

**REPORT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS
APRIL 2009 – MARCH 2010**



NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

DPP EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT FOR YEAR 2009/10

Background

The Northern Ireland Policing Board [the Board] has statutory responsibilities¹ to:

- Assess the effectiveness of District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) in performing their statutory duties; and
- Assess the level of public satisfaction with the performance of the DPPs.

To fulfil these requirements the Board undertakes an ongoing performance assessment of each DPP and Belfast Sub-Group against an agreed DPP Effectiveness Framework², and also commissions the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) to conduct a biennial DPP Public Consultation Survey.

Detail

For year 2009/10 DPPs were assessed against effectiveness targets in the following areas;

1. Consultation with the public,
2. Identify local policing priorities,
3. Monitoring police performance,
4. Engaging with the community,
5. Acting as a general forum for discussion and
6. Complying with statutory obligations as public authorities.

A summary of performance against key areas within the DPP Effectiveness Framework is set out below.

¹ Section 3(3)(d) (ii) and (iii) of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 (as amended)

² Belfast DPP has its own Effectiveness Monitoring Framework to reflect its particular role.

1. Consultation with the community

DPPs consult with communities to define what the community wants from its local police service.

DPP performance in this key area was assessed using the following Effectiveness Framework target;

- Target 2.1.1 - To provide the Policing Board with an Annual DPP Consultation Report by 31 October 2009

The Consultation Report summarises the outcomes from the DPP's programme of engagement and consultation. The document is used by both the local police Commander and the Policing Board to inform the priorities for the local and NI Policing Plan.

In 2009/10 all but one DPP/Belfast Sub-Group met this target.

During this reporting period, DPPs have continued to seek new and innovative ways to find out what the policing issues are affecting the local community. These have included:

- Focus groups
- Community events
- Innovative outreach work.

For example;

- In conjunction with Banbridge CSP and PSNI Banbridge Area, Banbridge DPP produced a Rural Crime Prevention Information Leaflet, which aimed to engage with and raise awareness amongst the general public in rural and farming communities. The leaflets were then widely distributed amongst members of the public who attended the Mullahead and District Ploughing Society event held in February 2010, and this new initiative also received the support of the local publication "Farming Life".

- Derry DPP made a number of visits to local post-primary schools during 2009/10 to engage with pupils in Year 11 Citizenship classes who were participating in projects on sectarianism and hate crime. DPP Members participated in the general discussion during the classes and in a question and answer session with the students. The Derry DPP Members reported that these sessions helped them to better understand issues affecting young people. Pupils present completed a questionnaire as part of the DPP's consultation process, the results of which formed part of Derry DPP's priorities for local policing in year 2010/11.
- Dungannon and South Tyrone DPP held a number of focus group meetings during the reporting period with individuals and organisations representing people with disabilities or special needs, to engage with them and ascertain their views and priorities regarding the policing of the area. Examples of those who participated in focus group meetings are members of a Tinnitus Support Group, members of the 'Hear and There' Hearing Impaired Group, members of the Diabetes UK Voluntary Association, and individual members of the general public with physical disabilities, sensory impairments and mental health needs.

2. Identification of local policing priorities

Having consulted with members of the public regarding the policing of the district, DPPs identify the key priorities to inform the development of the Local Policing Plan and input to the strategic priorities for consideration by the Policing Board and PSNI in agreeing the NI Policing Plan.

DPPs performance in this area is assessed using the following Effectiveness Framework target:

- Target 3.1.1 - To recommend to the Policing Board the DPP priorities for the NI Policing Plan and to the Area Commander for the local Policing Plan by 30 September 2009.

A total of 21 DPPs and Belfast Sub-Groups met this target in 2009/10.

The top five issues which DPPs/Belfast Sub-Groups identified were;

1. Anti-Social Behaviour (including underage drinking, youths causing annoyance, vandalism, criminal damage etc).
2. Drugs.
3. Neighbourhood Policing.
4. Domestic Burglary and Theft.
5. Road Traffic Offences and Violent Crime.

During each autumn and through to the New Year, DPPs engage with the local Police Commander to ensure that the community's priorities shape the development of the local Policing Plan for the area. An Example of consultation and negotiation between DPPs and local PSNI Commanders in this respect during 2009/10 is:

- Derry DPP forwarded the results of their DPP consultation exercise to the local PSNI Area Commander as a basis for discussion on establishing the priorities for the Local Policing Plan. Following subsequent negotiation, Derry DPP Members were pleased to be advised that the Commander had agreed to include a new qualitative target in relation to public satisfaction and confidence within the new Local Policing Plan.

During the 2009/10 year the Board with support from PSNI provided training for DPP Members on Local Policing Plans/Monitoring Police Performance/Strategic Questioning and PSNI Crime Recording Procedures. Six separate training events were held at different venues across Northern Ireland during September and October 2009, which were attended by approximately 231 DPP Members.

3. Monitoring police performance

A key component of police oversight is the public meetings of DPPs to monitor how well the PSNI perform against the targets set out in the Local Policing Plan. These meetings also provide the public with an the opportunity to ask questions of the police service on all aspects of policing and crime

DPP performance in this area was assessed using the following targets;

- Target 4.1.1 - To report to the Policing Board following 6 and 12 month PSNI reports on DPPs assessment of performance against the Local Policing Plan

A total of 18 DPPs and sub-groups met this target for the first 6 month report which was assessed during this reporting period.

- Target 5.1.1 - DPPs to promote and hold quarterly meetings in public to monitor local police performance

All DPPs/Belfast Sub-Groups met this target in year 2009/10.

- Target 6.1.2 - DPP to request the Area Commander to report at 6 and 12 months on measures taken to support the implementation of Policing with the Community and to report this to the Board at 6 12 months as part of the DPP assessment of police performance

As previously reported at target 4.1.1 above, a total of 18 DPPs and sub-groups reported monitoring and assessing measures to support the implementation of Policing with the Community.

From the 18 reports received by the Board; 7 DPPs assessed the implementation of Policing with the Community in their area as 'Excellent', 7 DPPs reported it as 'Good', 2 DPPs reported a 'Fair' assessment and 2 DPPs did not make an overall assessment.

4. Community Engagement

This is a core function of all DPPs. In order to fulfil their community engagement role, DPPs work with the PSNI and other relevant bodies and agencies, including the voluntary and community sector, to carry out a diverse range of programmes and initiatives to not only engage the wider community but also deliver key policing-related messages.

DPP performance in this area was assessed using the following targets;

- Target 7.1.3 - To develop and implement a programme of engagement within the community to gain the co-operation of the public in preventing crime and report annually on this area of work in the DPP Annual Report

All but one DPP/Belfast Sub-Group met this target in the 2009/10 reporting year.

Some examples of engagement reported in DPP Annual Reports for reporting year 2009/10 were;

- Lisburn DPP worked in partnership with Dunmurry PSNI, Colin Safer Neighbourhood and local off-licence retailers to support the launch of a scheme called “NO ID, NO SALE” to help tackle the problem of underage drinking in the area. The DPP reports that this initiative was so successful that it has since been rolled-out across the city.
- Strabane DPP hosted a “Respect on the Roads” young drivers’ education day, which was supported by the PSNI, NI Fire and Rescue Service, NI Ambulance Service and NI Prison Service. This was a hard-hitting road safety event which was attended by over 240 students across the Strabane District Council area, and highlighted the real dangers arising from driving with excess

speed, careless driving and driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

The Policing Board introduced the following additional target into the effectiveness framework for year 2009/10 to assess the work undertaken by DPPs particularly with communities that have not engaged with the police in the past.

- Target 7.1.4 - To provide the Policing Board with at least two examples in 12 month period of engagement or attempts to engage with a “hard to reach/not previously engaged” community stakeholder group
A total of 14 DPPs/Belfast Sub-Groups met this target during the reporting period.

Groups identified included;

- Victims of crime,
- Young people,
- Young Loyalists/Young Republicans,
- A Lesbian/Gay/Bi-Sexual/Transgender [LGBT] Group,
- Women’s Groups,
- A Carer’s Forum, and
- The Travelling Community.

DPPs are also supporting the police to deliver the Neighbourhood Policing programme, and are measured against this area using the following target;

- Target 6.1.1 - DPP Members to attend at least 2 engagements with Neighbourhood Policing Teams in 12 month period in order to inform DPP priorities for policing and monitoring of police performance
All but one DPP/Belfast Sub-Group met this target in 2009/10.

Work underway by DPPs in this important area is very encouraging, and there was evidence of significant improvement in engagement between DPP

Members, officers from PSNI Neighbourhood Policing Teams and the local community.

5. General Forums for Discussion

All DPPs must provide members of their community with the opportunity to engage with the police to discuss any concerns they may have on policing issues. To do this, DPPs should hold at least two discussion forums each year, which may be themed on a particular concern in the community or one of the key areas within the Local Policing Plan.

DPP performance in this area was assessed using the following targets;

- Target 5.1.3 - The DPP to increase attendance at meetings in public and DPP Discussion Forums and report to the Board by 30 April 2010 (Average attendance of 2006/7, 2007/8 and 2008/9 figure to be used as a baseline).

A total of 18 DPP and Belfast Sub-Groups met this target in the 2009/10 reporting year.

In some areas DPPs reported a drop in public attendance during the 2009/10 reporting year. However, total public attendance increased significantly in year 2009/10 when taken across all DPPs and Belfast Sub-Groups; rising to a reported total of 6,540 in the 2009/10 year against a reported figure of 4,031 in year 2008/09 [an increase of approximately 62%].

- Target 8.1.1 - To hold at least 2 discussion forums per year to discuss policing issues identified through consultation and engagement with the community.

All DPPs/Belfast Sub-Groups met this target in 2009/10.

6. Compliance with statutory obligations

DPPs are designated as 'public authorities' and are therefore subject to the statutory duties placed on them by for example Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006.

It is also a legislative requirement that each DPP must submit an Annual Report to their respective Council and to the Northern Ireland Policing Board by 30 June each year, apart from Belfast DPP which must submit an Annual Report by 31 July each year.

The Board monitored DPPs' compliance with their statutory duties during this reporting period using the following targets;

- Target 9.1.1 - To submit an Annual Report to District Council and the Policing Board on the operation of the DPP by 30th June 2010.
All but one DPP/Belfast Sub-Group met this target in 2009/10.

- Target 9.2.1 - To provide a summary of compliance with the statutory obligations placed on the DPP as a public authority by 30 April each year.

A total of 22 DPPs met this target for year 2009/10.

Belfast DPP

Belfast DPP has its own effectiveness framework to reflect its particular role and the governance arrangements in place with regard to the four Belfast Sub-Groups.

Summary

To summarise DPP and Belfast Sub-Groups' performance against targets contained within the 2009/10 Effectiveness Framework;

- A total of 20 DPPs and Belfast Sub-Groups met between 10 and 12 of the 13 targets assessed,
- 8 DPPs met either 8 or 9 targets from the 13 targets assessed, and
- 1 DPP met less than 7 targets from the 13 targets assessed during the 2009/10 reporting period.

Key issues arising from the 2009/10 effectiveness assessment were;

Consultation

The identification of local priorities within their respective areas has been, and continues to be, one of the real strengths of the work which District Policing Partnerships undertake as part of their statutory functions. For this reporting period DPPs again provided the Board with evidence to show how Members continue to seek new and innovative ways in which to engage their communities, some examples of which were outlined above.

Engagement

There was evidence of significant improvement in engagement between DPP Members, officers from PSNI Neighbourhood Policing Teams and the local community, which is of course very encouraging. However some work still remains to be done by DPPs in relation to those groups within their area who have not to this point engaged with the DPP. Progress in this very important area appears to be inconsistent across the DPP network, and all DPPs should ensure that they continue to prioritise this work and to fully utilise all engagement opportunities which arise with such groups in the future.

Identification of local policing priorities

There were good examples cited of successful negotiation between DPPs and local PSNI Commanders in agreeing priorities for inclusion within Local Policing Plans. However, issues did arise for some DPPs in relation to the final published format of Local Policing Plans [PSNI having taken a corporate

approach in relation to their design] and also around DPP requests that qualitative targets be included in Local Policing Plans.

Monitoring police performance

A number of DPPs reported to the Board that although there may be support 'on the ground' locally for the work undertaken by local Neighbourhood Policing Teams [NPTs] within their areas, there was a danger that this good work could be undermined because of ongoing issues around PSNI call-handling processes, extraction of officers from NPT duties and the resourcing of NPTs.

Northern Ireland Policing Board

January 2011