tier sets the vision for community safety and the operational tier implements that vision, Inspectors noted (as already indicated) that the roles of the various tiers can all too often be unclear and reporting and communication lines ineffective. This often seemed to leave locally elected representatives in a situation where they were not centrally involved in setting the strategy for community safety and had little information about the implementation of that



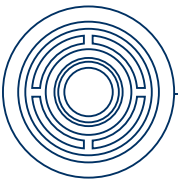
strategy. Combined with the relative absence of other community representatives from the strategic and operational tiers of the CSPs, this means that many decisions about community safety in a locality are generally being taken by a committee of statutory agencies, with some voluntary sector representatives. Inspectors do not believe this is satisfactory.

- 4.7 We note that the identification of local priorities in the local community safety strategy documents was informed by public consultation and consideration of local crime and deprivation data. Having examined the process by which this was done, it is clear that some considerable work was put into this process by local CSP co-ordinators. However, there were a number of weaknesses with this process that led some of those we interviewed to question the extent to which local concerns were truly identified with the local strategies. The first was that in most areas, the process of public consultation was carried out with very limited funding and sometimes limited responses were forthcoming. Inspectors wish to stress this is not a reflection on those who led this work who often showed considerable energy and imagination in their efforts. Secondly, local priorities had to fit within the Northern Ireland wide strategy set by the CSU, which while quite broad, still set parameters for the expression of local concern. Thirdly, the nine areas of the Northern Ireland wide strategy were very broad and allow for considerable discretion as to what to address within each area. Finally,

the priorities will now determine spending for the next two years based on data which is generally already two years old. **Some mechanism must be found prior to the roll-out of the RPA to provide an intersection between the efforts of CSPs to tackle community safety with the views of the community about where and how those efforts should best be targeted; and these efforts must be supported by the use of up to date information and data.**

Community engagement and Public Profile

- 4.8 One aspect of the dichotomy between the CSPs and the DPPs in relation to which there was almost complete agreement was the higher public profile enjoyed by the DPPs. A number of reasons were put forward for this including the fact that DPP meetings were open to the public and therefore attended by journalists, the subject matter of such meetings was often locally controversial, and the occasionally confrontational nature of such meetings. Inspectors felt that the higher profile enjoyed by DPPs was a source of some resentment on the part of CSP members.
- 4.9 More broadly speaking CSP members and co-ordinators, and indeed local political representatives, told us that the CSPs did not enjoy any real local profile. Inspectors were told in meeting after meeting in all four areas which we examined that CSP work was regularly confused with the council or the NIO or the PSNI.




Rarely did it appear that the CSP actually got credit for the considerable amount of work which was clearly being done in some areas. As one local councillor told us, “If I have no knowledge of the CSP how will the community know?”.

- 4.10 Unlike DPPs, CSPs did not survey local public opinion to determine their profile. A number of those interviewed by Inspectors recommended that this be done although the balance of opinion seemed to suggest that, as the profile of most CSPs was so low, this would be a pointless exercise.
- 4.11 Inspectors did come across good examples of CSP co-ordinators undertaking extensive outreach work in local communities and with local community groups to both raise awareness of the local CSP and to encourage interaction with the local community. However, the extent of this work tended to vary due to the priorities and indeed identity of the local co-ordinator. It appeared to us however, and this was confirmed in meetings with local community groups, that such work is most effective in building up relationships between local communities and the CSPs. Generally speaking, local community groups and others who Inspectors spoke to during the inspection and who responded to our stakeholder consultation, shared the view of local councillors that the profile of CSPs was very low. Inspectors were also told that, while good work was done by CSPs, and particularly co-ordinators, local communities did not feel engaged with in relation to community safety.

There was also a feeling expressed to us in both Belfast and Derry/Londonderry that CSP projects were often “city centre based” and “designed to reassure tourists”. Indeed an examination of many of the projects up to the point of indicative funding would suggest there was some substance to this view.

- 4.12 However, the recent drawing up of action plans, which set out how the indicative funding is to be spent, are based on local audits and consultations which should reflect what local community safety concerns are (bearing in mind our earlier comments about the limitations of these exercises). This should address the notion implicit in the above criticism that local community concerns have been ignored to date.

- 4.13 While some co-ordinators suggested that what was needed was a proper communications strategy from the CSU, Inspectors are of the view that such work is best undertaken locally taking account of the local media and political sensitivities. We would encourage local CSPs to develop such strategies. These need not be extensive or sophisticated documents but the combined wisdom and effort of those on the CSPs should be sufficient to raise the profile of the local partnership.** In this regard inspectors came across examples of equipment and literature being provided by the CSU to CSPs which we were told, if used, had to have the logos of the NIO, the CSU and



the PSNI displayed. Inspectors cannot understand the rationale for this particularly when it is clear that a corporate identity for local CSPs needs to be established and sustained. **We would also encourage the CSU to provide some limited additional resources to CSPs for communications purposes.**

4.14 Inspectors also felt that there was scope to open up some meetings of CSP strategic tiers in the same way as DPP meetings. Given the likelihood of local journalists attending such meetings, this seemed a straightforward and expense free way of raising the profile of CSPs.

4.15 In addition, we were surprised to find that in most areas CSPs do not publish annual reports. This goes both to the issue of profile and to that of accountability. The production of thousands of copies of a glossy local report would be disproportionate but a short report detailing what the CSP has achieved, could be done relatively cheaply and would provide some degree of openness in terms of local residents.

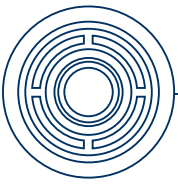
4.16 Equally, allowing the public access to the minutes of CSP meetings might be a way to raise the profile of the partnership, prove its worth and increase engagement with communities.

Equality

4.17 A key element of all inspections carried out by CJI involves consideration of the equality implications, and especially the implementation of the legal obligation which most inspected agencies have under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. CSPs are not designated for the purposes of Section 75, but the Northern Ireland Office and its constituent parts, such as the CSU, are.

4.18 Inspectors were alive to a particular point of concern in relation to CSPs because of the absence of Sinn Fein from the CSPs, which was that areas represented by Sinn Fein could lose out in terms of the spend from CSPs. We were also aware of a similar concern in council areas which were dominated by one political tradition.

4.19 We did not come across any suggestion during our inspection that there was discrimination in terms of the spending or work of CSPs. However, we were surprised to find that in three of the four areas which we examined in depth, no equality monitoring was carried out. In the fourth area there was some monitoring but details were not available to indicate that this was analysed rigorously. This meant that neither the spend of the CSP was monitored nor the applications for financial assistance, in those areas which accepted such applications. When we asked questions about such monitoring we were generally told that CSP members and co-ordinators



were satisfied because of their local knowledge that there were no equality problems. This, with respect, is not a sufficient safeguard. At the very least, efforts need to be made to gather information which would provide CSPs with the requisite reassurance they need that they are complying with Section 75.

Inspectors were told that spending of indicative funding is being carried out by objective need. As indicated, a proper equality monitoring exercise will no doubt confirm this but an absence of any objective information on equality is not acceptable.

4.20 We were told and we accept that such monitoring, in the context of the work of CSPs presents considerable difficulties. Given this, we were also concerned that all four areas told us that they had not received any guidance or assistance from the CSU regarding equality monitoring, a situation confirmed by the CSU. Indeed we understand that the challenge competitions run by the CSU were also not subject to any equality monitoring.

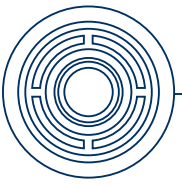
4.21 Inspectors recommend that immediate steps are taken to introduce a system of proper equality monitoring for CSPs. In those areas that allow applications from local community groups, the process should include those applications. It should, though, in all areas include the spend of the CSP budget and the communities it benefits.

4.22 We also had some concerns about the method of appointing political representatives to the CSPs. While we did not hear complaints that this had been done in any discriminatory way, **we believe that the membership of such representatives should reflect the relative political strength of the parties on the local council and should be carried out using the d'Hondt method.**

PART

2

Appendices





Methodology

Project Initiation; A Project Initiation Document (PID) was drawn up by the lead Inspector detailing the focus of the Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) inspection. This introduced the purpose and aims of the inspection and how the inspection would be carried.

Ten key areas formed the direction of the inspection focus to be carried out within the CSPs chosen:

- a Membership
- b Structure
- c Relationship with DPP
- d Evaluation/ Impact & Effectiveness
- c Profile
- d CSP and CSU relationship
- e Accountability
- f Consultation
- g Equality
- h Funding

The key aims of the inspection were to:

- 1) Assess the institutional strengths and weaknesses of CSPs against the common core themes of openness and accountability, partnership in the Criminal Justice System, equality, learning and results
- 2) Examine the aims and objectives of CSPs and the performance management system which underpins them and measure their effectiveness
- 3) Examine the relationship between CSPs and the DPP at a local level
- 4) Examine the relationship between the Unit and the Board

- 5) Evaluate the contribution of the CSPs to the proper and effective functioning of the Criminal Justice System in Northern Ireland and their impact in terms of local community confidence
- 6) Examine whether greater value could be added to the criminal justice system by some restructuring of the institutional architecture of the CSPs and DPPs particularly in light of the Review of Public Administration (RPA).

Inspection

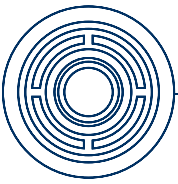
The inspection was carried out in six phases;

- 1) Notification to the CSU and Policing Board
- 2) Stakeholder consultation
- 3) Research and review of documentation
- 4) Self Assessment
- 5) Fieldwork
- 6) Report writing, feedback and refinement.

1) Notification

An official notification letter was sent to the Community Safety Unit and the Policing Board informing them of the proposed inspection. This included detail on the four CSPs chosen as part of the inspection; namely Belfast, Craigavon, Derry and Larne, an outline of the proposed timeframe and a brief overview of the methodology including the request for self-assessment. A set of key documents were also requested.

Separate meetings took place between the lead Inspector, the Unit and Board officials



within a short period of time of the notification letter being sent. The purpose of the meeting was to outline in more detail the methodology for the inspection, provide any additional support and assistance and answer any queries. It was also an opportunity to confirm the list of stakeholders to be consulted.

2) Stakeholder consultation

A list of stakeholders was compiled and consulted on based on the available documentation. These included:

- PSNI
- Youth Justice Agency
- Probation Board
- Political parties
- CAJ
- NIO
- NIACRO
- Victim Support
- NI Housing Executive
- Society of Local Authority Chief Executives
- Women's Aid
- Town and City Centre Managers
- Health Boards and Trusts
- Local Councils
- Justice Oversight Commissioner
- Policing Oversight Commissioner
- District Policing Partnerships

Most of the consultation involved either written response or a face to face meeting. They were asked to consider and comment on the key areas as listed in the aims of the inspection above.

3) Research and review of documentation


A review of relevant and available documentation was conducted in order to inform the early preparation of the inspection. Both the CSU and the Policing Board were requested to provide specific documentation as were the four Community Safety Partnerships and the District Policing Partnerships that fell into the inspected areas.

The CSPs provided examples of:

- Minutes from operational and strategic meetings
- Constitution
- Business plans
- Action plans- draft and finalised
- Audits
- Strategy documents
- Consultee /Stakeholder lists
- Funding criteria/ scoring matrix
- Successful and Unsuccessful funding applications
- Annual reports
- Project examples
- Membership lists

The DPP provided examples of:

- Membership lists
- Consultation lists
- Operational plans
- Strategic plans
- District Policing Plan
- Stakeholder lists
- Annual Report



Research was also conducted so to carry out comparative analysis with other jurisdictions.

4) Self Assessment

The self assessment exercise is intended for those agencies being inspected to critically assess their own strengths and weaknesses against a common core matrix. The exercise was conducted prior to the fieldwork so to identify issues that may need clarification during the fieldwork stage and to get a sense of how the partnership was working and delivering.

5) Fieldwork

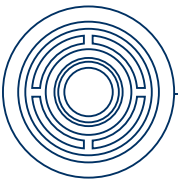
The fieldwork was conducted during May 2006, two days were spent in Craigavon, Larne and Derry and three days in Belfast. During this time various meetings, one to one interviews and focus groups were held with members of the partnership and those with an invested interest in community safety, mainly political parties. The core interviews held were with:

- Council Chief Executive
- CSP Chair
- DPP Chair
- CSP Co-ordinator
- DPP Manager
- PSNI – DCU Commander
- Strategic Tier members focus group
- Operational Tier members focus group
- Funding focus group – successful and unsuccessful applicants
- Political representatives
- Line Manager of CSP Co-ordinator

6) Report writing, feedback and refinement

During the period straight after the fieldwork follow up interviews were held to seek several issues of clarity from the CSU and Policing Board officials and other stakeholders who were identified as key during the fieldwork.

A report draft was then proposed with initial findings and recommendations shared with the CSU for comment. Following feedback refinement was then sought and the report published.



Community Safety in Britain (England and Wales)

Membership

There are currently 373 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP's) in England and Wales, mirroring local authority boundaries.

CDRP's fell out of the requirements of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act which placed a statutory duty on the police and local authorities to work in partnership with other local agencies, organisations in the public, private and voluntary sector to reduce crime and disorder and implement a strategy to do so.

Section 5 of the Act identified those that should be invited to be on the partnership, these were split into Responsible Authorities, Co-operating Bodies and Invitees to Participate. These are as listed below.

Section 5 (1) Responsible authorities

- Police
- Local Authority
- Police Authority
- Fire and Rescue Authorities
- Local Health Boards in Wales
- Primary Care Trusts (PCT's)

Section 5 (2) Co-operating Bodies

- Probation Board
- Parish Councils
- NHS Trusts
- NHS Foundation Trusts
- Governing bodies of schools
- Proprietors of independent schools
- Governing bodies of an institution within the further education sector

Section 5 (3) Invitees to Participate

Social landlords


- Drug Action Teams, Drug and Alcohol Teams
- Training and Enterprise Councils
- Voluntary Organisations – youth related
- Neighbourhood Watch representative
- Victim Support
- Ministry Of Defence
- Transport providers
- Bodies providing services to women, young, elderly, disabled, racial groups, homosexuals and residents
- Businesses
- Trade Union
- British Transport Police – are to be a few examples.

By sharing the responsibility over several authorities the police no longer had sole accountability for crime and disorder within the community. It has also opened up avenues for joint problem solving and further community engagement and involvement.

Those listed as responsible authorities have a duty to ensure that the agencies work together as a partnership to tackle crime and disorder issues. This is done from a three year strategy document which identifies and sets priorities arising out of their local crime and disorder audit.

Priorities

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 made it a responsibility of the local government to do as much as possible to prevent crime and disorder. The



Government has therefore set a three year National Community Safety Plan which details five key areas of focus for delivery over the period of 2006-09, these being:

- 1) Making communities stronger and more effective
- 2) Further reducing crime and anti-social behaviour
- 3) Creating safer environments
- 4) Protecting the public and building confidence
- 5) Improving people's lives so they are less likely to commit offences or re-offend.

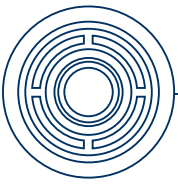
In particular the key priorities for CDRP's 2006-09 are to:

- 1) Deliver their agreed crime reduction targets by March 2008
- 2) Play a leading role in the development of the safer and stronger communities block of Local Area Agreements and manage subsequent delivery, ensuring targets set by the CDRP are reflected in Local Area Agreements
- 3) Encourage collaboration between agencies including joint planning, problem analysis and performance management
- 4) Ensure that sufficient arrangements are in place to deliver a range of engagement opportunities for local communities and to respond to their concerns
- 5) Ensure arrangements are in place for a joint intelligence led approach to solving local problems.

Specific priorities for 2006-07 too have been set for the CDRP's, these are:

- 1) Manage their performance against crime reduction targets, ensuring that delivery remains in line with trajectory
- 2) Develop more effective ways of working with Local Criminal Justice Boards, building on guidance to be issued by the end of 2005 by the Home Office and the Office of Criminal Justice Reform
- 3) In unitary local authority areas, complete integration with local Drug Action Teams. In two tier areas, complete arrangements for closer working to ensure an appropriate input to delivery of the National Drugs Strategy
- 4) Continue to lead the Prolific and other Priority Offender strategy
- 5) Work in partnership with other key agencies nationally, regionally and locally to identify, generate and share good practice in tackling volume violent crime, in particular alcohol related and domestic violence.

(National Community Safety Plan 2006-09, HM Government 2005).



Targets

CDRP's are to set challenging local targets that support the delivery of the Home Office PSA targets that they can impact on, these being:

PSA 1: Reduce crime by 15% and further in high crime areas, by 2007/08

PSA 2: Reassure the public, reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, and building confidence in the criminal justice system without compromising fairness

PSA 3: Improve the delivery of justice by increasing the number of crimes for which an offender is brought to justice to 1.25 million by 2007/08

PSA 4: Reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs including substantially increasing the number of drug misusing offenders entering treatment through the criminal justice system.

PSA 6: Increase voluntary and community engagement, especially amongst those at risk of social exclusion.

PSA 7: Reduce race inequalities and build community cohesion.

(SR 2004 PSA Targets)

Accountability

Regional Government Offices are the conduit between central government policy and local delivery. The offices are there to assist and monitor local partnerships but also to feed information back to central Government.

Funding

In April 2005 the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF) was introduced to the Local Authorities. This fund initially brought together monies from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the Home Office. The following streams were captured into the fund:

From the DCLG:

Liveability Fund
Single Community Programme
Neighbourhood Wardens
Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders
Living Space

From the Home Office:

Building Safer Communities
Home Office Regional Directors Allocation
Anti-Social Behaviour CDRP Allocation
Domestic Violence
Crime Reduction Capital
Business Crime
DAT Partnership Support Grant
The new fund was to be used to address crime, anti-social behaviour, drugs, empowering communities and improving the condition of streets and public spaces. In April 2006 more streams were added to the SSCF namely the Neighbourhood Element and Cleaner Safer Greener Element.



Community Safety in Britain (Scotland)

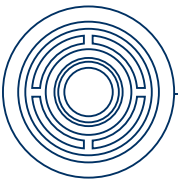
Community Safety Partnerships in Scotland sit within the Community Planning framework which local authorities have a statutory duty under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 to deliver. In total 30 partnerships have been set up within council areas

Membership

All community safety partnerships in Scotland have the local authority and police as core members as well as the fire service and health boards or trusts. These are usually represented at strategic level. The private and voluntary sector sits more at the local initiative and task group level.

Funding & Priority Areas

The Scottish Executive is the main source of funding for the community safety partnerships. For 2005-08 the Scottish Executive have awarded funding to partnerships who have to use a problem solving and evidence based approach so to tackle three community safety issues over the three years. The evidence gathered will be that collected as part of their community safety audits as well as community planning, anti-social behaviour, social inclusion and community regeneration work. The priority areas will have monitoring and evaluation built in so to report against the funding award.



References

Building Communities, Beating Crime
A Better Police Service for the 21st
Century
Home Office, November 2004.

Reducing Crime:
The Home Office working with crime and
disorder reduction partnerships.
National Audit Office 1 December 2004.

National Community Safety Plan 2006-09
HM Government November 2005.

Review of the partnership provisions of the
Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – Report of
Findings.

Safer Communities in Scotland
Guidance for Community Safety
Partnerships
Scottish Executive.

The Review of Public Administration in
Northern Ireland RPA.

Crime Reduction website:
www.crimereduction.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Crime and Anti-Social
Behaviour; making places safer through
improved local working
Audit Commission May 2006.

Together we can: improving community
involvement in community safety
HM Government June 2006.

Safer and Stronger Communities Fund;
Taking the Agreements forward.
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
August 2005.

Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategies
2005-08

Negotiating Crime and Disorder Reduction
Targets

Guidance for Crime and Disorder
Reduction/Community Safety Partnerships.
Partnerships Performance and Support
Unit, Crime Reduction and Community
Safety Group
Home Office November 2004.

Reducing Crime, the harm caused by drugs
and anti-social behaviour: Delivering PSA1,
PSA4 and PSA2.


Partnership Assessment and Delivery
Systems (PADS) Guidance for Partnerships
April 2006.

Safer Communities through Partnership
Policing
Tom Murphy 24 May 2006.

Crime Reduction Basics – tackling crime
and anti-social behaviour in the community
Home Office 2003.

CSP – Community Safety Strategies 2005-
08 x 26.

Memorandum of understanding between
the Community Safety Unit of the
Northern Ireland Office and Northern
Ireland Policing Board in relation to the
operation of District Policing Partnerships
(DPPs) and Community Safety Partnerships
(CSPs)
8th March 2006-06-19.



Belfast District Policing Partnership Annual Report March 2004 – February 2005 on the functions of Belfast District Policing Partnership.

Community Safety Website – Community Safety Unit Northern Ireland
<http://www.communitysafetyni.gov.uk>

Criminal Justice Review.

Criminal Justice Review – Implementation Plan 2003.

Creating a Safer Northern Ireland through Partnership:
A Strategy Document.
Community Safety Unit Northern Ireland

Working together for safer communities
An NIO magazine dealing with Community Safety Matters
Community Safety Unit Northern Ireland.

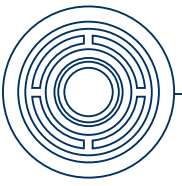
Annual Report and Statement of Accounts
1 April 2004 – 31 March 2005
The Northern Ireland Policing Board.

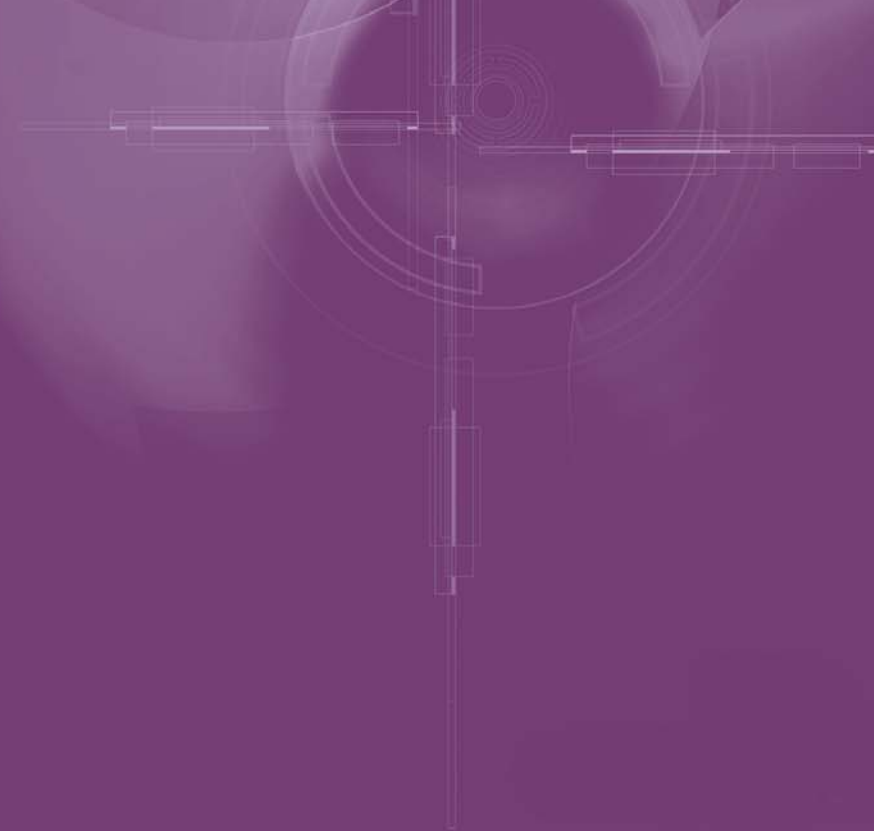
District Policing Partnerships Code of Practice on functions and responsibilities
Northern Ireland Policing Board
September 2002.

District Policing Plans 2005 – 06 x 26

District Policing Partnerships Survey 2004
NISRA

DPP Review Action Plan





Copyright© Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland
All rights reserved

First published in Northern Ireland in November 2006 by
CRIMINAL JUSTICE INSPECTION NORTHERN IRELAND
14 Great Victoria Street
Belfast BT2 7BA
www.cjini.org

ISBN 1-905283-14-8

Typeset in Gill Sans
Printed in Northern Ireland by Commercial Graphics Limited
Designed by Page Setup