Community Safety: A Decade of Development, Delivery, Change and Challenge in Northern Ireland

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Community Safety:
A Decade of Development, Delivery, Challenge and Change in Northern Ireland

FINAL REPORT

**A Research Report for
Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium**

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Executive Summary

In September 2011, the Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium (BCRC) commissioned research to examine the development of community safety policy since the publication of the Patten report in 1999. The research was also tasked with considering the range of dynamics which impact upon participation in, and delivery of, community safety programmes within interface communities; while exploring challenges facing the new Policing and Community Safety Partnerships. Over a two month period between October and November in 2011, an extensive audit and analysis of policy documents, academic literature and research reports related to the development and implementation of community safety was conducted. Alongside this, thirty semi-structured interviews were carried out with representatives from the community, voluntary and statutory sector.

The initial review of academic literature and policy highlighted a number of political developments which have positively influenced the community safety agenda – including the restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly in May 2007; and the devolution of policing and justice powers in April 2010. In this regard, several observations can be made in relation to the design and development of a community safety approach suited to the unique landscape of a society in transition:

- The political, policing and security landscape over the past decade has had a direct impact and influence upon the delivery of a community safety model as originally envisaged by the Independent Commission for Policing in Northern Ireland;

- Local communities have embraced the concept of community safety. However, levels of community participation in local initiatives have been inconsistent across the country;

- There has been a degree of scepticism at the community level as to how much impact the community sector have historical had in relation to community safety and policing issues, especially when set against the influence of elected representatives and service providers;

- Because of the ever-changing policing and security environment, it has been challenging for statutory bodies to deliver what might be considered 'normal' policing and community safety services;

- The past decade has been predicated upon cultivating a more inclusive environment in which service and community providers can work together in delivering a community safety model suited to the needs of all stakeholders;

- The next decade of community safety and policing is about building upon existing practice and partnerships, and aligning those with the DoJ's new vision for safer, shared and confident communities.

Aside from the literature review, four case studies were also selected to illustrate the range of community-based programmes and activities that have been established in both urban and rural settings to address the diversity of community safety issues across the country. This analysis revealed the importance of community participation in the successful delivery and implementation of community safety strategies, programmes and initiatives; the need for statutory agencies to be flexible in regards to the holistic nature of community responses to local issues beyond their own policy lens; and the significant role that the 'community safety' framework has in relation to facilitating and encouraging closer partnerships and positive engagements between communities and formal criminal justice providers.

Building upon the case study findings and policy analysis, it became apparent that local community groups were involved in responding to, and providing a diverse range services to deal with community safety and policing issues. Indeed, a range of volunteers, community activists and (generally) under-resourced community-based organisations played a major role in bridging the gap between statutory service providers and communities through facilitating meetings, promoting advocacy and acting as facilitators for the implementation of the community safety agendas at a local level. A closer examination of their roles revealed a typology of community safety work and activity in which they were regularly engaged. These approaches have been categorised as follows:

- Community advocacy

- Education and intervention

- Emergency response

- Partnerships

- Prevention

- Mediation

- Restorative justice

The research concluded with a series of thirty interviews with representatives from the community, voluntary and statutory sectors. Discussions explored themes surrounding the implementation of community safety strategies within interface communities; participants' experiences of DPPs and CSPs; and views on the new PCSPs and their potential.   The findings revealed that interface communities had suffered disproportionately in terms of the legacy of the conflict in comparison to other urban and rural parts of Northern Ireland. Therefore, the implementation of a community safety agenda not only had to contend with high rates of social and economic deprivation, but also had to incorporate within it, manifestations of the conflict, such as sectarian violence, peace walls and insecurities around policing.

The findings which related to DPPs and CSPs revealed a deep sense of frustration in terms of their general inability to address many of the community safety and policing issues prevalent at a community level. Respondents maintained that both sets of partnerships were not representative of the communities in which they served; often operated in isolation from community organising; and beyond pockets of good practice, had failed to meet the local communities needs or expectations around policing and community safety. There was an acknowledgement that the past decade had been difficult for statutory agencies tasked with implementing and delivering a policing and community safety agendas because of the fluid dynamics underpinning the country's transition from conflict to peace. However, there was renewed optimism that the devolution of policing and justice powers, along with the political stability at Stormont would facilitate the successful delivery of an effective, new community safety model in line with the DoJ's goal of creating safer, shared and confident communities.

Finally, the research also captured views and opinions in relation to the forthcoming PCSPs. There was a general consensus that the new structures provided an opportunity to shape the future of community safety in Northern Ireland and build upon that which had been established though the DPPs and CSPs. As part of the 'streamlining' opportunity provided through the PCSPs, a number of challenges were evident from the research. These concerns primarily focused upon the management of the PCSPs structures; along with issues as to whether PCSPs could facilitate improved input and delivery from statutory and community stakeholders. Aside from immediate challenges, the research also highlighted the need to define more fully, the roles and responsibilities of community stakeholders. Indeed, a key concern was that the community safety strategy, as delivered through the vehicle of the PCSPs, would become a conduit for a wide range of governmental programmes of action without adequately considering the potential limitations of stakeholder input. But in general, there was a great sense of optimism about the amalgamation of DPPs and CSPs, with an acceptance that the first year of the PCSPs would be a period of transition and learning. In general, respondents acknowledged the complexities which underpinned the streamlining of the community safety and policing agendas in Northern Ireland which for a decade had been split between the DPPs and CSPs. And where the lessons from the last decade could be learned, it was felt that the PCSPs would provide an excellent vehicle through which a new era of community safety could be delivered into the next decade.

However, it was also evident that stakeholders involved in the delivery of community safety over the same period were cautious in relation to the future impact of the new community safety agenda and were now engaged in a 'watching brief' in relation to the 'roll-out'. There was an acknowledgement that the role and function of the PCSPs would need to be carefully monitored as part of the transition to the new community safety landscape. But it was also noted that this transitional period would itself need to be carefully managed to avoid any detrimental impacts at the community level and potentially negate gains made in relation to policing more broadly in the country.

In view of the research findings, a number of recommendations emerged which have been documented below:

1. That greater consideration should be given to incentives for community involvement in community safety programmes. The research highlighted the difficulties with encouraging local participation in community safety processes. Therefore, training, internships, accredited courses, child care provision and accommodation of other family needs should be considered;

2. Steps should be taken to more formally recognise and quantify the contributions of community-based community safety programmes – outside traditional police centric measure of crime;

3. That sufficient acknowledgement and attention is paid to the continuing fragility surrounding the lives and experiences of those living in interface communities. It is imperative that future community safety agendas are tailored to meet those specific needs and not become subsumed under a broad community safety agenda;

4. That innovative, less bureaucratic means of both providing funding and assessing the impact of community safety programmes must be developed outside the current parameters of statutory frameworks;

5. The inherent frustrations and difficulties associated with the DPPs and CSPs should be taken into account and the necessary adjustments as part of the functioning of the new PCSP structures;

6. The DoJ's community safety agenda should not overburden the PCSPs with too many programmes related to the social, economic and political development of commununities.

Contents

1. Introduction

The Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium (BCRC) was established in April 2007 to create a citywide approach to resolving conflict at interfaces. The Consortium is grounded in the experience of grassroots Republican and Loyalist practitioners, who for several years, have been working at the interfaces to prevent, control and manage episodes of violence.

The BCRC, along with the Falls Community Council, EPIC, Charter and Intercomm were tasked through SEUPB Peace III funding to deliver a peace-building programme until October 2011. As part of this process BCRC sought to commission research to examine the development of community safety policy since the publication of the Patten report in 1999. Furthermore, the research was tasked with considering the current impact and challenges on individuals and organisations working to address community safety issues within their neighbourhoods.

In September 2011 the consultants successfully completed the tendering process and were awarded the contract to complete the research. The following report sets out the completed work. Chapter Two outlines the research methodologies employed along with the types of participants involved. Chapter Three begins with a comprehensive overview of the development and implementation of policy relating to community safety and policing in Northern Ireland over the last decade. The review considers the role of the state and the community in the delivery of a community safety agenda and evaluates the various mechanisms that have emerged to facilitate this process. Chapter Four documents the main findings, beginning with the presentation of a case study analysis to illustrate models of good practice in the context of engaging on community safety issues. Following this, the interviewee's views, perceptions and experiences of community safety are presented along with the appropriate analysis. Finally, Chapter Five draws the main findings together and provides a series of recommendations based upon the learning which has emerged from the research.

2.0 Methodology

The following section outlines the central aims and objectives of the research along with the methodology employed as part of the overall research related to community safety and policing.

3.1 Research aims and objectives

The main focus of the research was to examine the development of policy on community safety since the publication of the Patten Report in 1999 and make recommendations for strategies to enhance community involvement in the community safety process. More specifically, the research aims include:

- Analysis of the development of community safety in Northern Ireland since the publication of the Patten report;
- Examining case studies of effective community responses to community safety issues;
- Assessing the potential of the new Policing and Community Safety Partnerships structure;
- Identifying the main challenges for Belfast interface communities within the community safety policy framework;
- Assessing the barriers and opportunities for communities working at interfaces in Belfast within the current community safety frameworks;
- Making recommendations for community organisations that are responding to community safety issues to enhance their effectiveness in current and future community safety frameworks.

3.2 Research methodology

In order to comprehensively address all of the research aims and objectives it was appropriate to develop a methodology that had three distinct, but interrelated elements. By incorporating a range of different approaches, the researchers were able to explore and evidence the complex dynamics of interaction between communities, service providers and policy makers within the area of community safety. It should also be noted that throughout the duration of the research, the researchers met with a Steering Group which composed of members of the funding organisation on three occasions to ratify elements of the methodology and provide updates on the research. Each of the research tools employed in this study has been outlined below:

Review of community safety policy and strategy in Northern Ireland

The researchers, conducted a comprehensive audit and analysis of policy documents, academic research and reports, along with legislation related to the development and implementation of community safety approaches and techniques in Northern Ireland since the implementation of the recommendations set forth by the Independent Commission for Policing in Northern Ireland (ICP) in 1999. It must be noted from the research that little material on community safety in Northern Ireland exists relative to that which is available on community safety policy and practice within the United Kingdom criminal justice jurisdiction. In this regard, the research drew information from wide range of publications as part of informing the current research related to community safety in Northern Ireland.

Case studies analysis

The researchers, in conjunction with the Steering Group decided to include four case studies in the research. Initially, a broad scoping exercise was conducted to ascertain a number of community-based programmes, strategies and initiatives involved in responding to community safety issues within their local communities in both urban and rural context. Upon completion, and following discussions with the Steering Group, it was decided to conduct a case-study analysis on the following four groups:

- **ACT Programme** – A support programme for former members of the UVF/RHC and aims to build local capacity, develop relationships, and support local communities address the social, political and economic issues prevalent within their neighbourhoods;

- **West Belfast Community Safety Forum** – A community based initiative involving a partnership approach between service providers, statutory agencies and local residents to address anti-community behaviour, the fear of crime, and confidence in the criminal justice system;

- **North Belfast Interface Monitoring Group** – Loyalist and Republican community workers and representatives working in partnership and alongside statutory agencies to address interface violence and improve the health and social wellbeing of local residents;

- **Youth Summer Intervention Programme (rural)** – engages with marginalised young people over the summer period and diverts them away from the criminal justice system through diversion schemes and intervention programmes.

The researchers met with representatives from each of the above groups to discuss the operational delivery of their programmes; successes and challenges; along with relationships and levels of joined-up working with statutory service providers. All of the groups were questioned on a broad range of community safety issues as part of illustrating the skills and capacities required to deliver these programmes within a challenging environment. Overall, the case studies form a significant part of the research in terms of providing respondents the space in which to highlight key issues and challenges from the perspective of their own particular work and activity.

Interviews

The third element of the methodology employed involved thirty semi-structured interviews (Table 1 – see below) with representatives from the community, voluntary and statutory sector. Interviewees were identified and selected on the basis of their experience of, and involvement with, responding to community safety issues. An initial internet search, along with a literature review and discussions with the Steering Group revealed several potential interviewees. The researchers contacted organisations and individuals and asked them to participate in the research. Following initial conversations, the researchers met willing participants to conduct the interviews. A series of themes were used to guide the discussions with interviewees.

Those interviewees from the community and voluntary sector were asked a series of questions on the following themes:

- Rationale for involvement in community safety issues;
- Nature and scope of community based responses;
- Resourcing community based responses;
- Interaction with statutory service providers;
- Successes and challenges to implementation of community safety strategies;
- Competition within the community and voluntary sector;
- Ownership and visibility of community safety initiatives.

Those interviewees from the statutory sector were asked a series of questions on the following themes:

- Views and perceptions of DPPs and CSPs;
- Successes and difficulties with DPPs and CSPs;
- Current issues within the community safety agenda;
- Expectations on the amalgamation of DPPs and CSPs;
- Practicalities of the organisational realignment;
- Political and community challenges facing the new structures.

For the purposes of confidentiality and anonymity, interviewees' personal details have not been included in the report. However, the organisations they represented have been included in order to highlight the breadth of bodies and organisations engaged with as part of the research. However, throughout the research, respondents have only been identified as either 'community respondents' or 'statutory respondents' – again, to retain the anonymity of responses.

Table 1:
Total Number of Participants and Affiliation

Name of Organisation	Number of interviewees
PSNI	2 – Operational 1 – Strategic
Department of Justice	3 – Strategic
Community Safety Partnerships	2 – Strategic 2 – Operational
District Policing Partnership	2 – Strategic 2 – Operational
Independent DPP Members	2
Intercomm	1
West Belfast Community Worker	1
Colin Neighbourhood Partnership	1
North Belfast Interface Network	1
North Belfast Community Development & Transition Group	2
West Belfast Community Safety Forum	1
North Belfast Alternatives	1
Restorative Justice	2 – Operational 1 – Strategic
EXIT	1
Community and Development workers (Loyalist & Republican)	2
Total number of interviewees	**30**

3.0 A Decade of Community Safety &
Policing Policy and Development

3.1 Introduction

At a general level, the issues of policing and community safety have become synonymous with wider developments relating to the politics of, and transition to, peace in Northern Ireland. With the delivery of safety and security having acted as a site of 'contest' during the conflict and post-conflict phases of the country's recent history, policing (in its broadest sense) has retained both operational and symbolic significance as a function of the complex interplay between the history, politics and culture of 'getting policing right' for the communities it is meant to serve (O'Rawe, 2003).

Undoubtedly, changes to the policing landscape effected through the Independent Commission for Policing in Northern Ireland (ICP 1999 – the 'Patten Report') have acted as a central focus for narratives related to peace and political shifts in the country. Indeed, the inclusive political support which now underpins the policing institutions, combined with devolved policing and justice powers to the polity for the first time since 1972 is a clear indicator of policing's centrality to both governmental and community concerns related to a settled, shared society.

However, a key feature of such a police-centric focus has been the marginalisation of wider, community debates in relation to policing in the post-Patten era (Topping, 2008b). In this regard, the ICP's original blueprint for police reform was concerned with a much broader spectrum of policing and security outside that of the police *per se*. Therefore, as a framework for considering alternative and often holistic approaches to policing in Northern Ireland, much of Patten's innovative 'thinking' has been lost as part of public and political attention concerned with the organisational reforms to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) itself.

As part of those wider considerations related to the policing landscape in the country, District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) and Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), as mechanisms of accountability and partnership respectively, have commanded at least some attention as part of the ICP's vision. But the extent to which they have been successful or fully inclusive in terms of realizing the ICP's vision of policing at local level is at best, questionable (Byrne and Monaghan, 2008; Gormally, 2003; Topping, 2008a). In this respect, the creation of new Policing and

Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) under the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 will on the one hand, seek to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of DPP and CSP (often) overlapping functions into a singular community safety body (DoJ, 2011). Yet on the other hand, such realignment is a tacit recognition at a governmental level that both the DPPs and CSPs have played somewhat of a political rather than practical role as part of the wider policing reform processes in the country (NIO, 2009).

And finally, what has been conspicuous through its absence as part of the wider police reform narrative has been the 'place' of the community (in its broadest sense) and their potential contributions to the policing landscape. With Northern Ireland underpinned more generally by vibrant, proactive civil society structures, quite where those contributions could or should 'fit' into the policing debate have long been neglected at official government and policy levels – as an opportunity 'missed' as part of the reform processes to policing institutions more generally (CJINI, 2006; NICVA, 2005; Acheson *et al.*, 2006; Office of the Oversight Commissioner, 2007; O'Rawe, 2003).

Thus, as Northern Ireland moves into a new era of settled, devolved government with all but completed police reforms under the ICP and full policing and justice autonomy, the new PCSPs are themselves symbolic of wider progress and confidence in terms of the Department of Justice's (DoJ) attempts to 'go beyond the criminal system and government departments, with…local partnership working and contributing to building safer, shared and confident communities' (DoJ 2011:4). In this respect, the following research is an attempt to explore the development of the policing and community safety landscape and policy in Northern Ireland; while considering, through a case-study approach, the actual and potential community-based contributions to policing, in line with the ICP's vision of 'policing more broadly conceived' (Kempa and Shearing, 2005: 4).

3.2 Policing

It may be observed that the focus on the changes to policing in Northern Ireland throughout the conflict have been almost as critical as the more tangible effects of the conflict itself. As a barometer of both political and social (dis)satisfaction with policing and its symbolic role during the conflict, the continual process of police reform and reconstruction reflects a significant proportion of what may be termed the 'change dialectic' (O'Rawe 2003; McGloin 2003). Indeed, such was the weight of pressure on the need for reforms to the police throughout the conflict and post-conflict periods of Northern Ireland's recent history that 'implicitly, bargaining about policing became meta-bargaining as to the nature of the conflict …' (Campbell et al. 2003: 42).

In regard to the conflict, and indeed the broader 'peace process' in Northern Ireland, the 'Good Friday Agreement' was reached on 10 April 1998 (McGarry and O'Leary, 1999). Cementing the progress made from the Loyalist and Republican ceasefires in 1994, the Agreement was about the establishment of a peaceful and democratic means to resolve the intractable social and political differences engendered by over three decades of conflict. The Independent Commission on Policing (ICP) was set up as part of the 1998 Agreement, culminating in the publication of what is otherwise known as the 'Patten Report' (ICP, 1999). Chaired by Chris Patten, its broad task was not only to give policing back to the people of Northern Ireland and reconnect the police with those whom they were meant to serve, but attempt to resolve an issue that, for many, lay at the heart of the conflict (ICP, 1999). Thus, the Patten Report may be viewed as symptomatic of a perceived need for an end to incremental and politically nuanced 'tinkering' with policing, and the beginning of a substantial, inclusive and permanently acceptable change process (Topping 2008a).

As the final 'stepping stone' along the journey towards a lasting peace in the country, the Patten Report, as the most 'significant' and 'complex blueprint' for police reform in the world, was part of an overarching consensus that if policing could somehow 'be got right', the other pieces of the jigsaw would fall into place (O'Rawe 2003; Bayley 2007; Office of the Oversight Commissioner 2006; NIPB and PSNI 2007). In over ten years of post-Patten policing, there has been a growing momentum to such change, espoused in the significant political progress and devolution of local governance to the polity (2007b; 2007c); along with the devolution of local policing

and justice powers for the first time since 1972 (McDonald and Townsend, 2010). Indeed, the Office of the Oversight Commissioner (OSC), established out of the ICP to ensure the 'faithful and comprehensive' implementation of the 175 recommendations (Patten Report, 1999: para. 19.2), has indeed confirmed that the vast majority of the recommendations are now complete, as espoused in the end to the OSC' term of office in May 2007 (Office of the Oversight Commissioner 2007). Thus, with policing having changed dramatically, the 'meta-bargaining' is now concerned with the nature of policing the peace; and the ubiquitous link between politics, policing and the rule of law has now been replaced by a broadly social agenda focused on creating safer, shared and inclusive communities (DoJ, 2011).

Examining the Patten recommendations in more detail, the central plank to the reforms may be conceived in two distinct 'streams' (Kempa and Shearing 2005; Topping 2008a). In terms of the first stream of reforms, they may be imagined as relating to some of the more physical and symbolic manifestations of policing change in the country, such as names, badges and 50/50 recruitment. But looking to the second stream, it may be conceived as relating to broader issues around the governance of security, or policing more broadly conceived (Topping, 2008a:378). On the one hand, the literature strongly points to the fact that the first decade of change to the policing landscape in Northern Ireland has predominantly focused upon implementing the first stream of reforms, as the physical foundations to a permanent, acceptable and inclusive change process for both Loyalist/Unionist and Republican/Nationalist communities across the country (ibid). But on the other hand, it is the second stream, anchored in Patten recommendation 44 on 'policing with the community', 'concerned with…questions around the governance of security, or, policing broadly conceived', which is of importance (Topping 2008a). Indeed, it is this second 'stream' which provides a key focus for the present research in terms of the 'place' of community as part of wider policing developments.

However, with the issue of police reform retaining an undoubted political quality focused upon the first stream of reforms (Ellison and O'Rawe, 2010; Topping, 2008b), much of the political and public attention has remained focused on the more tangible, political manifestations of change – distracting attention away from such community-centred debates on policing.

One key example of this may be observed following the endorsement of the policing bodies by Sinn Fein's governing council in January of 2007, the first time in

their history they have accepted the legitimacy of PSNI since its creation in November 2001 (*Belfast Telegraph*, 2007b). Not only did this result in Sinn Fein taking its seats on the Northern Ireland Policing Board for the first time, but also the historic watershed engendered significant political progress, with a devolved government restored to Stormont since the 9th May, 2007. This also resulted in the formal procedures, as stipulated in the Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Act 2007, for the re-organisation of District Policing Partnerships to reflect more fully the composition of Nationalist and Republican communities, enhanced through the inclusion of Sinn Fein members. And while this was very significant, not only in symbolic political terms, but also in practical terms of holding the PSNI to account at the local level to all sections of the community, it undoubtedly shifted attention away from some of the more holistic debates relating to the policing landscape in the country (Topping, 2008a).

It must be noted that in spite of the significant organisational and political progress effected through reforms to the PSNI in the post-Patten era, current research indicates that there has been (and still is in certain areas) alienation of the Republican/Nationalist (and to a lesser extent Unionist/Loyalist) community from any 'normal' conception of interaction with the police – whatever that may look like as part of the post-conflict space (Ellison & Mulcahy, 2001; Mulcahy, 2006; Topping, 2008a). In this respect, a sizable minority of the population in Northern Ireland generally, and Belfast specifically, remain at best ambivalent about engaging with the PSNI (Byrne & Monaghan, 2008). Even in spite of the raw *political* basis for such disengagement having all but diminished in the face of substantial progress at the political table (as noted above), contemporary studies continue to contradict the 'official picture' of community support for the policing institutions (NIPB, 2010), demonstrating that basic co-operation between working-class Republican/Nationalists (and to a lesser extent Unionist/Loyalist communities) is still at best, strained (Ellison & Shirlow, 2008; Byrne & Monaghan, 2008; Topping, 2008b; Topping, 2009).

On a related point, the very conception of the PSNI and their community policing role is still far from any uniform grasp of the term (Kelling, 2005). With PSNI having changed vertically in the sense of its switch from counter-insurgency to a community policing role over the past ten years; and horizontally in terms of downsizing and 'normalising' as part of their more community-oriented reforms,

Republican and Loyalist communities have had the very basis for their experiences and relations with the police altered dramatically (Ellison, 2007).

Outside of the 'official' discourse from the NIPB indicating 'record levels' of confidence in the police (NIPB, 2007a), the literature points to dissatisfaction with policing at the grass roots of Loyalist and Republican areas (Topping, 2008b; Byrne and Monaghan, 2008). Looking specifically at Loyalist areas traditionally supportive of the police, this perception may in part be due to the reduced numbers of visible officers available to deliver community policing compared to the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) 'hay-day' which peaked at 13,500 officers (Mulcahy, 2000). And within Republican areas, it is felt that not only have PSNI simply 'missed the mark' in regard to the delivery of effective community policing, but they also have limited capacity, beyond individual officers and personalities, to interact and engage community infrastructures concerned with governing security (and which contribute to low crime rates) which existed prior to their acceptance of policing. Thus, it is indicative of the complexity to policing in Northern Ireland, and the fact that within many Republican (and some Loyalist) areas that:

> 'in the aftermath of a…conflict, peace itself can constitute a crisis to the extent that it undermines the policies, practices and assumptions ingrained and institutionalised over the years' (Mulcahy,1999:278).

As a result, while the PSNI have been radically transformed in line with Patten's first 'stream' of reforms, evidence would point to the fact that the changes to policing on the ground through his second 'stream' have been more limited insofar as policing in many areas largely mirrors the reactive style of policing characteristic of the conflict, albeit in a peace-time context (Topping, 2008a; Byrne and Monaghan, 2008).

Thus, in overview of the policing literature, it is clear that the PSNI's current 'emphasis' on community policing appears to be less of an organisational mindset embraced throughout the whole service, and more of specialist front line policing role left in the hands of neighbourhood policing officers. In this regard, the research indicates that this is especially so when: a) recent data suggests that only 10% of PSNI's organisational capacity is actually dedicated to what might broadly be defined as neighbourhood policing duties (HMIC, 2011); and b) holistic, community-level contact between PSNI and many working-class Loyalist and Republican communities in Northern Ireland has yet to move beyond 'critical engagement' where contact with

police for such communities remains at best, an option of last resort (Byrne and Monaghan, 2008; Topping and Byrne, 2012). And until this position can be addressed and policing is located within the wider mesh of community in its true sense – and beyond police-centric thinking on policing – the PSNI will continue to remain on the 'outside' of potentially diverse *policing* arrangements beyond isolated and individual examples of 'best practice'.

3.3 The Policing Environment

While much of the literature devoted policing and the PSNI tends to relate both to the development/reform of PSNI and their interaction with (mainly) urban, working-class Loyalist and Republican communities, little attention (if any) has been paid to the present 'climate' in which policing or community safety is actually delivered. While reform and change to the policing landscape tends to be couched in terms of the necessity and desirability of delivering more community-centred policing, the reality of the current environment has been somewhat conspicuous by its absence. In this respect, the following section will 'map' the parameters of the environment which currently define the limits for the delivery of policing and community safety in the country.

And at least from the perspective of the PSNI, it has been argued (above) that in organisational terms, they have struggled fully realize the implementation of Patten recommendation 44 in relation to community policing in line with the core recommendation of the ICP (Byrne and Monaghan, 2008; ICP, 1999; Topping, 2008a; 2008b; 2009). With the PSNI as a relatively 'young' organisation due to the changes in composition of the service as part of the reform process, this too has raised questions in respect of the experiential base underpinning their capacities on a number of fronts. With many experienced, senior officers having departed from the organisation through generous severance packages, is it arguable that their strategic and operational capacity and knowledge has been reduced throughout the organisation. However, it is also important to note that the operational environment in which the PSNI police and community safety is delivered is by no means conducive to the delivery of 'normal' policing within any normal conception of the term as part the still conflicted and divided post-conflict society of Northern Ireland (Frampton, 2010; Kelling, 2005; McDonald, 2010; Topping, 2008b).

In reference to this situation, the complex policing and security environment of Northern Ireland further presents a number of counterfactual narratives around the official notions of policing and crime, which helps to provide both and understanding of, and insight to, the complex dynamics underpinning the 'positive peace' in the country as it emerges from a protracted, internal armed conflict – and as a framework within which policing and community safety may be considered (Ellison and Mulcahy 2001; Holen and Eide 2000; Topping, 2009).

An initial inquiry would suggest that in spite of the transition from conflict to relative peace, Northern Ireland suffers from low levels of crime. Unlike the often compared transitional democracy of South Africa (Altebeker 2005), the 'official' projection of Northern Ireland as a low crime society has endured, and in fact, been bolstered by the significant political progress which has facilitated the historical devolution of policing and justice powers to Stormont for the first time since 1972 (McDonald and Townsend, 2010; Edwards, 2011). On one hand, such low crime levels have tended to be explicated through a Durkheimian school of 'solidarity in conflict', in conjunction with the detailed sociological accounts of close-knit communities and 'grapevines' prevalent across the country (Brewer 2001; Shaw and Shearing 1998).

On the other hand, the 'official' picture of crime and security confirms that within historical and contemporary accounts of the country's narrative, the conception of Northern Ireland as a low-crime, transitional society is undoubtedly compelling. From the first International Victim Survey in 1989 reporting Northern Ireland as Europe's low crime comparator (Brogden 2000; Van Dyk *et al*. 1990), contemporary evidence points to the lowest levels of conflict-related violence on record; the lowest levels of recorded crime in the past twelve years; along with victimisation rates at 13.8% - the lowest since records began in 1998, which also compares favourably to England and Wales. Furthermore, the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) continues to claim that satisfaction levels with the PSNI remain at record highs (Lyness *et al*. 2004; NIPB 2010; PSNI 2011).

However, it is important to note that in terms of the criminological landscape which underpins current efforts related to policing and community safety, there are a number of underlying factors which must also be considered as part of the debate. Firstly, it is notable from research by the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) that crime rates in terms of what can be defined as predominantly Protest or Catholic wards have varied significantly – with higher crime rates generally within Catholic wards in comparison to Protestant wards and the average levels of crime in the country (NIPB, 2007b).

And secondly, relating to the delivery of what might be conceived as 'normal' policing and community safety issues – and specifically looking at violent dissident Republicanism – while their terrorist capabilities are in no way comparable to the threat posed by mainstream Republican paramilitaries at the height of the conflict, it

must be acknowledged that dissident factions are still engaged in an armed campaign, along with the delivery of 'civil policing' within certain areas of Northern Ireland. This has manifested itself through the planting of viable explosive devices and concerted efforts to kill members of the security forces across the country (*Belfast Telegraph*, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c; *Belfast Telegraph*, 2010; *Irish News*, 2008; *Irish News*, 2009) – resulting in the deaths of British soldiers Patrick Azimkar and Mark Quinsey outside the Massereene Barracks in Co. Antrim on the 8th March 2009; and the murder of Constable Stephen Carroll on the 10th March 2009; and Constable Ronan Kerr on the 12th April 2011 (McDonald & Townsend, 2011). Indeed, it is a continuing feature of the post-conflict landscape that the terrorist threat is now at its highest in 12 years; with PSNI annual statistics evidencing 78 recorded 'shooting and bombing' incidents in 2006/07, rising by 2009/10 to 129 (Independent Monitoring Commission [IMC], 2010; Kearney, 2010; Owen & Dutta, 2011; PSNI, 2010). And significantly for community safety efforts at a local level, dissidents have also been targeting community workers engaged with PSNI.

It is also important to recognise that paramilitary activity has not been limited solely to those from a Republican background. Within a minority of Loyalist working class communities, the evidence suggests that residual paramilitary structures still remain in place to control communities and orchestrate violence. This was apparent in East Belfast during June 2011 where a mainstream Loyalist paramilitary group were accused by the PSNI of playing a prominent role in three nights of public order and interface violence. It is therefore fair to conclude that the presence of paramilitary elements at the community level, along with their ability command support is thus far from being consigned to the annals of Northern Irish history (Mc Donald, 2011).

Therefore, within this contested environment, that there was (and still is), disengagement and alienation of Republican / Nationalist, and to a lesser extent Unionist / Loyalist communities from any 'normal' understanding of interaction with the police – not necessarily the fault of PSNI themselves (as noted above - Ellison & Mulcahy, 2001; Mulcahy, 2006; Topping, 2008a). And when combined with policing and security legacy issues (Byrne & Monaghan, 2008; Lundy, 2011) – one becomes aware of the conflicted landscape in which policing is delivered not just by the PSNI, but also for those community/voluntary groups and organisations who are either associated with the PSNI; or which mediate between grassroots concerns and the police (BBC, 2011).

3.4 Community-Based Contributions to Policing in Northern Ireland

Having explored the available literature with regard to the development of policing in Northern Ireland since Patten, along with the operational parameters in which any conception of 'normal' policing can be considered, the following section will explore what may termed as the 'nature' of community-based contributions to the policing landscape in the country. As the 'operational face' to local community capacities and provision as part of the ICP's broader policing vision, this section will evidence the seldom explored delivery of what can be termed local non-state policing – or 'security governance' – as bound up in a variety of factors, including: rationales; the tradition of 'sorting things out'; and the alternative contexts to such provision.

As reflected in the study of Acheson *et al.* (2004), with a myriad of voluntary and community sector groups in the country undertaking a variety of roles within differing contexts and across social and cultural boundaries, their social 'presence' is undeniable 'fact' (NICVA, 2005; CJINI, 2006). However, it must be noted that the 'extent and nature of community action is neither self-evident nor securely defined within clear boundaries (Acheson *et al*., 2006:19). Therefore, it is within this rather nebulous context of civil society organising and action that the literature shall focus, providing a framework in which to conceptualise our local iterations of security governance and its delivery.

At a basic level, a substantial 'reservoir' of non-state community safety efforts in Northern Ireland developed from the conflict, which may be viewed to have:

> 'brought many self-help agencies…The tradition of 'sorting things 'out' is one of the main strengths of Northern Ireland's civil institutions' (Brogden, 1998:4).

As further noted by Shearing (a former Patten Commissioner), such 'policing nodes' (or sites of policing action) are a fact of life in the country (Shearing, 2000). As observed:

> 'here in Northern Ireland – and in many other unsettled political contexts – another form of 'non-state' agent is particularly important in challenging the monopoly over the business of policing of the public police: civic bodies of various forms, including, but certainly not limited to, agencies that deploy violence as part of their practices of control…' (Kempa and Shearing, 2005:7).

Within this non-state policing context, the literature indicates that such 'alternative' community safety activity ranges from:

- providing responses to interface violence (Jarman, 2002; 2006);
- community-based restorative justice initiatives (CJINI, 2007a; 2007b; Mika, 2006); citizen patrols coordinating hundreds of volunteers;
- youth intervention services;
- and the coordination of multi-agency community safety forums, generally *outside* the remit of the state.

Indeed, these advanced community networks can link and bridge across the divided communities and also provide both short and long-term solutions to the perceived and actual deficiencies in state-based provision of security (c.f. Topping, 2008b). Brewer (2001) has also indicated that as part of the process of democratic transition in the country, Northern Ireland has largely retained these local 'moral' economies, 'grapevine' community safety networks and social organising derived from the conflict to maintain social order and control (Moran, 2004). It is therefore to specific issues of engagement between the state/police and civil society capacities to which attention shall now turn, in order to provide a contemporary perspective on the 'place' of community security governance.

In conflicted democracies and transitional states, such as Northern Ireland, where policing institutions have been perceived to be as much part of societal problems as solutions, the complex arrangements of civil society organising around security governing (through being in constant tension with the state) are often characterised by innovation and 'alternative' solutions in the delivery of 'policing' (Perry *et al.*, 1976; Anheiser and Kendall, 2002; Dupont, 2004). Indeed, such a position was reflected nearly ten years later in the final report of the Office of the Oversight Commissioner (OOC) and the idea of 'policing more broadly conceived', noting that much closer attention should be paid to the community sector in Northern Ireland by the policing institutions. With approximately 4500-5000 community-based groups (NICVA, 2005; CJINI, 2006), further described by Bayley as part of Northern Ireland's 'hyper organised' civil society (Bayley, 2007), the Oversight team stated:

'the Policing Board, the Police Service and the Northern Ireland Office need to be alert to the effects the well intentioned creation of community groups and their overlapping mandates can have on community engagement…With the 2009 Review of Public administration implementation looming, it will be timely to review the structural issues and create structures appropriate to optimising the all important community engagement efforts…' (Office of the Oversight Commissioner, 2007:16).

However, what is also clear from the literature on the of delivery of community-based security governance is that restrictive attitudes exist within government policy circles as 'reflective of a mindset which *fears* genuine community involvement and ownership in the process of justice, particularly when communities may be ones traditionally alienated from the state structures' (McEvoy *et al.*, 2002:197). A prime example regarding such reluctance for effective development of local security governance initiatives may be evidenced through Shirlow *et al.* (2005) in their work with former political prisoners. With one community group in North Belfast refused funding to provide a mediation service for paramilitary intimidation (in spite of established links with paramilitaries), the money was instead given to a Christian group because it was considered 'safe'. This was despite the fact that giving the money to such a group was a *de facto* waste because it had no affective links or ties with the paramilitaries to be of practical use within the community. Even as late as 2008, application forms for community group funding from the Belfast City Council's community safety department had 'no restorative justice groups need apply' printed on them (Topping, 2009). In this regard, such accounts only help to confirm that much of the post-Patten era has been specifically geared to dealing with *police* rather than wider *policing* change in terms of alternative or 'parallel' community safety agendas, no matter what the *reality* of their contribution to 'policing' could be.

There has, however, been some development with regard the governance of security in Northern Ireland in terms of the Loyalist-based 'Alternatives' restorative justice schemes; and the Republican-based Community Restorative Justice Ireland (CRJI). Under the weight of pressure from such groups and their popularity at the community level, the NIO produced a protocol for restorative justice schemes which has resulted in 'official' accreditation for both schemes. Indeed, Alternatives and CRJI were both given official NIO accreditation in 2008 following inspection by CJINI (CJINI 2007a; 2007b; 2008). But in general, it is clear that attitudes to local community safety capacities in their broadest sense, are more about the *managing* the

aspirations of those who could contribute to policing and the criminal justice system, rather than genuinely *harnessing* their social utility or community capacities as part of Patten's broader policing vision. This 'mindset' also ignores what O'Mahony *et al*. (2000:1) have called 'chances' to embrace community security capacities in the post-ceasefire democratic space – obviating the contention that policing 'issues…being addressed anew, paradoxically present opportunities for fresh and innovative approaches to basic issues that elsewhere are frozen in politicised or technocratic debates on crime…'

An finally, beyond some of the more pragmatic arguments within the literature relating to local community capacities to participate in their own policing affairs, it is also important to survey the literature in regard to the 'makeup' of those communities which contribute (or could potentially contribute) to the community safety policy debate. Outside of the (still) highly divided and segregated nature of Northern Irish society (Shirlow and Murtagh, 2006), the apparently 'vibrant' nature of the voluntary and community is evidently an extension of the communal division in which it is situated. As highlighted in the study by Acheson *et al*. (2006), 73.9% of such voluntary and community groups in Northern Ireland derive mainly or wholly from one of the two main communities – either Catholic or Protestant. This undoubtedly reflects the views of Morrow (2006) that Northern Ireland is characterised by bonding capital (intra-community association) over bridging capital (inter-community) due to the history and nature of the conflict (Acheson *et al*., 2004; Cairns *et al*., 2003; OFMDFM, 2006).

Though beyond this basic understanding of differences between community organising within Protestant and Catholic communities, there are implications for the long term delivery of community safety and policing country. In view of the *unitary* nature of the Northern Ireland criminal justice system, the PSNI, and indeed the PCSPs along with their funding streams for community organisations, the divided nature of community-based activism around 'policing' and community safety will only serve to sustain pockets of micro-governance within the specific social and cultural contexts of Protestant and Catholic communities respectively. However, it must acknowledged that over the past decade there are several example of divided communities working in partnership to address community safety, policing and quality of life issues – such as the North Belfast Interface Monitoring Group. But until there can be a more unified approach to community-based community safety, real and

tangible benefits for local communities to deal with crime and quality of life issues will continue to be limited. Because neither government bodies nor PSNI will be able to pour their finite resources into communities (and their organisations) whose activities continue to be bound up (operationally and geographically), with the legacy of the conflict. Indeed, this all ultimately impacts upon the need for successful, effective implementation of the new PCSPs in 2012 as a means of helping to gain consensus and create more community synergy with regard to the wider delivery of community safety outside the narrow parameters of the police.

3.5 Partnerships and Policing in Northern Ireland

Community Safety

On a general level, it is important to note that community safety – as a working concept to define partnership efforts related to crime, policing and quality of life issues – is by new means new or unique to Northern Ireland. Emerging in the late 1970s in England and Wales, Home Office Circular 211/1978 was indicative of a shift in government policy at the time which recognised the 'limits' of the public police in being able to control crime alone – emphasizing a need to work in partnership with other agencies at a local level (Newburn, 2002). Furthermore, the Morgan Report (1991) emphasized the need for partnership around crime prevention insofar as it recognised that local councils were ideally situated to be at the centre of such activities (cited in Squires, 2006). However, it was the Labour party and the publication of '*Getting to Grips with Crime: A New Framework for Local Action*' (Home Office, 1997) which laid the ground for the antecedents of modern community safety practice. Setting out the need to tackle a range of quality of life and anti-social behavioral issues, as Brunger (2011:45) notes:

> 'the paper also established that the language of reform would be premised upon…crime and disorder reduction rather than explicitly community safety…much of the paper was taken forward into the Crime and Disorder Act 1998'.

Indeed, the 1998 Act established a statutory framework for police and local authorities to work together in partnership, with sections 17 and 115 of the Act providing a legal onus upon police and local service providers to participate in crime reduction initiatives; and exchange information with partner agencies to support local strategies (Brunger, 2011). Furthermore, set against the context of three Home Office papers: '*Policing a New Century: A Blueprint for Reform*' (Home Office, 2001); '*Building Communities Beating Crime*' (Home Office, 2004); and '*From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing and Communities Together*' (Home Office, 2008) – the basis for the centrality of community safety and reduction of crime and disorder may be observed within government policy during this period.

Community Safety in Northern Ireland

But while community safety remains as an overarching government policy objective for England and Wales, in Northern Ireland the picture and progress of community safety policy and practice is substantially different – not least because of the peculiarities for policing generally derived from the conflict. Unlike the reforms to public service which swept the rest of the U.K. during the 1980s and 1990s:

> 'as a result of this stark ethno-national divide and the onset of political violence, the from of the public services and partnership policing did not evolve in Northern Ireland to the same extent…Public services…had not been opened up to the same managerialist reforms…' (Brunger, 2011:95).

However, in spite of the religious and political divides between the communities and the state/police during the conflict, attempts were made at fostering policing partnerships at a local level through Community Police Liaison Committees (CPLCs).

Originally envisaged in England in the aftermath of the Brixton riots, the were introduced in Northern Ireland under the Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 which created a statutory responsibility for obtaining views from the public on policing issues. However, due to the nature of the conflict and partisan nature of policing during the Troubles, the Community Police Liaison Committees (CPLCs) in the main reflected the Protestant majority who supported the RUC (Walker, 1990; Weitzer, 1992). In this regard, the CPLCs were described as 'rather cosy ritualistic affairs that achieve little practically and have no discernable impact on what the police do…' (Morgan, 1989 cited in Weitzer, 1992:235). But following the Loyalist and Republican paramilitary ceasefires of 1994 (Mulcahy, 2006), the then RUC published their '*Fundamental Review of Policing*' (RUC, 1996) as an attempt to begin a process of working more closely with all communities in the country – epitomized through a number of publications grounded in a community-oriented theme were produced, including: '*Working Together to Police Northern Ireland*' (1988); '*People, Policing, Progress*' (1991); '*Everyone's Police*' (1996); '*Listening to the Community, Working with the RUC*' (1997); and '*Reflecting All Shades of Opinion*' (1998) (c.f. Mulcahy and Ellison, 2001). And while the effectiveness of such initiatives is for another inquiry, it is the emerging pattern related to the picture of community safety which is of significance.

Because outside the efforts of the police at the time, the Criminal Justice Review (CJR) of 2000 notes that as early as 1977 a Crime Prevention Panel was

formed between the Northern Ireland Office (NIO), RUC and representatives of the civic and business sector to look at coordinated approaches to dealing with crime (CJR, 2000:256; Brunger, 2011). In 1993, the NIO also published a paper on community safety entitled 'Crime and the Community' (NIO, 1993; Feenan, 2000). Furthermore, in 1996 a Community Safety Centre (CSC) was set up within the NIO as part of broader community safety efforts. Although as Brunger contends (2011:104): 'the role of the CSC, however, reflected in the fact that senior members of the management board of the CSC were carefully selected by the NIO and that it was…carefully steered…' But it was following the publication of the CJR implementation plan in 2001 (NIO, 2001) in which the genesis of community safety in Northern Ireland may be observed. Through Recommendation 196 of the CJR, it proposed Community Safety and Policing Partnerships (CSPPs) be set up – eventually to become Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in their modern form.

Out of the creation of the CSPs following the CJR it is, however, important to note several key features of this 'new' model of community safety and functioning in Northern Ireland. Firstly, the legislative provision for the CSPs under the Justice (NI) Act 2002 (as drafted) lacked any of the strength of its Crime and Disorder Act 1998 counterpart for England and Wales. Indeed, there was never any section 17 equivalent which demanded that local authorities and service providers incorporated crime and disorder reduction into their everyday, core activities. Neither was there any section 115 equivalence mandating the sharing of information between partner agencies. And in general, the legislative provisions relating to CSPs in the country under the Justice (NI) Act 2002 have *never* been brought into force – creating a *de facto* voluntary basis for the current operations of CSPs (CJINI, 2006).

Secondly, the Community Safety Unit (CSU) created under the CJR (and under the DoJ) has also been subject to criticism from the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) in terms of the level of central control exerted upon individual CSPs at the council level. Furthermore, in terms of constraints placed upon the CSPs, Brunger (2011) also highlights the top-down, Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets to guide CSPs in the Northern Ireland Community Safety Plan. On the one hand, these may be observed as helping to unify the different agencies involved in local partnership working. But on the other hand

'the role of PSAs then, links directly into the debates surrounding central and

local control of CSPs. Their pervasive influence ensures that…a large amount of central control is firmly administered over CSP planning…plans are motivated towards addressing these targets and less by dealing with local issues' (Brunger, 2011:280).

Thirdly, the democratic nature of input into CSU and CSPs is at best, a moot point. With the CSU staffed and run exclusively by civil servants (Brunger, 2011), it is symptomatic of the CSPs in terms of their composition, with CJINI (2006) noting that statutory bodies account for 50% of CSP membership; elected and voluntary members 20%; and the private and community sector merely 3%. Furthermore, the administration cost of the CSPs currently runs at £1.15m out of a budget of £3.28m. Thus, when combined with the lack of independent scrutiny to minutes of meetings and funding processes, the space in which local community concerns and priorities may be considered is undoubtedly limited (Brunger, 2011; Topping, 2009).

And finally, what cannot be divorced from the wider debate on CSPs is the fact they were conceived in parallel to the reforms under the ICP (Ellison and O'Rawe, 2010). In this regard, as part of the wider 'political' constraints restricting police partnerships prior to Sinn Fein acceptance of the policing institutions in 2007, there had been an implicit recognition through the CJR that the NIO had deliberately created a 'two-tier' partnership approach so as to 'manage' the lack of (willingness for) effective engagement and partnership with the (then) estranged Republican (and to a lesser extent Loyalist) communities. In perpetuating the 'separateness' between the PSNI and (mainly) Republican communities, as quoted in Topping (2009:214):

> 'there was a reason why the two structures were set in place. And the reason is that the DPPs [as police structures] would have alienated the Republican community, so they *had* to set up another mechanism in place whereby Republican communities felt confident and could come forward to a statutory body…the Community Safety Partnership was set up to have a mechanism whereby hard to reach communities could engage on *policing* issues, but not directly with the *police*'.

District Policing Partnerships

Having examined the policies and developments related to community safety in Northern Ireland, it is now apt to turn attention to another feature of the policing partnership picture – and to the District Policing Partnerships (DPPs). Indeed, the DPPs have a statutory monitoring remit under Part III of the 2000 Act to consult, identify, monitor, engage and act within the community in accordance with the objectives of the policing plan and as part of the new institutional accountability and oversight infrastructure created through the reforms to policing under the ICP. As a tool for the police to reach out and engage with communities, as well as a platform from which the public may voice their concerns and hold the police to local account, the DPPs, as part of Patten's vision have far out-stripped any previous efforts to engage with communities in Northern Ireland, or indeed the United Kingdom more generally. However, there are many underlying tensions with regard to the DPPs and their peculiar form of partnership working (not necessarily attributable to the PSNI), to which attention shall now turn in the evaluation of whether DPPs actually ensure 'that policing is at the heart of the community… Accountability to local communities and transparency are central to the operation of DPPs' (NIPB, 2007a:6).

As part of the ICP's vision of the DPPs, it was envisaged that partnership working relating to crime and policing (rather than police) issues, would involve:

> 'creating a real partnership between the police and the community, government agencies, non-governmental organisations, families, citizens; a partnership based upon openness and understanding; a partnership in which policing reflects and responds to community needs'. (ICP, 1999:8).

But in view of the available evidence, DPPs still remain something short of the representative forums for plural debate upon policing matters for local catchments of civil society in Northern Ireland.

With Sinn Fein only taking their seats on the DPPs since 2007, a significant proportion of the Republican/Nationalist community has been absent from the policing debate (willingly or not) by their absence from the less than stringent DPP *monitoring* rather than accountability function (Mulcahy, 2006). Even those Nationalists from the more moderate Social and Democratic Labour Party (SDLP) who took their seats in 2003 following the creation of the DPPs sustained an on-going campaign of intimidation, harassment, assault and bombings in recent years (*Belfast Telegraph*, 2007a). Indeed, following the appointment of Sinn Fein DPP

members in 2007, they too have also been publicly issued with death threats by dissident Republicans (*Belfast Telegraph*, 2007c).

However, while the literature may point to barriers with regard to wider Nationalist/Republican participation in DPPs following the ICP reforms, for Loyalist/Unionist communities who have been more readily involved in holding the PSNI to some form of account, further problems underline the tenuous relationship between public involvement and police accountability through this partnership mechanism – especially at the community level. Merely three years after their creation, an appalling public attendance record at DPP meetings may be observed, despite running costs spiralling to approximately £12m (*Belfast Telegraph*, 2006). With 268 out of 300 meetings between May 2003 and March 2006 with less than 20 members of the public in attendance, far from acting as 'an excellent sounding board…providing a useful channel of communication between the police service and the community' (Police Federation for Northern Ireland Chairman, 2004 cited in Mulcahy, 2006:174), the DPPs have in many ways, come to mirror the now dated CPLCs, as 'talking shops' staged managed to avoid controversy…' (Mulcahy, 2006:175).

As Topping (2008b; 2009) further contends, the body of DPP work in consulting and engaging with communities, including the monitoring of local policing has a negligible impact upon the daily routines of the rank and file community officers. In this respect, for those at the coalface of delivering policing on the ground, the DPPs have become a:

> 'shallow, sad reflection of what Patten had envisaged…[and] there's no bite with them at all, and that suits the police, because they don't want that critical engagement…' (PSNI Officer quoted in Topping, 2008b:789).

And in combination with the central pressure upon the DPPs from the NIPB to meet targets and produce statistical accounts of police performance (Byrne and Monaghan, 2008), the evidence points to something considerable less than the ICP's original vision of District Policing Partnership Boards (DPPBs) with a much wider remit as part of *policing* rather than current *police* objectives. Indeed, looking to Patten Recommendation 32, it stated that:

> 'District Councils should have the power to contribute an amount initially up to the equivalent of 3p in the pound towards the improved police of the district, which could enable the District Policing Partnership Board to

purchase additional services from the policing or other statutory agencies, or from the private sector' (ICP, 1999:para 6.33).

But under a barrage of (unfounded political) criticism that such a community-level provision would provide an 'open-door' for paramilitary entry into publicly funded policing partnership arrangements, Recommendation 32 was the only provision of the ICP never to have been enacted in legislative form (Mulcahy, 2006; Bayley, 2007; Topping, 2009). Indeed, such 'dampening' of community partnership potential in 'policing' was also foreshadowed by the parallel Review of the Criminal Justice System in 2000 insofar as the prospect for a 'fascinating experiment' in bringing together community energies and organising as part of wider policing and community safety initiatives, is a vision which government policy over the past ten years has had little time for (Gormally, 2004; McEvoy *et al.*, 2002). Thus, the opportunity for bridging the gap between effective policing partnerships and grass-roots community-based input and energy, has so far remained limited (O'Rawe, 2003).

3.6 The Future of Policing Partnership Arrangements in Northern Ireland

Moving beyond the literature in relation to policing and community safety policy and development, it is important to now examine the trajectory of community safety arrangements as part of measures brought under the newly devolved policing and justice powers in Northern Ireland through the DoJ.

Current proposals on community safety arrangements (discussed below) have their genesis in the NIO's 2008 consultation document '*Together, Safer, Stronger*' community safety strategy (NIO, 2008). Contained within this document were attempts to enhance and bolster the position of CSPs insofar as the document proposed new powers in line with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 in terms of statutory obligations service providers to incorporate crime reduction into their core business; along with creating an obligation for information sharing. And while the follow up to this consultation by the NIO (2009) confirmed that such measures would be implemented (along with more stringent powers to deal with anti-social behaviour), the DoJ recently launched their own consultation on both the strategic direction for community safety in the country together with the new structures to underpin that vision.

Entitled 'Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities' (DoJ, 2011), this current consultation is part of far-reaching strategy by the DoJ, which states:

> 'the new Community Safety Strategy will be developed in the context of wider Executive policies, notably the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and Early Years Strategy, which all reflect the cross cutting nature of community safety and have a part to play in addressing crime and anti-social behaviour' (DoJ, 2001:5).

Indeed, the cross-cutting nature of the new consultation is notable feature in terms of the clear attempts to draw together – at a strategic level – a variety of government objects under the banner of community safety. Through balanced, evidence-based early interventions (DoJ, 2011), the current proposal represents on one hand, a robust and multidimensional approach to tackling a range of quality of life and fear of crime issues – as part of enabling a broader *policing* rather than *police* or criminal justice approach to community safety issues.

But on the other hand, and significantly for the divided nature of Northern Irish society (Shirlow and Murtagh, 2006), is the proposal to place 'shared communities' at the heart of community safety policy – and laterally, incorporate the

issues of social division, interface communities and shared space into the responsibilities of a range of statutory agencies. As stated in the consultation, the DoJ will:

> 'engage with government departments, service providers and communities to maximize the impact and focus of government in interface and other areas facing significant community safety problems exacerbated by economic and social disadvantage and the legacy of the conflict…' (DoJ, 2011:25).

Furthermore, with the 'shared communities' also encompassing efforts at tackling hate crimes more generally, the strategic basis for increasing awareness, reporting and support for such issues has been laid as part of a multidimensional approach to what is a complex issue.

Policing and Community Safety Partnerships

Outside the immediate remit of community safety strategy for Northern, and most importantly for the physical landscape in which community safety is delivered, is the creation of the new Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSP) as set out in Part 3 of the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. Under the Act, the roles and functions of the CSPs and DPPs will be merged into a single PCSP, with the strategic priorities and objectives of both the NIPB's Policing Plan and the DoJ's community safety objectives agreed and aligned under a new Community Safety Strategy (DoJ, 2011).

Similarly to the structure of DPPs, the new PCSPs will also comprise of 8, 9 or 10 councillors selected by local councils; and 7, 8 or 9 independent members selected by the NIPB – providing a political majority on the structures. Furthermore, independent members will (at the time of writing) receive a stipend as part of their roles and responsibilities. And while the majority of the roles and functions of the DPPs and CSPs remain in tact under the 2011 Act, another key feature of DoJ's policy strategy is the emphasis on the role of the voluntary and community sector, noting that PCSPs will build upon efforts to date and 'continue to work with the third sector to explore its role in the delivery of community safety solutions at a strategic and local level' (DoJ, 2011:35). In this regard, and as part of the local strategic priorities within each council area, PCSPs will be able to set up 'delivery committees' which can be tasked with tackling specific issues, projects or geographic areas of community safety need. And of note for the capacity of the delivery committees, they will be able to co-opt external bodies and members relevant to their work; and will not be limited in size.

Contained within the main body of the PCSP will also be a 'policing committee comprised of councillors and independent members, performing the more technical PSNI monitoring functions inherited from the DPPs, including making of arrangements for obtaining cooperation of the public with the police. And in terms of the policing committee, it will have to report directly to the NIPB on the exercise of its police-centric functions

However, in terms of the overall functions of the new PCSPs, the main statutory obligations will include:

- Making arrangement for obtaining the view of the public about matters concerning the policing of the district and enhancing community safety;
- To act as a general forum for discussion and consultation on matters affecting the policing of the district and enhancing community safety;
- To prepare plans for reducing crime and enhancing community safety;
- To identify targets or other indicators by reference to which it can assess the extent to which those issues are addressed by action taken in accordance with any such plans; and
- To provide any such financial or other support as it considers appropriate to persons involved in ventures designed to reduce crime or enhance community safety.

Looking specifically at the fourth function in relation to measuring successes, there is strong emphasis by the DoJ upon departing from the statistical definitions of success – so long a contention with respect to the function of the DPPs (Byrne and Monaghan, 2008; Topping, 2008b). As noted in the consultation document:

> 'we do not propose to set arbitrary targets…we will monitor recorded crime levels in order to respond to any emerging issues, and use other robust sources such as recorded crime statistics and the Northern Ireland Crime survey to measure crime levels and confidence in a more holistic way' (DoJ, 2011:36).

But significantly for the PCSPs, in terms of the post-devolution policing landscape and policy in Northern Ireland, will be their mediating value between the politics of past around the police – and their ability to cement an agenda of *policing* as part of Patten's original vision for the future. With Minister Ford noting that crime and anti-social behaviour cannot be separated from housing, the environment, health, social care or employment, the new PCSPs signify a symbolic shift in governmental focus out of narrow debates on police reform. As highlighted by Topping (2008a), the first ten years of post-Patten policing focus in the country have been about the physical changes to police as an organisation; along with 'cultivating' the political landscape facilitate all-party policing support for the policing institutions. In this regard, the PCSPs may be viewed as the new 'roadmap' for facilitating wider, inclusive action in relation to the delivery of *policing*, which as Bayley (2007) contends, underpins the ICP's understanding that policing was always too important to be left to just the police alone.

3.7 Summary

This review has drawn together policy and practice relating to community safety and policing over the past decade. During that period, there have been a number of political developments which have positively influenced the nature of the community safety agenda – including the restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly; and the devolution of policing and justice powers. In this regard, a number of observations can be made in relation to the design and development of a community safety approach suited to the unique landscape of a society in transition:

- The political, policing and security landscape over the past decade has had a direct impact and influence upon the delivery of a community safety model, as originally envisaged by the Independent Commission for Policing in Northern Ireland;

- Local communities have embraced the concept of community safety. However, levels of community participation in local initiatives have been inconsistent across the country;

- There has been a degree of scepticism at the community level as to how much impact the community sector have historical had in relation to community safety and policing issues, especially when set against the influence of elected representatives and service providers;

- Because of the ever-changing policing and security environment, it has been challenging for statutory bodies to deliver what might be considered 'normal' policing and community safety services;

- The past decade has been predicated upon cultivating a more inclusive environment in which service and community providers can work together in delivering a community safety model suited to the needs of all stakeholders;

- The next decade of community safety and policing is about building upon existing practice and partnerships, and aligning those with the DoJ's new vision for safer, shared and confident communities.

4.0 Research Findings

The remainder of this report sets out the main findings, which emerged from the research. These include case studies of community safety programmes from four different areas of Northern Ireland; a typology of community-based community safety contributions; and 32 interviews conducted with a wide range of statutory and community stakeholders concerned with community safety and policing in urban and rural environments.

Overall, the researchers would contend that the current approach provides a high degree of triangulation with regard to the main issues and themes related to the delivery of community safety and policing. Through considering both policy and practice, while analysing and evaluating actors involved directly in the community safety landscape, the research further provides a new and unique insight into the issues affecting not just how community safety has been delivered, but also how it could (or should) be shaped into the future in light of the forthcoming changes through the new DoJ strategy – along with the PCSPs as the structures to support that vision.

4.1 Case Study Analysis

The following section is an opportunity to explore in more detail four models of good practice in relation to the implementation of community-safety strategies at the local level. The case studies illustrate the various techniques and approaches that evolved within the community sector to address issues such as interface violence, marginalised young people, engagement with criminal justice agencies, and community participation in the community safety process. The four case studies have been outlined below.

Case Study One: North Belfast Interface Monitoring Group

The North Belfast Interface Monitoring Group (NBIMG) was established in early 2003 as a response to increasing violence and disorder along several interface areas in North Belfast. It encompasses representatives from the Nationalist/Republican and Unionist/Loyalist communities in North Belfast, drawn exclusively from the voluntary and community sector. There was no statutory or political representation within its membership. Since its formation, the group have been meeting regularly (twice a month) to respond to incidents around the interfaces. The meetings are not only an opportunity to deal with specific incidents, but also to provide clarity around decisions, and quash rumours and myths. They have become a place where individuals can collectively begin a process of self-evaluation of their work and impact on the community.

Examples can be shared in terms of methods related to the alleviation of violence at a specific interfaces, or consequently, interface workers had the chance to highlight initiatives that had been unsuccessful in addressing the causes of the violence. As the years have progressed, the NBIMG in line with the changing nature of the violence and significant lack of community support for the behaviour, began to look at the causes of interface violence within a more developmental capacity. It continues to react to specific incidents along the interfaces, but also initiates a process of developing links with other organisations in an attempt to prevent the violence. The key to addressing the violence and disorder was to develop positive relationships with young people. Prior to the work of the NBIMG, there was a perception with those engaged in interface violence that it was accepted behaviour and seen as protecting the community from local residents. This was not the case and this message has had to be communicated to young people participating in the violence. Initially, interface management was based on reacting to specific problems and dealing with them in an ad hoc manner. However, as the members of the NBIMG have become accustomed to the work and environment, and have identified many of the people involved, attention has shifted to more preventative approaches to interface violence.

Firstly, the group considers family intervention as a process to address issues of violence and the involvement of young people. Members of the group then approache family members to discuss the behaviour of young people and their role in the interface violence. And while recognising that this is as a fairly simple method of

responding to the violence, it has on occasion proven effective. It became evident from an early stage who the key protagonists where, and by informing their families, this process was one was seeking their support in limiting the potential for their children's continued involvement in the interface violence. These approaches highlight the potential negative consequences of their children's continued involvement in interface violence and offered support and advice to the parents. Secondly, the NBIMG helps identify the importance of engagement with local primary and post primary schools. Previously, there was reluctance for some schools to become involved in issues around young people and community violence, especially if their pupils were not identified as being involved. However, through dialogue and several meetings schools have become more involved in the behaviour of their pupils outside of the school.

Furthermore, members of the NBIMG through positive engagement have been able to establish working relationships with teachers and principals. In the lead up to the summer, NBIMG members have given talks in schools during their assembly's on the risks associated with interface violence. Furthermore, on occasions where there is the potential for violence to escalate (parades, football matches), teachers have been encouraged to become visible on the streets and stand with members of the NBIMG. This sends out a positive signal to young people and reinforces the reality that interface violence is not supported and will not be tolerated within communities. Thirdly, since 2006, the NBIMG has been successfully managing and implementing a summer interface poster initiative which resulted in the distribution of 20,000 leaflets throughout North Belfast. This initiative involving young people, community and statutory agencies is aimed at raising awareness of young people to the dangers and consequences of engaging in risk behaviour especially around interfaces. The NBIMG have worked closely with the emergency services, the Community Safety Unit and Belfast City Council, as a partnership approach to addressing violence along the interfaces. Furthermore, relationships and partnerships have been made with local schools and youth providers to relay the message that interface violence will not be tolerated within the community. By involving all of the key statutory agencies along with the churches and schools, it is hoped that young people will realise that violence is unacceptable, dangerous and has no place in their community.

Fourthly, in the last three years the NBIMG have approached members of the local churches for support in relaying the message that interface violence is a negative

activity with serious repercussions for both those that engage in it and those that are victims. A number of churches have come out in support of the NBIMG initiative and on occasions have worked with representatives from the NBIMG to alleviate tensions along the interfaces. Fifthly, the group have been working in partnership with a number of agencies from within the criminal justice system. In relation to policing it was apparent that the message from the NBIMG was that dealing with interface violence was primarily the responsibility of the PSNI. It was a public order issue and therefore anyone apprehended engaging in that behaviour should be arrested and subsequently charged. Local residents were also informed that if they had concerns around behaviour at the peace walls and interfaces that they should inform the PSNI. However, the NBIMG acknowledged that if local residents required their support then they would respond in kind.

The NBIMG have also raised issues with the PSNI and the PPS about community concerns that relate to bail restrictions; a perceived lack of prosecutions; the length of custodial sentences; the types of sentences; and responses to repeat offenders. In regards to the Youth Justice Agency there was a degree of criticism emanating from the NBIMG around their commitment to the process and an over reliance on community and voluntary organisations to 'babysit their clients' without adequate support or resources. The NBIMG welcomed the concept of youth conferencing along with the rehabilitative element to the punishments. They were willing to embrace the organisation and work in partnership with regards to managing and monitoring those young people who had offended. However, there was a sense that the Youth Justice Agency was only interested in ticking boxes and getting the young people out into the community. Overall the NBIMG acknowledged the benefits to working with the different agencies of the Criminal Justice System, but felt that their own knowledge and experiences of community issues was crucial in any approach around the management of interface related issues.

Case Study Two: ACT Programme: Action for Community Transformation

The ACT programme emerged in 2007 after the Ulster Volunteer Forces statement of intent when it stated that it was transforming into a 'non-military, civilianised organisation'. The ACT programme is essentially a vehicle through which members of the UVF and the RHC are being supported on their journey from conflict to peace. The programme aims to build local capacity, develop relationships, and support local communities address the social, political and economic issues prevalent within their neighbourhoods. The ACT programme is entirely voluntary, and to date 191 members of both organisations have completed the training, while a further 1440 people from across Northern Ireland have agreed to participate in various aspects of the programme. The Act programme consists of three phases, and these have been outlined below.

The first phase is called 'Transition' and is primarily about building the capacity of those participants who want to play a positive, proactive role in their communities. Through a period of community consultation, discussions with experts, and a review of international best practice, a training manual was created. This consisted of four modules that considered the individual; the group within the organisation; the community; and the wider impact on society. Each component of the programme was underpinned by a different approach and theoretical concept. The four approaches consisted of self-reflection; socio-metrics; action-planning; and inter-relations, whilst the four concepts included, Johari-window; Ice-berg; Conditions; and Restorative practices. Throughout Phase 1 it is important to highlight the importance of 'self-reflection'. This is a crucial element of the programme, and is about each participant exploring their own personal and public history and acknowledging their role in the conflict. Through workshops and seminars participants were given opportunities to share their experiences and consider what role they might have in relation to improving the health and social wellbeing of those within their community.

The second phase is referred to as 'Operational' and is about making an impact within the community. Essentially, this is action-based learning where the participants apply the skills and learning that have been acquired through phase 1 of the programme to issues of concern within their area. Therefore, the ACT programme has established a co-ordinating committee which has ten themed departments relevant to providing opportunities to work closely with the community i.e. parades, interface

violence, young people. The co-ordinating committee, which meets monthly, is responsible for overseeing the aims, objectives and actions of the departments and provides support where and when appropriate. The conduit through which to implement this is known as an Area Action Group and this structure allows for the principle of 'distributional leadership' to underpin the ACT programme, were each department can engage with local people via the Area Action Groups on local issues. Furthermore, as the committee oversees the work of the departments, the process is in place which allows the departments to draw upon different individuals with specific skills to support them. There are currently 6 Area Action Groups established across Northern Ireland where individuals are working with local residents and existing organisations in the area of community safety.

An important element of the ACT programme is the sharing of information, learning and knowledge among the participants and the structures that have been put in place allow for these to captured and disseminated. It should also be noted that the programme is keen to approach and engage with those from the wider community including academics and practitioners under the rubric of critical friends. This increases accountability and ultimately increases the capacity and confidence of those participating in the programme. Essentially, collaboration and joined-up working is crucial as everyone has different skills and experiences necessary to improve the quality of life for those residing in Loyalist working class communities.

The third phase is a combination of the 'Transitional' and 'Operational' and is about merging the two to encourage collaboration and political engagement across and within communities. The mechanism through which to begin this is in partnership with the Progressive Unionist Party either as a member or as a supporter. In this respect, the notion of being politicised needs not necessarily be about membership of a political party but rather about working in collaboration with others on issues of a political nature which affect us all as citizens.

Key outcomes:

- *Engagement with people from the Nationalist community and ethnic minority groups:*
  o The ACT training programme has been delivered to a cross community group of ex-prisoners and former combatants from the Short Strand and inner east Belfast. This pilot paves the way for other such work to take place. ACT has actively encouraged members to become involved in forums such as the Belfast Conflict Transformation Consortium which is made up of community activists from all communities and other diversity and equality forums.

- *Increased positive participation in community structures:*
  o As part of the Act model and to help embed the principles of civilianisation, a number of action groups have been established in several communities. Each area action group has 10 sub-groups which allow for project delivery and work in areas such as legacy of the conflict; policing and justice; youth work; culture; parading etc. Each area action group has identified pieces of work that can be delivered in partnership with other community organisations to help address issues of community safety. Approximately 250 men are actively involved in this Phase of the work.

- *Decreased levels of indigenous sectarianism:*
  o The Act Training Programme addresses this issue at its core and participants are encouraged to examine themselves and their role within the conflict. PSNI statistics would support the statistic that 'hate crimes' have decreased within loyalist communities.

- *Increased skills in mediation and problem solving:*
  o Over 300 participants have received training in mediation and the principles and practices of restorative justice and have also availed of opportunities to practice these new skills within a volunteering context with NI Alternatives and EPIC.

- *Increased engagement and confidence in policing structures:*
  o Engagement with the PSNI is high and on-going dialogue is taking place regarding levels of criminality; drug dealing; interface issues; parades and culture. ACT participants have also been part of a consultation carried out in loyalist and republican areas to assess attitudes towards the police and to make recommendations for change. This piece of work was carried out on behalf of the Northern Ireland Policing Board. The implementation of the new Policing and Community Safety Partnerships which will be launched in November 2011 will provide opportunities for ACT participants to apply for and be part of new structures which are aimed at bringing communities into the heart of policing and community safety matters.

Case Study Three: West Belfast Community Safety Forum

The West Belfast Community Safety Forum was established in June 2008 in response to community concerns following a number of murders, along with an increase in fear of crime, criminal activity and anti-social behaviour. There was a realisation from within the community that crime and anti-community behaviour would be addressed most effectively through a co-ordinated response involving public service providers and the entire community. There were three key aims to the establishment of the forum. These included an increase in community confidence in the safety of their neighbourhood; an increase community confidence in the services provided by statutory criminal justice organisations; and an increase in community engagement with the statutory criminal justice agencies and local service provides. There are a multitude of statutory, community and voluntary agencies and organisations represented within the forum, which include the Falls Community Council, West Belfast Partnership Board, Belfast City Council, DOJ/Community Safety Unit, and the Youth Justice Agency.

The forum maintains that community safety is primarily about delivering local solutions to local problems that have been identified by local people. To achieve this it is crucial that there is community participation, partnerships between residents and service providers, and joined-up working with tangible results which have a positive impact on the lives of local residents. Local residents are leading the agenda on community safety. The forum regularly meets with residents associations and community groups to ascertain their concerns and views on issues pertaining to community safety. The Forum has been at the fore front of facilitating meetings between the PSNI and local residents. Recently, a series of community meetings have taken place on themes such as burglary; domestic violence; on-street drinking; death drivers; drug and alcohol abuse; scrambling; sex offences; threats and intimidation; and bail restrictions.

Furthermore, intervention and prevention are two aspects of community safety, which the forum is consistently looking to deliver through community-based initiatives. For example, in 2010 the forum organised a Halloween event in the Falls Park, which was attended by 600 people. This was an opportunity to involve young people in constructive activities and reduce the potential for anti-social behaviour and/or interface violence. The event was considered a success, and in 2011

approximately 4000 people attended a similar event from the community. This reinforces the level of public support and approval for the forum and the various community safety programmes being delivered in partnership with statutory bodies throughout the community.

An important element of the forum is the level of importance placed on critical reflection and the evaluation of the impact of various community safety programmes and initiatives. Residents and stakeholders are consistently asked for their views and opinions, and the forum regularly consults with the local community to assist in the development of their action plans, and the strategic direction and priorities of the forum. The most recent action plan for 2010/11 highlighted anti-community behaviour, drugs and alcohol, serious crime, and the need to support local people as key areas of concern for local people. Interestingly, these priorities are similar to those being pursued by the Belfast Community Safety Partnership, the Safer Belfast Plan, and the West Belfast District Policing Plan. The positive connections and joined up working benefit the community as they have an opportunity to influence the strategic community safety agenda, and enable the statutory bodies deliver on their roles and responsibilities through local level implementation. It should also be noted that to ensure joined-up working, restrict replication and support targeted need the forum reports to a Steering Group. This group consists of representatives from the Belfast District Policing Partnership and the Belfast Community Safety Partnership. The Steering Group is tasked to support the integration of community safety approaches and facilitate collaboration between the community and service providers.

The reputation of the forum in relation to leading on community safety issues, and working in partnership with criminal justice agencies, was enhanced by the publication of the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (2009). The report indicated that the forum had made a positive contribution to the delivery of a safer community in West Belfast, and had developed levels of trust and confidence between the community and the various criminal justice agencies. More recently, the attendance of their local MP, the Chief Constable of the PSNI and the Minister of Justice at their 2010 annual meeting in Belfast City Hall reinforces their position as integral to the delivery of community programmes in West Belfast. The Forum is unique in that it has managed to incorporate elements of both bottom-up (community) and more formal (statutory) approaches to the delivery of a community safety model.

Case Study Four: Interface Summer Intervention Programme

Situated in a predominantly Republican/Nationalist area with a limited history of police contact, the aim of this youth intervention scheme was to engage with marginalized young people in the area in terms of diverting them from trouble and disorder associated with the twelfth of July Orange Order marches. It was recognised that a large numbers of children in the area, because of a lack alternative activities over the period of the twelfth of July, became involved in a variety of anti-social behaviours, including: underage drinking, interface violence and sectarian violence. Furthermore, it was also recognised that social media was being used to both organise and orchestrate such activity, described in the area as a 'holy war'. The local confederation of community groups in the area firstly came together to discuss potential interventions and responses to the issue of young people and interface/sectarian violence. However, from a community perspective, a key feature of the initial organising around the issue was an apparent lack PSNI attention or input, predominantly because there was limited police intelligence around the problems, in spite of community knowledge.

Local community representatives and organisations then proceeded to plan more formal interventions – predominantly centred around removing young people from the area through involving them in schemes which would take them to an activity centre over the twelfth of July period. Following the initial organising, the local education and library board, community safety partnership and PSNI also became involved, providing funding for the initiative. With community workers and representatives involved the scheme, a key premise was the project's link to local community organising – maximizing both the impact of the scheme for the children; and gaining respect from the children for those involved in running the scheme. With the project taking only two weeks to become 'live' from the initial meetings, it was held as quick and effective means of dealing with a sensitive community issue without recourse to what was described as 'airy-fairy policy' in relation to statutory body interventions. In total, 31 children were involved in the scheme in the summer of 2011, which, beyond simply limiting sectarian-related issues and violence in the area, was also noted for building community relations with the young people; helping change behaviour; and disrupting what was a cyclical and problematic local event. Furthermore, it was also contented that one of the young people who participated in

the scheme was the son of a dissident Republican in the area. However, following the scheme, the dissident Republican subsequently stepped down from their position in a community association. It was believed locally that this was positive step forward in terms of the community potentially working with statutory bodies more fully around local community safety problems.

In terms of outputs from the project, on the one hand it was felt the scheme (because of its community origins) empowered local people to take responsibility of a local problem; while providing a long-term solution to an intractable problem not perceived to have been dealt with adequately by statutory bodies. But on the other hand, because of the involvement of statutory bodies, the project was felt to provide a more sustainable approach the issue of interface/sectarian violence beyond the voluntary interventions, which had underscored previous community efforts at reducing such local tensions. However, two key points of contention did emerge from the scheme in terms of the wider operation of the community safety scheme.

Firstly, that in spite of 'buy in' from statutory agencies, it was felt by those at the community level (who led the organisation of the scheme) that statutory bodies didn't fully 'invest' in the community work on the ground because of the fact they failed to see the link between community knowledge (as a driver for the success of the scheme); and their own professional, community safety-type skills. And secondly, it was also perceived that such holistic approaches to community safety issues, by virtue of being community-led, were not amenable to any formalized measurement within a criminal justice framework. Thus, with no means to 'measure' the diversionary outputs of the scheme with reference to community inputs, it was perceived that statutory agencies 'stole' the success through their own statistical changes.

Case Study Summary

Theses case studies have provided a comprehensive insight into the practical workings of four community-based programmes and projects across Northern Ireland which have attempted to improve the health and social wellbeing of residents, working through a community safety and policing agenda. The review has highlighted the various strands of positive work, along with the importance of joined-up working and partnership between the community and statutory sectors. A number of observations can be made from this review, which include:

- The importance of community participation in the successful delivery and implementation of community safety strategies, programmes and initiatives;

- The need for statutory agencies to both fully appreciate and be flexible in regards to the holistic nature of community responses to local issues beyond their own policy lens;

- The wider impacts and benefits that community projects can deliver within a broad community safety framework;

- The significant ability of community safety programmes delivery through community providers to act as a 'stepping stone' for local communities in the transition towards cooperation with formal criminal justice service providers;

- The high degree of community-level, contextual knowledge which such organisations bring to the community safety table as a necessary ingredient to complimenting equally important skill sets brought by statutory organisations.

4.2 Typology of community safety approaches

After a comprehensive analysis of the discussions with representatives from the community, voluntary and statutory sectors, it became apparent there were a number of themes related to the delivery of community safety. This resulted in the creation of a typology of community safety work and activity undertaken by those within the voluntary and community sector. An interesting observation was that on a number of occasions, respondents didn't necessarily associate their work through the context of a formal community safety framework or strategy. Instead, they often assumed that their work was about 'community development', 'good relations' or 'social justice', which of course are key elements which transcend the community safety agenda. Through discussions with interviewees, the literature review and case study analysis, it was possible to draw out several types of community safety work that were consistently being delivered at a community level. These have been identified below:

Table 2: Typology of Community-based Community Safety Activities

Community Advocacy
Education and Intervention
Emergency Response
Partnerships
Prevention
Mediation
Restorative Justice

The remainder of this section highlights these different forms of community safety activity and provides details of how they are operationalised within communities.

4.2.1 Community Advocacy

Several community representatives indicated that they frequently promote the needs and fears within their communities. Furthermore, they usually are the first point of contact for local residents and service providers in the context of responding to community safety issues.

- ***Operational Policing***

    Organisations and individuals are often a point of contact for local area commanders and neighbourhood teams. They often assist the police in facilitating the flow of information, sustain communications and represent the 'face, views and experiences of the community'. They also facilitate engagements between the PSNI and local residents, challenge police behaviours and provide a mechanism for assessing accountability.

- ***Parading and Protest***

    They liaise with the PSNI in relation to the management and monitoring of parades and protests. Furthermore, they facilitate internal community dialogue on the issues and update residents on the PSNIs policing response.

- ***Interface Violence***

    Engagement with community representatives across the interfaces and participate in joined-up programmes with service providers and statutory agencies. They are also responsible for managing mobile phone networks, hosting interface management meetings, and challenging agencies such as the PSNI, NIHE, and Youth Justice and their roles and responsibilities.

- ***Quality of Life Issues***

    Essentially a small number of individuals are responsible for addressing many of the social, economic and political issues that impact on community safety across communities. They co-ordinate political engagement between elected representatives and local residents, hold statutory bodies to account, and lobby service providers to improve the health and social wellbeing of residents.

- ***<u>Vulnerable, Excluded and Marginalised Groups</u>***

They are a vehicle for raising awareness and promoting the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised in society. Often they are required to support the elderly, young, disabled and those who have been through the criminal justice system in addressing community safety concerns.

4.2.2 Education & Intervention

Continually the community sector is responsible for either delivering or facilitating programmes and initiatives aimed at supporting and educating local communities set within the context of community safety.

- *__Community Training__*

Those from the sector are often responsible for providing training to community groups on various aspects of community safety. They also provide support for external trainers and attempt to recruit residents from their wider community to participate in various training programmes.

- *__Community Education__*

They provide a range of forums, advice and educational tools to prevent and respond to community safety issues. These can include workshops and seminars on alcohol and drug usage; bonfire safety interface mentoring; reducing anti-social behaviour; and cross community initiatives.

- *__Identifying 'At Risk' Groups__*

Specifically, representatives from this sector identify groups and individuals most at risk of offending within their communities. They provide support and more importantly, links between these individuals and organisations such as the Probation service and Youth Justice.

- *__Policing and Crime__*

The focus is on educating communities on the roles and responsibilities of the PSNI and other criminal justice agencies. This is about confronting preconceptions of the institutions, and breaking down barriers through information sharing and facilitating meetings.

4.2.3 Emergency Response

Representatives from the community remain the focal point for emergency responses relating to community safety issues through either responding directly to an incident, or facilitating the relevant service provider.

- ***Interface Violence and Parades***

On the majority of occasions representatives from the community provide the immediate response and have individuals on-site to manage, monitor and address the violence and disorder. Representatives from the community are also key to the marshalling of parades and liaising with representatives from neighbouring communities.

- ***General Criminality***

More recently representatives from the community have been deployed to local anti-community incidents and hotspots within their neighbourhoods. They are also responsible for contacting the PSNI and feeding back police information about crime in the local area to residents. Neighbourhood PSNI teams also liaise with local community representatives to ascertain community feelings pertaining to certain community safety issues.

4.2.4 Partnerships

Very often-statutory agencies and service providers looked to identify community representatives to either facilitate or act as a bridge between the community and themselves.

- *__Working With the PSNI__*

Joined up working between the community and the PSNI is now an integral element of the community safety agenda. The community sector contributes to the policing plans and the establishment of PSNI priorities at a local and national level. Furthermore, at the neighbourhood level, community representatives assist in the development of relationships between officers and the wider community.

- *__Developing Partnerships__*

Specifically this refers to the community's role in supporting the PSNI and their attempts to engage with 'hard to reach' groups and individuals in the area. This would often involve community organisations acting as a 'stepping stone' within the community as part of wider movements towards cooperation with the criminal justice system more generally.

- *__Accountability__*

Representatives from the community sector play a significant role in streamlining communications between the criminal justice agencies and the local community. At the early stages of relationship building they form a bridge between residents and the PSNI, defining stakeholder roles and responsibilities.

- *__Single Issue Work__*

Often the community sector creates links with the PSNI and statutory agencies on single issues of concern to communities. This amounts to the provision of tailored, preventative approaches and responses from the relevant agencies so that the community receive a positive outcome related to their area of concern.

- ***Multi-Agency Working***

The focus is on creating proactive links with a diverse range of statutory and voluntary agencies to address local crime and anti-community behaviour which has multiple causes. A key element of this approach is that the community sector ensures agencies take responsibility for their area of work within the community and more importantly, prioritise community need.

- ***Intra-Community***

Community representatives from across a wide range of neighbourhoods have developed a strategic and co-ordinated approach to issues pertaining to community safety. This is about maximising the communities' capacities and resources so that the sector can support cohesive responses to crime and the fear of crime.

4.2.5 Prevention

Occupying a central role within the fabric of community life, it was clear that many organisations at a community level had a strong preventative role in terms of contributing to a variety of local factors which in turn, enhanced the safety and security of local areas.

- ***Environmental & Economic Regeneration***

Essentially, representatives from the community sector are at the fore front of identifying, developing and responding to economic and community development issues that have a direct impact on community safety. For example, discussions on the transformation and/or removal of peace walls which communities are an integral aspect of, has been positioned within an environmental and regeneration framework.

- ***Fear of Crime***

The community sector is central to identifying and responding to a wide range of local issues which promote the fear of crime. This involves representatives conducting audits, crime surveys and targeting the causes of crime. The community often leads on the facilitating of community safety information days, poster campaigns and awareness sessions.

4.2.6 Mediation

Many community organisations and individuals also played an important role in mediating between a variety of stakeholders whose role could or should have impacted upon local community safety issues. This included mediation within community, across community divides and between statutory organisations.

- ***Public Order Situations***

Members of the community sector have been at the core of devising both short and long term strategies between the PSNI, other statutory service providers, local residents groups, and the wider community to minimise public disorder. Specifically this has related to the issues arising from flags, parades, bonfires, and interface violence which historically involved violent confrontations between the public and the police.

- ***Brokerage***

There are times that representatives from the community sector have been asked to facilitate contentious conversations (Loyalist and Republican engagement / community safety issues around engaging with criminal justice agencies) and provide venues for community dialogue on these issues.

- ***Cross-community Working***

The majority of cross-community programmes, strategies and initiatives have been developed and managed within the community sector. These programmes strengthen community capacity and confidence, break-down myths and eradicate stereotypes. Furthermore, they improve the quality of life within communities and reduce concerns surrounding issues of community safety.

4.2.7 Restorative Justice

Within both Loyalist and Republican, it was evident that the local restorative justice agencies and their practices had a significant role in contributing to the community safety landscape – working with individuals and the wider community to promote an inclusive, community safety landscape.

- ***<u>Restorative Practices</u>***

Restorative practices have increasingly become central to the administration and delivery of community safety at a local level. Indeed, with most restorative justice schemes in Loyalist and Republican areas having received accreditation from CJINI, they were view as a valuable local asset both by statutory agencies (and especially PSNI); and the local community who could utilise the schemes to resolve a variety of policing and quality of life issues

4.2.8 Summary

This brief thematic analysis of the different programmes and initiatives undertaken by the community and voluntary sector illustrates the diverse range of community safety issues that they address on a daily basis. Volunteers, along with under-resourced community representatives more often than not, bridge the gap between service providers and local residents through facilitating meetings, promoting advocacy and acting as the facilitator for the implementation of the community safety agenda. They are also at the forefront of providing education and intervention programmes for young people, the unemployed, and raising awareness around health and social wellbeing issues. All of these issues are an integral aspect of the broader community safety agenda and resonate very closely with the DoJ's current strategy. Furthermore, the evidence suggests that the community sector has been proactively engaging with them over the last decade.

4.3 Responses from Interviews

Following on from the thematic analysis, this section aims to provide an overview of emerging issues from the perspective of the interviewees. In the course of the interviews, community safety and policing issues were covered from a wide range of angles, with examples and illustrations provided through the working experiences of respondents – both in terms of current issues; and concerns and expectations for the future. In this regard, the issues raised have been broken into three distinct sections as a means of capturing those emerging and key themes. These include:

- Interface Neighbourhoods and Community Safety;
- Experiences and Perceptions of Community Safety and Policing Programmes and Mechanisms;
- Amalgamation of DPPs and CSPs.

4.3.1 Interface Neighbourhoods and Community Safety

A specific focus of this research was to consider community safety issues from the perspective of those working within and between interface communities, as those who bare the brunt of the disproportionate spread of community safety issues in soceity. The social, economic, political, and conflict related issues prevalent within these urban working class Loyalist and Republican communities has been well documented in policy reports and academic articles. However, in terms of community safety, several issues became apparent that representatives from the community sector felt were unique to residents that lived adjacent to peace walls and interfaces.

'Macro Complacency' of Interface Management

There was a sense from several interviewees within the community sector that there was a growing tendency from civil servants and elected representatives to assume that much of the violence and disorder which took place along the interfaces, had rescinded. The experiences of community workers were dominated by conversations with civil servants and statutory bodies about the potential for the transformation and regeneration of the peace walls and interface barriers. They noted that the new community safety agenda that was promoted through the DoJ included a specific reference to divided communities and the peace walls. However, respondents felt that relationships remained fragile across many of the interfaces, and there was persistent potential for violence and disorder. They also felt that much of the work currently undertaken in a voluntary capacity by community representatives was going un-noticed, and that the obvious next stage of the macro conflict transformation process was the removal of the peace walls. However, by shifting the focus away from low-level incidents of violence and concentrating on the tangible challenges of removing a wall, the statutory bodies were risking the development of more intense interface violence.

Disparity in Policing Practices

According to a number of respondents, there was a growing disparity in relation to the types of policing urban working class Loyalist and Republican communities were experiencing. This was then having a direct impact on local residents willingness to participate positively in the emerging locally based community safety agenda. Several interviewees felt that policing in places such as Ardoyne in North Belfast was primarily influenced by a security agenda, which meant that officers were focused on dissident threats and activities. This meant there were constantly large numbers of officers travelling in land rovers, who were heavily armed. The impact on policing from a community perspective was that it was considered militaristic both visually and in practice. The community also failed to differentiate between policing and community safety, so were reluctant to view the new community safety agenda in a positive light. These negative views and perceptions were reinforced by the position that other communities such as those in Loyalist areas and more middle-class neighbourhoods experienced differential policing practices, with more focus upon 'community policing' as opposed to one dominated by a public order and security agenda.

Procedures and Bureaucracy

Several respondents from both Loyalist and Republican backgrounds indicated a frustration with the PSNI in relation to the sharing of information. According to the interviewees there were numerous occasions that the PSNI used terms such as 'operations on-going so unable to comment', or 'due to security constraints we are unable to disclose that information'. This caused a large degree of frustration and confusion among those in the community sector who were taking the lead on facilitating engagement between local residents and service providers around the subject of community safety.

Resources

A key argument from those responsible for addressing community safety issues within and between interface communities is that they are not simply responding to 'normal community safety issues'. They contend that the legacy of the conflict has perpetuated the social, economic and political issues, prevalent within these working class communities. Therefore, interface communities require supplemented support and resources so that the overall community safety agenda being pushed by the DoJ could be successfully implemented in these marginalised and socially excluded areas.

Community Participation

Respondents indicated that it was becoming extremely difficult to persuade and encourage local residents to participate in community safety programmes. Issues such as childcare, employment, resources, capacity, apathy and ignorance around the subject were driving people away from actively becoming involved in community-based initiatives and strategies. A further point of contention from the community and voluntary sector related to the fact there were no financial benefits for community participation, while those from the statutory sector were being paid (often overtime) for participating in the implementation of programmes. Yet the success of these programmes often depended almost exclusively upon community involvement and support.

In relation to North Belfast and Ardoyne in particular, the level and extent of participation and positive engagement in community safety processes is weighted against and premised on service delivery and evaluated on the basis of community satisfaction as opposed to top-heavy statistical based data analysis. This has been primarily facilitated through regular multi-agency meetings, which are convened and chaired by local community representatives. These meetings provide a transparent and democratic process wherein residents identify key issues in the community and raise them 'face to face' with the relevant statutory providers, agreeing tangible actions and enhancing the local accountability framework through the process. A key learning curve for the community has been the role and responsibilities of statutory agencies aside from the PSNI in the delivery and implementation of a community safety agenda.

According to community representatives, managing expectations within the community has remained one of the major challenges, as statutory bodies are often slow to respond to community needs. However, it was also noted that these issues are gradually being addressed with new understandings from those participating in such processes, driven by strong grass-roots community activism.

Political Representation

A key area of concern, which related specifically to urban Loyalist working class communities, surrounded the relationship between residents and Unionist politicians. There was a general consensus from interviewees that the main Unionist parties the DUP and the UUP failed to adequately represent the needs of residents at either local government or Executive level. Furthermore, as these politicians were also an integral element of existing Community Safety and District Policing Partnerships there was a fear that working class Loyalist communities were absent from the community safety debate.

Existing Networks and Relationships

It was interesting to note from several interviewees that their methods of engaging on, and responding to, community safety related issues, often involved bypassing the formal mechanisms provided by Community Safety or District Policing Partnerships. They had no call to participate in these processes due to the fact they had direct lines of communication with PSNI Inspectors and/or Commanders along with local politicians. Over the last decade, these relationships and partnerships were crucial in addressing incidents along the interfaces, as they often required an immediate response. Many of the community representatives preferred to engage with specific people rather than participate in a general community safety process, as they felt personal relationships with decision makers were more beneficial to their own communities.

Summary

There is no doubt that interface communities have suffered disproportionately in terms of the legacy of the conflict in comparison to other urban and rural parts of Northern Ireland. Furthermore, the evidence would also suggest that these communities would perceive there to have been minimal benefits either socially or economically since the onset of the peace and political processes. Therefore, the implementation of a community safety agenda not only has to contend with high rates of deprivation, but has also to incorporate manifestations of the conflict, such as sectarian violence, peace walls and insecurities around policing.

4.3.2 Experiences and Perceptions of Community Safety

From the discussions it was evident that there was no common framework of understanding about the delivery and implementation of community safety programmes and strategies over the past decade. Interviewees were asked to consider their previous experiences of engaging on community safety issues and comment on the successes, difficulties and challenges they encountered. The research analysis revealed several themes, which captured interviewee views, as outlined below.

District Policing Partnerships

District Policing Partnerships were established under the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, coming into practical operation in 2003 with a statutory monitoring functioning to hold the PSNI to account in terms of local views on policing; and according to the Policing Plan established by the NIPB; for obtaining cooperation between the public and the police; and acting as a general forum for policing more generally at a local level. However, several interviewees were both frustrated and critical of the role of DPPs within the context of community safety and policing. It was apparent from the research that interviewees' experiences and perceptions of DPPs were similar to those documented in the literature, as discussed in Chapter Two.

Format

There was a suggestion that DPPs from the outset were primarily structured in such a way which excluded many working-class communities. According to one interviewee, the public meetings were dominated by bureaucracy and 'facts and figures' and failed to connect with the needs of local communities:

> 'Basically the DPP meetings are not community friendly…they can be full of statistics and very formal and actually intimidate those maybe less confident or not as well educated as those sitting at the top table' (community representative).

It was noted that over the course of the last five years there had been attempts to make the public meetings more inclusive. However, according to respondents many residents from urban working class communities felt detached from DPPs and were reluctant to engage with them to address specific community safety concerns.

Representation

According to several respondents from a Unionist/Loyalist background there was a strongly held view that DPPs had failed to represent Loyalist working class communities and specifically failed to address their policing and community safety needs. A key contention of respondents was that both independent and political members were neither representative nor articulating the views of many urban working class communities:

> 'Look at the DPPs, there are no working class Loyalist representatives…Loyalist communities do not have a voice, nor can they access those levels of power' (community representative).

However, it was interesting to note that similar views and opinions were absent from discussions with those from the Republican community. Many of their political and independent members resided and worked within the neighbourhoods and communities, which they represented.

Delivery

It was apparent from the discussions with respondents that there existed a significant 'delivery gap' between what were the formal statutory functions of the DPPs; and how that meaningfully impacted at the community level in terms of effectively dealing with local policing issues. Indeed, the formulation of strategic policing priorities through the DPPs lacked, from a community perspective, an adequate connection to issues on the ground. This was captured by one respondent who noted that:

> 'The DPP priorities through the policing plans are not necessarily community issues' (community representative).

Furthermore, because of this delivery gap, local street and neighbourhood-level community forums under the auspices of community safety working were created to provide opportunities for local residents to more fully participate in the wider policing and community safety debate. In both Loyalist and Republican areas, it was generally held that:

> 'DPPs never had any teeth in terms of community input…but communities do have input into policing through their local community-based forums' (community representative).

Overall, while interviewees were positive about the overall concept of DPPs in terms holding the police to account. However, at the local level in areas suffering from multiple deprivation indices where issues of confidence and engagement with statutory bodies was limited, the positive impact of DPPs remained largely, absent.

Community Safety Partnerships

Following the Criminal Justice Review of 2000, CSPs were established under the Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002. They were based loosely on the equivalent legislation in England and Wales through the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to create multiagency partnerships as a means of addressing local community safety issues. However, discussions with respondents revealed that aspects of their format, concerns about their representation, and issues about their delivery processes called into question their overall impact beyond the public service agreements held by the DoJ as a measure of success. Once again, these views and opinions have been documented in previous research, as outlined in Chapter Two.

Format

In terms of the structures and format of CSPs, several respondents held the view that their top-down strategies and bureaucratic checks and balances rendered them distant and remote from the realities of community safety issues as experienced by communities on the ground. They pointed to the convergence of statutory body agendas and the clash of political ideologies as distracting from the community agenda and need:

> 'Community safety meetings just tick boxes, they are not pitched at the community level…they don't work in the interests of the community' (community representative).

Furthermore, it was felt that in terms of transparency and accountability the CSPs had failed to provide assurances that they where properly serving the needs and interests of the community. One respondent indicated that the fact CSPs where managed and administered from within councils failed to provide sufficient community access into the process:

> 'The administration and running of community safety partnerships should be based in the community and not in council buildings removed from community settings' (community representative).

It was also noted that CSPs were often dominated by politically informed decision-making, which in turn allowed councillors to take political ownership of the agenda. This often resulted in the community position and view being excluded from the final decision-making process:

> 'The CSPS are political…they are no use to grass roots community groups because they cant practically access them, they are too bureaucratic' (community representative).

It should be noted that interviewees acknowledged the positive contributions of CSPs to the community safety agenda in Northern Ireland. However, the optimism, which first met the introduction of CSPs, has clearly been replaced by cynicism of their role.

Representation

Beyond issues related to the format of CSPs and their relation to the community level, how communities were represented was also evident from the respondents. In terms of direct political representation, especially within Loyalist areas (and similarly to the DPPs), it was perceived that the views and concerns of local populations were not adequately represented or communicated within the CSP structures. As summarily noted by one such respondent:

> 'Working class communities are not represented…Unionist politicians do not represent the views of Loyalist working class communities' (community representative).

At a general level, it was also a strong theme from community respondents, as well as some statutory, that community concerns were further stifled by the fact the some of those bodies within the CSP structure were mainly there to fulfil obligations rather than commitment the necessary time, energy and resources to support a community-centred community safety agenda. And while many examples of good working relations based on personality between partner agencies were highlighted, the dominant theme around representation from respondents related to tokenism, insofar as:

> 'There is a perception that the statutory bodies are there simply because they have to be there' (statutory representative).

Overall, a clear message from the research on community representation within CSPs was a tendency for the community safety issues to remain strategic, dominated by

those within the macro-level, never truly embracing the needs of grass-roots communities.

Delivery

In the context of delivery, respondents from several Loyalist and Republican working class backgrounds were of the opinion that CSPs lacked a joined-up approach between the needs of the community; the individual skills of each member organisation; and the joining of that through a community safety framework:

> 'The current statutory bodies on the CSPs are not delivering on community safety issues in spite of the fact they are part of the community. As agencies, they only bring resources, not community knowledge' (community representative).

In view of the absence of a joined up approach between community safety organisational skills and local community needs it was perceived by respondents that it was a constant struggle to deliver tangible impacts within communities most at need:

> 'People at the community level are tired of community safety battles just to get simple stuff working' (community representative).

Furthermore, it was also contended by several respondents that those responsible for decision-making were absent from the point of delivery need within CSPs. This often led to long, drawn out processes, with perceived indecision and delay:

> 'There needs to be bodies who are much more joined up and who can make decision, such as someone from the PPS or PSNI who can make a decision around a table, not have to take that back up the chain' (statutory representative).

It was clear from the discussions that successful partnerships were built upon the notion of impact and making a positive difference within communities. However, beyond the processes, which have brought statutory and community groups together, their impact on the ground in the context of improving issues pertaining to community safety in urban working class communities is at best limited.

Community Safety Agendas

Over the last decade, the context of the community safety agenda in Northern Ireland has evolved, moving from beyond debates merely relating to policing, to incorporate a multitude of social, economic and political issues – as observed in the DoJ's consultation on community safety (2011). However, over the course of this development, it was perceived that tensions have existed between governmental, statutory and community bodies in relation to ownership of the community safety agenda. According to one respondent, the polarisation of views was most evident from the debate between Community Safety Unit within the NIO (now DoJ) and the policing institutions implementing community safety initiatives, whereby:

> 'Historically there may have been tension at the strategic level between the NIO and the NIPB about what exactly the community safety agenda was about, and what it was supposed to deliver' (statutory representative).

While such issues may be observed at the macro-level within the country, at a district council level, local political and policing agendas have further created tension that have impacted upon the implementation of community safety programmes. This was succinctly captured by one respondent, who discussed the complexities which surround responding to community safety issues at the local level – highlighting concern that any new initiatives would fail to move beyond the current *status quo* of engagement with 'the usual suspects'. As noted:

> 'In terms of the bigger politics of police/council interaction with communities, it's been in a safe pair for too long and this thinking has become entrenched. In this regard, community safety is not really about looking for new groups. So a revamp needed, not more of the same...' (community representative).

Thus, located within these local tensions, it was evident that a hierarchy of local agendas clouded community safety debates. And where the tensions between these differing agendas could not be resolved, statutory bodies often reverted to what were described as their 'default' position, which centred upon the delivery of individual organisational need within the CSP. This was clear from one respondent insofar as:

> 'When push comes to shove, [organisation] will of course fall back to accountability masters. But accountability in general has come too far. It is there and was necessary, but we now need to look at outcomes, not process – the question is when do we move on. Currently, all teeth with regard to accountability geared to PSNI, not statutory bodies' (statutory representative).

It was clear from discussions that agendas surrounding community safety have transformed and evolved over the past decade. The political sensitivities that once

dominated the community safety agenda have been replaced by agendas preoccupied with individual, organisational agendas motivated at least in part, by finance and accountability which has undoubtedly been detrimental the promotion and implementation of collective community safety agenda.

Community Contributions

A number of discussions were dominated by the theme of community and their role within the community safety framework. The conversations focused primarily on the role of the community and whether statutory bodies saw them as positive and necessary contributors to the successful implementation of community safety at the local level. While it was observed that many community and voluntary bodies did contribute to the delivery of community safety at the local level (see typology of community work), quite how that could be defined within the language of community safety from a statutory perspective was some what limited. A central issue was the expectations placed on the community to both support and actively participate in the delivery mechanisms that surround community safety programmes. According to one respondent, there was a tendency within service providers to view the community as willing contributors to the promotion and implantation of their policies:

> 'There is a perception that people think the community is a big driving force, but actually it isn't, as the community is usually one or two people, yet there are expectations that the community will do all the work' (statutory representative).

By the same token, it was also noted that statutory bodies have been reluctant to define and consider the nature of such work from a perspective other than their own:

> 'All the organisations and agencies use the term community, but there is a glass wall to full community participation, either because of status or funding. There has been no real consultation with the community over community safety' (community representative).

It was also noted that because of a lack of statutory knowledge and understanding of community contributions to the community safety landscape, there was a tendency towards broad-brush assumptions of the nature of such groups and the rationale for their involvement. In this regard, one respondent indicated that:

> 'The lumping together of groups together in terms of work is also a problem by statutory bodies. For example, one failed project from a government/council perspective is indicative of all Republican/Loyalist groups in the area when in fact this is not the case' (community representative).

Though interestingly, where community contributions suited specific goals and agendas of statutory bodies, there was a tendency to selectively embrace their work and complement it within their own frameworks:

> In the past [organisation] was attacked for its role, but now it is used as a convenient support post as part of the new agenda' (community representative).

Overall, while the research has highlighted that community organisations undoubtedly contribute to the community safety landscape, the extent to which that has been recognised and/or accredited by both the community itself and statutory bodies has been somewhat limited.

Funding

The discussion revealed that funding issues were integral to the implementation of a community safety agenda in Northern Ireland. However, an underlying theme which emerged related to the current financial climate, especially in relation to the issue of budgets which for so long, had remained protected throughout the years proceeding the various political settlements. Also of note was the allocation of funding for community safety activities to the community sector, which in general, was felt to be disproportionately weighted in favour of the funder's agenda rather than allocated solely on the basis of local need. In this regards:

> 'There is a perception of statutory bodies getting funding for community work, but it is always to their agenda, not that of the community. They don't see financial value of community work' (community representative).

This situation may be explained by the fact that statutory organisations themselves were clearly undergoing a period of financial retrenchment, limiting their capacity to contribute to the wider agendas of CSPs and local forums at a community level. As observed in this regard:

> 'In current financial climate, there will be extra pressure on stat bodies to supply staff time/resources' (statutory representative).

One respondent used the example of the West Belfast Community Safety Forum, which has been recognised and accredited for its approach to addressing community safety issues to highlight the problematic nature of funding – and the impact at the grassroots. And while receiving a small amount of funding from the DoJ, its success

was largely attributed to the number of volunteers and the breadth of community participation.

However, from a government perspective, it was held that within the current financial climate, so too communities had to be realistic with regard to the financial demands they placed upon statutory funders. This was especially in regard to the need for the community safety service and programmes they provided to fall within the remit of financial accountability frameworks. As noted by a statutory respondent,:

> '[organisation] recognizes that communities feel that money should be better spent 'on the ground', but a middle ground is needed in terms of accountability for public finances. The [organisation] also has to balance local 'want' with actual local 'need' which can vary greatly'.

Overall, there was a general consensus from respondents that future community safety initiatives would be dictated through financial agendas as opposed to a needs-based approach to community safety. But drawing positives from this however, it was also maintained that such financial constraints may act as a catalyst for more collective, 'joined-up' approaches to community safety – along with the sharing of resources in a more efficient manner between *all* relevant stakeholders within the community safety framework.

External Community Safety Frameworks

It was evident from the discussions with both statutory and community representatives, that through a combination of historical and political factors along with existing community safety and policing limitations (as noted above) that a number of community-based initiatives exist or existed outside the formal community safety framework. It was also noted that there were other examples of community forums and groups, which although aligned to the mainstream community safety agenda, also worked within their own tailored community safety framework. Respondents referred to the examples of the Colin Neighbourhood Partnership, the West Belfast Community Safety Forum and the Tigers Bay Community Safety Partnership as examples of hybrid community safety structures:

> 'The community safety forum within CNP gets monthly reports from DPPs/PSNI/CRJ/ safer neighbourhood project and probation. In this regard, there are positive relations with statutory agencies at this level, with minimum service agreements and a scrutiny panel for local community safety issues' (community representative).

Furthermore, although respondents recognised the valuable role of these hybrid community safety structures, there were concerns about the duplication of community safety programmes, and levels of joined-up working between community and statutory organisations:

> 'There is a problem of 26 drug and alcohol groups in my area alone, so coordination of community input can be tricky. This creates a dilemma in terms of how to coordinate' (community representative).

A further complicating factor, which relates to some of these hybrid programmes, is the level of influence that certain 'community representatives' have on the community safety agenda. There are a number of initiatives which were established during the emergence of the peace, and political processes, which involve individuals associated with the conflict. These same individuals have no need to participate in the formal community safety channels because of their direct links with members of the PSNI, senior civil servants and politicians. As one respondent, simply noted:

> 'There is no contact with CSPs/DPPs – it's straight to the local inspector' (community representative).

There is however, no doubting the positive impact that the majority of these external community safety forums and groups have had on the lives of local populations. A large number emerged out of a necessity related to the wider political transitions that surrounded policing and the dismantling of the paramilitary structures. But, within the new devolved policing and justice landscape, there is a need for greater collaboration and coherence on behalf of statutory bodies and the community to address the broad spectrum of community safety issues prevalent within communities.

Summary

In view of the variety of issues related to community safety in Northern Ireland, what the evidence points to is the complexity related to the implementation, impact, and delivery of community safety across the country. While the DPPs and CSPs were initially created as separate mechanisms to facilitate the political divisions associated with policing and community safety associated within the early post-Patten period, they have on an individual basis, been limited in terms of community safety set against the needs and expectations of grassroots communities. Collectively, they have also diluted efforts over the past decade to provide a coherent approach to community safety and policing, which in turn has created inconsistent pockets of practice between the PSNI, CSPs, DPPs and communities.

Especially within Loyalist and Republican communities, this fragmented landscape has failed to deliver on needs and expectations related to community safety at a local level. Indeed, it must be acknowledged that the legacy of the conflict and the country's transition has had a significant impact upon the design and delivery of community safety approaches – especially within urban, working-class Loyalist and Republican communities. As a result, a disparate range of community bodies and organisations have operated in parallel to the formal community safety strategies and structures set in place by the state. Therefore, within the newly devolved policing and justice environment, a key issue from the research is the need to move away from such duplication and facilitate a more collective approach to community safety issues – with quality of life concerns as a core focus. But set within this context, current financial constraints are limiting the extent to which the current landscape can be sustained – either from a statutory perspective in terms of meeting the variety of community safety demands made upon them; or from a community perspective in terms of statutory roles and responsibilities which can be provided from within a finite governmental budget.

Finally, while there has been significant progress over the past decade in relation to community safety and policing, there are undoubtedly new and emerging opportunities under the devolution of policing justice. The recent consultation on community safety illustrates the broad range of issues which impacts upon the health, safety and social well-being of local population. Likewise, the consultation has highlighted the diverse range of agencies and organisations, both statutory and community, required to respond to these multitude of issues. But as apparent from the

research, the key challenge will be coordinating, funding and responding to those issues in a manner which can harness the latent community safety capacities to meet those needs as part of our ever normalising landscape in the country.

4.3.3 Amalgamation of DPPs and CSPs

Discussions with interviewees then shifted away from a reflective discourse of community safety and policing towards one focused on the forthcoming merger of DPPs and CSPs in April 2012. Several themes emerged around the new PCSPs, including the opportunities for both community and statutory bodies; the challenges for the new structures; the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders; and the representation of political, statutory and community members. The following sections explores in more detail each of these themes.

Opportunities

Several respondents were of the opinion that the new structures were an opportunity to move away from the entrenched strategic and political positions which have underpinned the delivery of community safety and policing over the last decade. The move towards combining and unifying policing and community safety under the one body symbolises the significant progress that has been made as part of the ever-normalising policing environment. Respondent's held the view that these new structures would provide a new platform in which the community safety debate could move beyond the traditional police focus:

> Community safety maybe seen as cutting through old sectarian and political issues around policing. In this regard community safety can become a common denominator in NI. PCSPs can be viewed as facilitating this move (statutory representative).

It was also noted by interviewees that the new focus on community safety through PCSPs further provided a mechanism in which local communities could increase their knowledge and understanding about the multitude of agencies that are responsible for community safety at a local level. The respondents talked about a 'clean slate' in the context of the delivery of community safety programmes, and felt that there were new opportunities to reconnect with urban working class communities on issues prevalent within their areas. It was also suggested that with these new structures there was a need to prioritise community input and understanding of their role within the new community safety frameworks:

> There is a need for better education at a community level in relation to community responsibility around community safety issues…a process of empowerment is needed' (community representative).

Alongside the conversations about 'new opportunities' it was also noted that in spite of the DoJ consultation there were some perceptions that the community safety agenda had already been decided without adequate community contributions. Respondents indicated that the consultation was to some extent, tokenistic, and the opportunity to fully address over-arching community safety issues had been limited:

> 'There is a feeling that the new DoJ consultation is a consultation on decisions already made around community safety' (community representative).

Furthermore, a small number of interviewees were concerned that the new community safety structures, in an attempt to garner support from all quarters, would encompass too many agencies, and try to address too many issues which could broadly fall under the remit of community safety:

> 'The new PCSPs will try to keep everyone happy, but therefore get nothing done effectively' (community representative).

Overall there was distinct optimism from interviewees in relation to the potential for PCSPs to both provide a new start for the implementation of a community safety and policing agenda, and incorporate community, voluntary and statutory bodies into a robust and coherent structure previously absent in the last decade.

Challenges

In terms of challenges, it was apparent from respondents that PCSPs were faced with two key issues. Firstly, stakeholders, including statutory and community bodies, needed to actively participate within the new structures, something which was felt to be lacking under the previous mechanisms of the DPPs and CSPs. Furthermore, statutory bodies needed to be further challenged with regard to the use of their resources and expertise which produced tangible outcomes at a community level; and that communities needed to be challenged to become proactively involved in community safety initiatives and not simply 'expect' programmes to be delivered for them. Although within what were recognised as the physical and structural changes necessary to implement the PCSPs:

> 'The first year of PCSPs, will by their nature, by a year of transition and we must expect teething problems. There is no suggestion that PCSPs in general should do everything. But there is also a need to challenge communities on their perceptions and politics, especially where much community work is de facto entrenched along sectarian lines' (statutory representative).

Secondly, it was held that within the new PCSP arrangements, a key challenge would be how the different statutory agencies involved would deliver upon their community safety responsibilities; and in a manner which moved beyond the previous focus upon the PSNI's role to ensure that all agencies both contributed to, and were accountable for, their particular area of delivery. In this regard, is was held by a number of respondents that there needed to be careful management of PCSP partnership working, especially in relation to the absence of a statutory responsibility for agencies to incorporate community safety into their everyday functioning. This was captured by one interviewee who noted:

> 'The only person really held to account in CS is police. The concern is that new arrangements will continue to focus too much on the police. If the new structures are not managed correctly, everyone will fall back to default position of police with the police remaining at the centre' (statutory representative).

Another key contention from the interviews surrounded political participation within the new structures and their influence upon setting and implementing community safety agendas at a local level. Indeed, it was apparent that the majority of political representatives who would be involved in the new PCSPs arrangements would derive from either the DPPs or CSPs – limiting the extent to which new political capital

could be injected into the community safety framework. As suggested by a number of respondents during the research:

> 'There are concerns relating to political involvement and interference in PCSPs – it will be more of the same! Party politics at the strategic tier of the PCSPs is a concern as it can pervade the effectiveness of community safety if left unchecked. In this regard, there is a need to move away from individuals at a table' (statutory representative).

It was also held by several respondents that the amalgamation of community safety and policing agendas, if not managed correctly, had the potential to become constrained by the policy and procedure underpinning the variety of programmes encompassed with the DoJ's new vision for community safety in Northern Ireland. This was summarily evidenced by one respondent who was concerned that the place of communities would be side-lined at the expense of incorporating these programmes, insofar as:

> 'There are too many ideals lumped into DoJ consultation with all the agendas of neighbourhood renewal etc. Where there are too many agendas, they will overlap and the left hand won't know what the right hand is doing. PCSPs are not structured correctly to meet all these demands. In this regard, community safety will become too disparate in terms of competing agendas' (community representative).

Finally, it was apparent that concerns existed in relation whether the new PCSP arrangements would engender change at a community level in terms of creating an enabling environment in which greater levels of public participation could be engineered in comparison with the DPPs and CSPs. This was evident from community-level respondents, further reinforced by the views of one statutory respondent that:

> 'Currently, the model of the PCSPs doesn't change the community environment in terms of where the community fit in; and the community is not a strong feature of the new strategy in any new or better way. Relations between communities and community safety not really clearer. The community not written large and it's a huge challenge to map and engage with what is already there' (statutory representative).

Discussions related to challenges for the PCSPs were undoubtedly positive as none of the issues raised were seen to be insurmountable. It was suggested that a key challenge for the DoJ and NIPB related to the management of PCSPs, insofar as positive accounts of community safety success from interviewees were attributed to

individual efforts and personalities as opposed to any systematic, organisational approaches to the delivery of community safety initiatives.

Roles and Responsibilities

This area of the discussion related to the development of an understanding about the roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders in the new PCSPs. Several interviewees noted that the majority of stakeholders would benefit from participating in a re-education process about what exactly community safety was and what it entailed as part of DoJ's new approach and vision to community safety. It was felt that the 'community' were a key part of this process, as it was essential that their interpretations of community were aligned with the new community safety narrative being articulated by the DoJ. Historically, within urban working class communities, their views and approaches to community safety issues have been shaped and influenced by the conflict, where the first thought has often been for a security response to a community safety issue. However, within the newly devolved policing and justice landscape, community safety issues now require more holistic responses:

> 'The community too need to be educated on a number of levels. Many think that when they phone police, the buck stops there – they think the police either can or should deal with it' (statutory representative).

There was also a degree of concern surrounding the overall management and direction of community safety priorities and planning. Specifically, interviewees identified the potential for the NIPB and the DoJ to clash over their individual aims and objectives delivered through their own action plans. However, the DoJ have noted that under the new structures agreed working plans will be put in place. Yet, concerns still existed within some statutory quarters as to how this will be put into practice:

> 'PCSPs are a new partnerships which happen to bring together two functions. There will be joint NIPB and DOJ objectives, hopefully not in competition, but as objectives jointly set' (statutory representative).

Again, there was a high degree of optimism among interviewees as to the potential for the new community safety structures to address concerns about roles and responsibilities. However, equally there existed some caution insofar as that once in operation, stakeholders would revert back to their 'instincts' of protecting their own organisational interests.

Representation

In terms of representation, there were a number of concerns raised which related to the potential for policing to dominate the community safety agenda in Northern Ireland. Without a robust statutory framework to specifically define the role of individual agencies and stakeholders within the PCSP structures, it was deemed that PSNI, by virtue of the resources and status, would dominate the community safety agenda – and therefore what was represented through the new structures. As noted by one statutory respondent:

> 'The problem with the name of the PCSPs and the fact they use term policing. In this regard, they are following the wrong agenda' (statutory representative).

Furthermore, in respect of political input to the PCSPs, the fact that largely the same politicians from the DPPs and CSPs would be involved; and by statute, have political majority within the new structures, the representation of independent or alternative perspectives on community safety was questioned. Indeed, the politicisation of community safety was a key concern from numerous respondents (as already noted above) where that was not properly managed or counter-balanced. As stated by one respondent:

> 'There is a risk of continuing political agenda because there is no significant alteration to the political representation of the new structures. There is a danger of the politicisiation of PCSPs because of the dominant numbers of politicians' (community representative).

Specifically for Loyalist, working-class communities, the issue of representation was raised in terms of how those specific views would be articulated within either the new community safety structures or strategies. Thus, the research evidenced a significant disconnect between internal Loyalism and Unionist politicians, specifically in regard to policing and community safety. As voiced by one such interviewee:

> 'Representation on PCSPs is a major concern in view of working class loyalist representation at present' (community representative).

In general, the research flagged up significant concern regarding the potential place of independent views; and the level of impact independent members could actually have on local community safety agendas – especially set against what will be a political domination of the new PCSP structures.

Summary

This section has provided an opportunity to explore the views, thoughts and perceptions of a range of stakeholders with regard to the amalgamation of DPPs and CSPs as part of the community safety framework. There was a general consensus, that within the context of the proposed new community safety structures that opportunities existed to shape the future of community safety in the country and improve upon that which had been laid through the DPPs and CSPs over the past decade.

As part of the 'streamlining' opportunity provided through the new PCSPs, a number of challenges were evident from the research. These concerns primarily focused the management of the PCSPs structures; along with issues as to whether PCSPs could facilitate improved input and delivery from statutory and community stakeholders. Aside from the immediate challenges, the research also alluded to the need to define more fully, the roles and responsibilities of community stakeholders. Indeed, a key concern was that the community safety strategy, as delivered through the PCSPs, would be perceived as a conduit for a range of governmental programmes of action without adequately considering the potential limitations of stakeholder input. Related to this, is was also of note that many of the aspirations set fourth by the DoJ would falter within the management of the new environment – and especially where political agendas were allowed to unduly influence community safety agendas at a local level.

Overall, there was a great sense of optimism about the amalgamation of DPPs and CSPs. It was accepted that the first year of the PCSPs would be a period of transition and learning. In general, respondents also acknowledged the complexities which underpinned the streamlining of the community safety agenda in Northern Ireland. And where the lessons from the DPPs and CSPs could be learned, it was felt that the PCSPs would provide an excellent vehicle through which a new era of community safety could be delivered into the next decade.

5.0 Conclusion & Recommendations

In view of the research, it has presented an opportunity to both examine and document the evolution of community safety policy, practice and development over the past decade. The review of literature and policy around community safety captured the significant societal and political changes which have simultaneously contributed to, and shaped circumstances underpinning the evolution of, the broader community safety environment. It must be noted that while principles and policies around community safety have generally existed in Northern Ireland through the NIO (and now DoJ), their 'place' has tended to be side-lined in favour of the attention afforded to changes associated with the police and policing institutions in the post-Patten era. However, since the devolution of policing and justice in the country, the DoJ has reinvigorated the community safety agenda, capitalising upon the new-found local autonomy to tailor community safety policy to local circumstances; and build on the successes associated with the country's ever normalising landscape. And while the research has undoubtedly raised questions related to the delivery of a 'new' community safety agenda through the PCSPs, it must also be noted that opportunities now exist to build upon experiences of the DPPs and CSPs – and drive forward an agenda commensurate with the vision of the DoJ and support at a community level.

Beyond the literature, the research generated a number of findings through discussions with representatives of the community, voluntary and statutory sector engaged in addressing community safety at a local level. The four case studies provided a unique insight in the workings of community-based initiatives in response to policing and community safety issues. They highlighted the levels of community expertise associated with responding to those issues which impact upon the health and social well-being of local populations; while locating the impacts and benefits of such activity within a wider community safety framework.

Aside from the case-study analysis, discussions with interviewees revealed the complexities which surround the implementation of a community safety agenda. Indeed, previous experiences of engagement by (mainly) urban, working-class Loyalist and Republican communities on community safety issues have historically been shaped by the legacy of the conflict – namely, the legitimacy of the police, interface violence and the existence of paramilitary organisations. However, the findings illustrate the strength and resilience communities have shown in terms of

being both flexible within, and reactive to, the evolving community safety environment over the past ten years. The key aspects of the research are based primarily around capacity and empowerment, along with development of partnerships between grass-roots initiative and service providers. Indeed, there is an acceptance from all stakeholders as part of the process of community safety that joined-up working and collaboration is necessary to delivery positive impacts at a local level. However, it was apparent in responses from community activists that their role in addressing community safety issues has often gone un-noticed or un-recognised by statutory organisations, at least at an official level of discourse. Furthermore, the research has highlighted the growing demands placed upon communities to become active participants within the delivery of the devolved community safety agenda.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the optimism surrounding the future of community safety in Northern Ireland under the devolution of policing and justice; and opportunities through a new community safety strategy; along delivery mechanisms through the PCSPs. With previous issues associated with the conflict having largely diminished in the face of substantial political progress over the past decade, a certain degree of 'normality' pervaded the debates and responses surrounding the implementation of community safety across Northern Ireland. In this regard, the prospective, new arrangements relating to a shared community safety landscape presents opportunities anew to discuss fresh and innovative approaches to basic issues that have previously remained frozen as part of the politics of policing and security associated with the past.

Recommendations

In view of the research findings a number of recommendations emerged, which have been documented below:

1. It may be appropriate to consider greater incentives for community involvement in community safety programmes. The research highlighted the difficulties with encouraging local participation in community safety processes. Therefore, training, internships, accredited courses, child care provision and accommodation of other family needs should be considered;

2. It may be necessary to take steps to more formally recognise and quantify the contributions of community led, community safety programmes outside traditional police centric measure of crime;

3. It is important to acknowledge the continuing fragility which surrounds the lives and experiences of those living in interface communities. It is imperative that future community safety agendas are tailored to meet those specific needs and not become subsumed under a broad community safety agenda;

4. To develop innovative, less bureaucratic means of both providing funding and assessing the impact of community safety programmes outside the current parameters of statutory frameworks;

5. To consider the inherent difficulties associated with the DPPs and CSPs and make necessary adjustments as part of the functioning of the new PCSP structures;

6. To ensure that PCSPs are not over burdened with a variety of social, economic and political issues which comprise a community-safety agenda.

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