



BUSINESS CRIME

A FOLLOW-UP REVIEW OF HOW
THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM
DEALS WITH BUSINESS CRIME
IN NORTHERN IRELAND

NOVEMBER 2020

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATM	Automated Teller Machine
BCCM	Belfast City Centre Management
BCP	Business Crime Partnership
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CJI	Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland
DoJ	Department of Justice
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
IT	Information Technology
NBCC	National Business Crime Centre
Niche RMS	Records Management System developed by Niche Technology Inc. used by the PSNI
NPCC	National Police Chiefs' Council
NIPB	Northern Ireland Policing Board
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
OBA	Outcome Based Accountability
PCSP(s)	Policing and Community Safety Partnership(s)
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
RACNI	Retailers Against Crime Northern Ireland
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound objectives or targets
UK	United Kingdom

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CHIEF INSPECTOR'S FOREWORD

The need for effective partnerships between the business community and the Police Service of Northern Ireland this year have never been as important nor tested so much than during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The significant impact on our economy, particularly on the hospitality and commercial sector, has drawn policing into a space never imagined. The safety of business owners, their staff and customers has rightly needed to be prioritised against the anti-social and unlawful activity of others. The prevalence of closed business premises for long periods of time has brought its own challenges.

Progress has been made on all recommendations and this has supported the business community and the Police Service of Northern Ireland's response to the challenges since March 2020.

Sustaining and developing the Business Crime Partnership and delivering outcomes against their action plan, as well as highly effective local relationships between the police and the business community, will be key during each phase of the Covid-19 pandemic and recovery, as new challenges emerge with the likelihood of economic downturns and increased unemployment.

I am grateful to Tom McGonigle for completing his last review with CJI and all those who contributed and supported his work.



Jacqui Durkin

Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice
in Northern Ireland

November 2020

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND TO THE FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJI) published a report *'How the Criminal Justice System deals with Business Crime in Northern Ireland'* in October 2017¹. The key findings of the inspection were:

- there had been successes in reducing serious business crime, such as tiger kidnaps. Other business crime categories were also reducing, with the exception of shoplifting;
- business crime was significantly under-reported for a variety of reasons, including negative perceptions of the Police Service of Northern Ireland's (PSNI's) ability to respond to calls, previous experience of reporting to police and possible reputational risks for businesses;
- the strategic relationship between organisations representing the business community and the police was well established. However good performance at an operational level was often personality-based with Crime Prevention Officers or within Neighbourhood (now Local and Neighbourhood Policing Teams) police;
- a Rural Crime Partnership had been in place for a number of years and appeared to be effective in addressing matters such as the theft of agricultural equipment and cross-border crime;
- some positive initiatives were in place such as schemes to share information about people who perpetrated crime against retailers;
- a Business Crime Action Plan had been published in June 2016, though it was not sufficiently outcome-focused;
- business crime did not feature specifically in the Northern Ireland Policing Plan or in most local policing plans;
- the process of evidence collection and case-building was challenging for the police when crimes were not reported promptly or when closed circuit television (CCTV) footage and retailers' record-keeping were of poor quality;
- a particular issue was raised about 'Making Off Without Payment' by motorists who did not pay for fuel. This was often done in error rather than in an attempt to deliberately evade payment. Work was ongoing to reduce the inappropriate burden of such civil debt collection on the police;
- lack of a definition of 'business crime' meant analysis was difficult. Consequently statistics and outcome rates were only available for a small number of crimes that related specifically to businesses; and

1 CJI, *How the Criminal Justice System deals with Business Crime in Northern Ireland*, October 2017, available online at <http://www.cjini.org/getattachment/f3c64bbb-db99-474b-b41c-e7b863fe391c/report.aspx>.

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- businesses highlighted issues about victimisation that were similar to those raised in other CJI inspections. In particular they felt that business crime was considered as 'victimless' by the criminal justice system. Persistent offenders were a concern for them, especially when they were perceived to receive minimal sanctions.

The inspection report made two strategic and four operational recommendations for improvement and PSNI implementation.

The purpose of this review is to assess progress in implementing the recommendations since October 2017.

CHANGES SINCE THE 2017 INSPECTION

The Business Crime Partnership

The current format of the Business Crime Partnership (BCP) was constituted in 2018. It includes representatives from business umbrella groups - Northern Ireland Retail Consortium, Federation of Small Businesses Northern Ireland, Retail Northern Ireland, Trading Standards, Retailers Against Crime Northern Ireland (RACNI), Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) – as well as the PSNI, Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) and Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs). It is chaired by the Department of Justice (DoJ) which also provides administrative support.

The BCP's purpose is to ensure criminal justice agencies engage with business umbrella groups to hear members concerns, as well as allowing police to share messaging around crime prevention and investigation.

Minutes of BCP meetings reflect active engagement and positive leadership by the DoJ and the PSNI. There have been on average 12 people in attendance at each quarterly meeting, applying a good focus to current issues.

The minutes reflect understanding of business perspectives, for example, the police and the DoJ recognise their responses must be proportionate to business needs, such as the capacity of employers with low employee numbers to afford lengthy suspensions of suspected fraudulent employees, when deciding whether or not to report criminal activity.

There is also recognition of business community concerns about matters such as sentencing, granting bail and delays in the court process - which are wider concerns for the criminal justice system. Businesses are encouraged to engage constructively with the wider criminal justice system, for example, by responding to a consultation which was undertaken as part of the 2020 Review of the Northern Ireland Sentencing Framework.

Tangible examples were provided of BCP benefits. For example, the PSNI Business Crime lead arranged a meeting for business representatives with Organised Crime Branch Detectives, who explained how they were dealing with a spate of Automated Teller

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Machine (ATM) robberies. The BCP was also able to identify a trend in meat thefts from retail outlets across Northern Ireland and arrange a co-ordinated response, whereas they might otherwise have been dealt with as isolated incidents.

During the Covid-19 pandemic a PSNI Assistant Chief Constable had, at the time of writing, chaired three separate meetings with businesses, at local and regional levels, in order to address immediate and long-term impact. Abuse of retail staff was the main concern, along with protecting empty premises and cybercrime. The BCP led on reinforcing key messages such as the importance of reporting business crime and respect for shop workers.

In May 2018 the BCP partners launched a support website² and an information technology (IT) application to assist digital reporting.

Other developments have included deployment of an additional two Police Officers in Belfast city centre in summer 2019, bringing the total to four dedicated Police Officers. These two officers are jointly-funded by the DoJ, Business Improvement Districts and Belfast City Council. They join the existing team of two Officers who have been responding to quality of life needs of the business community since 2005. This scheme was established by BCCM and continues to be managed by them. The four Officers cover the wider city centre encompassing the three city centre Business Improvement Districts, operating shift patterns that suit the needs of city centre businesses; and their mobile telephone numbers are available to all businesses to enable a rapid response.

The NIPB said the PSNI Crime Prevention Unit has proven to be a proactive partner at regional level on the BCP, leading on business crime initiatives and providing guidance for retailers; and at local level, involving PCSPs in addressing business crime within local government district and council areas.

The PSNI, the DoJ, and RACNI all said the BCP is working very well and making a positive contribution to dealing with business crime.

The follow-up review

This follow-up review was primarily undertaken through interviews and analysis of documentation. All members of the BCP were invited to contribute. Face-to-face interviews were conducted in the early stages. Following the introduction of restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, subsequent interviews were conducted remotely.

The review assesses the recommendations and sub-recommendations of the 2017 CJJ report sequentially.

² *Business Crime Partnership – Tackling Business Crime Together* available at www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/business-crime

CHAPTER 2: **PROGRESS AGAINST RECOMMENDATIONS**

*'A safer and more competitive Northern Ireland to do business – A Business Crime Action Plan'*³ was revised and published in May 2018, seven months after the CJI report. The Plan took account of the CJI recommendations, for example by setting targets to:

- publish PSNI analysis of business crime statistics and victim update figures;
- develop and conduct a bi-annual business crime survey, which would provide data at local council level; and
- policing districts were to develop a knowledge and understanding of high volume and repeat offenders and ensure that they would be targeted in terms of prevention, intelligence and enforcement options.

In June 2018 the PSNI provided an update on progress in relation to the CJI recommendations.

During the suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly between January 2017 and January 2020 there was no legally-constituted NIPB to scrutinise the PSNI response to business crime in the normal way through their committee processes.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION 1

The PSNI should adopt a crime prevention strategy, within six months of this report, which is designed to ensure a consistent, long-term and outcome-based approach to crime prevention.

Status: Achieved

Inspectors' assessment

The current *'PSNI Crime Prevention Strategy 2025'* (the strategy) is a high-level document and business crime is not specified. However crimes which affect businesses, such as cybercrime and serious and organised crime, are addressed in the strategy. They are also referenced in various other strategic documents and initiatives for example:

³ Business Crime Partnership, *A safer and more competitive Northern Ireland to do business – Business Crime Action Plan*, May 2018 available at <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/justice/business-crime-action-plan-may-2018.pdf>

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- strategic priorities 3.1 and 3.2 of the 2019-20 Annual Policing Plan for Northern Ireland (*'Identify and intervene with Priority Offenders'* and *'Tackle Serious and Organised Crime'*) were both relevant to business crime, and are subject to measurement using an Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) methodology;
- several PCSPs have specific measures to address business and retail crime. These include Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) marking programmes for machinery, town centre CCTV provision, business crime clinics and a project to help businesses develop a cyber security strategy;
- the Chief Constable's Report to the NIPB on 6 February 2020 reported specifically on business crime during the preceding Christmas holiday period;
- the PSNI website has a dedicated business crime page;⁴
- there are specific, business-relevant targets at local policing level for example, Newry, Mourne and Down, Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Policing Plans for 2017-18 each contained a target to *'Improve awareness of agricultural and rural crime in collaboration with partner agencies;'*
- the Community Safety Framework for Northern Ireland aims to engage PCSPs in a way that facilitates rapid adaptation to current local crime trends; and
- the NIPB agreed in March 2020 with the DoJ proposal for the introduction of a multi-agency Community Safety Board. It is expected to make a contribution to tackling business crime.

The Northern Ireland Policing Plan 2020-25 was launched in March 2020. It aligns to the draft Programme for Government and utilises an OBA model. All crime types were considered in development of the plan, and are to feature in the NIPB's performance monitoring. Indicators which are especially relevant for the business community include:

- fewer repeat victims of crime; and
- fewer repeat offenders of crime.

The NIPB said the current crime prevention strategy represents a more targeted approach than previously. As the NIPB is represented on the Business Crime Partnership, it is felt that any specific business-related concerns can be raised if necessary.

As such, while the letter of this recommendation may not have been fully achieved, there has been progress in delivering its spirit in relation to business crime.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION 2

The PSNI should, in the six months following this report, develop a process whereby Officers in all policing districts are able to fully utilise opportunities to detect and investigate crimes committed against retailers by using intelligence sharing schemes, which are underpinned by sound data protection and governance procedures.

Status: Achieved

4 Available at https://www.psni.police.uk/advice_information/business-crime/

Inspectors' assessment

This recommendation related to the PSNI making better use of information provided by schemes such as RACNI and RetailWatch, to target prolific shoplifters. In 2017 there were concerns expressed to Inspectors that the PSNI was missing opportunities to clear crimes because they failed to use intelligence that was shared with them. Examples were given of concurrent investigations being conducted by different police districts into the same offenders, thus missing linkages between travelling crime gangs who deliberately moved around in order to avoid detection.

The 2018 Business Crime Action Plan said *'Promotion of information sharing and enforcement schemes, such as Retail Crime Watch, to police districts. The PSNI have recently reviewed Information Sharing Agreements with retail umbrella groups to ensure a corporate position is taken with these organisations. This collaborative working has been bolstered by a pilot project involving images of offenders of retail theft being shared with retail umbrella groups in a bid to identify these persons.'*

In its June 2018 assessment, the PSNI said it was continuing to support intelligence schemes through RACNI and BCCM and that information sharing had yielded notable success in identifying people who were involved in acquisitive crime.

The PSNI also pointed out that information sharing has evolved to an online platform where retailers can access a secure members' area that contains images, as well as emerging crime trends for Belfast. Robust agreements are in place to facilitate information sharing. This has also included opportunities for the police to be assisted by industry in locating missing people.

Scoping exercises were conducted with the Metropolitan Police and the United Kingdom (UK) National Business Crime Centre (NBCC) to identify and implement best practice in relation to information sharing. The PSNI said that, while they are willing to share information within the boundaries permitted by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), it is logistically difficult for them to do so with a variety of representative bodies. They believe they require a single representative body with whom they can share information appropriately.

The RACNI organisation gathers and shares intelligence about retail offenders and their techniques. They place considerable emphasis on a strong working relationship with the criminal justice system, and in particular the PSNI. RACNI contributed to this review and said there have been important developments since the 2017 inspection. These include:

- a comprehensive Information Sharing Agreement is now in place between RACNI and the PSNI;
- PSNI Officers, including operational and command level Officers, attended all RACNI area meetings at the time of this follow-up review. Their attendance has been very helpful in terms of sharing information, communicating with the retail sector and also to convey that business crime is a priority for the police; and

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- RACNI staff are now involved in briefing and helping to train PSNI Officers on sharing information about retail crime. They have provided intelligence and data which has led to significant arrests of prolific offenders.

RACNI also said information sharing has been facilitated through the BCP. They are members of the Scamwise and Cybercrime partnerships,⁵ which facilitate information sharing and are chaired by the PSNI. RACNI said the closer professional relationships which have developed should enhance efforts to address business crime and ensure it remains a priority for the criminal justice system.

This assessment is all the more positive as RACNI was critical of the PSNI approach to information sharing when CJI last inspected.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 1

The PSNI should ensure appropriate succession planning for key roles, as part of the crime prevention strategy, to maintain a long-term engagement with internal and external stakeholders.

Status: Achieved

Inspectors' assessment

In June 2018 the PSNI appointed strategic leads at Chief Superintendent and Superintendent levels for a number of core areas including business crime and rural crime. They meet quarterly with representatives from other police branches such as cybercrime, organised crime, crime prevention and corporate communications. These meetings helped ensure that all business crime activity was assessed centrally within the PSNI. The structure is appropriate for maintaining the profile of business crime, irrespective of the individuals occupying the lead roles.

The PSNI business crime lead is supported by a small team, including specialists such as a crime analyst and architectural design adviser, when necessary.

Business crime is now a core element of the Belfast District Commander's role and the current incumbent has been in post since autumn 2017. The District Commander for Ards and North Down is the lead for rural crime. In terms of succession planning, the business and rural crime responsibilities will continue to attach to these portfolios when current post holders move on and new Officers are appointed.

The business crime lead role entails collaboration with external stakeholders. There is no designated counterpart in An Garda Síochána, but there are effective links; and the PSNI participates in the UK NBCC events.

⁵ The ScamwiseNI Partnership advises businesses and individuals how to avoid scams. The National Cyber Security Centre Cyber-Security Information Sharing Partnership (CiSP) is an online community for Northern Ireland organisations to share threats, vulnerability information and mitigation to protect against cyber incidents.

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While the architecture currently serves business crime well at senior level, it is local PSNI Officers who provide the routine contact for local businesses. The current PSNI emphasis on local and neighbourhood policing should assist links with business, though given the PSNI's size and the number of transfers that are likely to take place over the course of a policing career, it will always be challenging to maintain good succession planning. This is important because the issue that arose in the 2017 inspection related to the PSNI's lack of succession planning for Community Safety Sergeants who were responsible for day-to-day contact and contributed to groups such as Organised Crime Task Force sub-groups and liaised with local Crime Prevention Officers.

NIPB officials were not aware of any major issues around succession planning. Following a Local Policing Review they noted an increase in Local Policing Teams on the ground; and they suggested the turnover of PSNI staff within local teams does not seem to be as high as previously.

CJI did not receive any indication of problems with a lack of continuity of PSNI personnel in the course of this review.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 2

The Business Crime Action plan should be reviewed within six months of this report with a view to ensuring that the targets/actions within it are SMART and that there is a greater level of accountability/governance for all partners. The review should also consider including the following issues in the Action Plan:

- i. the police response to 'drive-offs' (developing on from work undertaken previously);
- ii. education for businesses about their responsibility to implement crime prevention advice to prevent theft by customers; and
- iii. education about the importance of good record-keeping/monitoring by businesses to prevent employee theft.

Status: Achieved

Inspectors' assessment

The revised Business Crime Action Plan (the Plan) was launched in May 2018 and has been updated annually. It is a live document which consists of three strands:

- prevent and protect;
- partnership working; and
- enforcement.

Review of the Plan is a standard agenda item at each BCP meeting. The Plan for the incoming year was the main topic at the February 2020 BCP meeting. The targets have identified leads in order to ensure accountability and many are specific, measurable,

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achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) for example, outputs such as numbers of events that took place and numbers of website hits. A number of targets are 'ongoing' and it would be helpful if the BCP assured themselves that these are adequately monitored to ensure progress and where possible specify achievements towards meeting the target or action. The BCP should also ensure that adequate agenda time is afforded periodically to meaningfully review Action Plan progress rather than by exception.

However many BCP targets cannot be entirely SMART. This is because:

- the Plan needs to be agreed by all BCP partners, several of whom do not apply an OBA or SMART target focus;
- SMART targets cannot be applied to aspects of BCP work which are about processes, for example, business uptake of PSNI advice;
- SMART targets cannot measure prevention; and
- since commencement of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a growing recognition that the BCP needs to prepare for unexpected eventualities as events are cancelled; and much of their activity has to be carried out in different ways.

Following a 'Making Off Without Payment' pilot in two PSNI Districts, approval was given in December 2017 for the scheme to be introduced service-wide. This was implemented with effect from 19 March 2018. Although some retailers were initially resistant, it has now become established practice for the PSNI not to respond to such calls unless there is evidence of dishonesty.

'Safeshop' training is designed to address core elements of crime prevention and reactive measures in the event of theft. It has been ongoing for several years and still continues. Particular attention is paid to offering *Safeshop* education to retailers who feature on the 'Top 10' lists for shoplifting. Further work has also been completed with the Health and Social Care Board and an umbrella group for pharmacies to promote safe working environments. This has included presentations, site visits and joint messaging around attacks on staff.

Safeshop sessions are delivered by a team that includes RACNI representatives outside retail opening hours in order to facilitate business attendance. A record is kept of those who receive training and follow-up reviews are undertaken to ascertain compliance with PSNI advice.

Safeshop 'Train the Trainer' has been delivered to most PSNI Crime Prevention Officers and a number of local neighbourhood Officers. There has been engagement with key multinational retailers at senior management level to share the benefits of the *Safeshop* scheme and ensure collaboration in dealing with acquisitive crime.

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Safeshop also addresses the issue of employee theft and the need to monitor stock and keep proper records. It also provides an online business crime self-assessment methodology. The information provided at these training seminars is also accessible on the BCP and PSNI websites.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 3

Improvements should be made to the PSNI's analysis of business crime within six months of this report by:

- i. agreeing a definition of business crime with partners;
- ii. delivering a mechanism to survey the views and attitudes of businesses across different sectors in order to improve stakeholder and victim engagement; and
- iii. improving the availability of business crime statistics and undertaking subsequent analysis to develop priorities within the Business Crime Action Plan, drive performance improvements by the PSNI and better inform the business community.

Status: Partially achieved

Inspectors' assessment

The intention of this recommendation was that adopting a definition of business crime would help measurement and increase understanding of its nature and extent.

The 2018 Business Crime Action Plan said '*Accurate recording of crime: This has been achieved through an IT system upgrade and PSNI-wide adoption of a business crime definition on 1 October 2017.*'

The definition adopted by the PSNI was in line with that of the UK National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC). Their most recent (June 2019) definition is '*Any criminal offence where a business, or person in the course of their employment, and because of that employment, is the victim.*'

The use of previous definitions and explanatory text have all failed to resolve problems of subjective and differing interpretation by frontline Police Officers in various UK police forces.

When under-recording of around 38% was noted in Northern Ireland soon after adoption of the definition, the PSNI's Service Executive Team reviewed its use. They took advice from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) which advised that any data produced on the basis of the definition would not be reliable because there was too much scope for subjective judgements and inaccurate reporting. The PSNI also ceased using a business crime tick box on their Niche RMS recording system for the same reason.

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The PSNI position is the same as other UK police forces. Examples were provided for this review of wide variations and confusion among police forces in their attempts to apply a definition of business crime. While some apply a business crime flag to relevant crime and incident reports, the NPCC definition is simply provided as guidance and there is no mandatory recording process for business crime in the UK.

The issue of a business crime definition was considered by the BCP during development of its Action Plan. All members, including the NIPB officials were involved and in agreement with the outcome. It was pointed out that the same issue also applies to 'rural crime.'

Consequently a definition was not in place at the time of this review. Nonetheless the various parties believe they have a sufficiently accurate understanding of the scale and trends in business crime and attempts to reach a workable definition remain on the BCP agenda.

After extensive preparation and marketing, a Northern Ireland-wide business crime survey was undertaken in autumn 2019 and attracted 76 responses. This was low, though the analysis, undertaken by NISRA (the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency), is still considered useful and provides a benchmark for future surveys.

The PSNI said business crime forecasts have recently been reviewed, with the first revamped version produced in spring 2020. They are to be provided on a quarterly basis in order to coincide with BCP meetings.

The emphasis is on statistics and trends, 'Most Similar Force'⁶ comparisons and cross-border information, if applicable. The main statistics in the forecasts relate to 'Making Off Without Payment', shoplifting, business robbery and burglary. However it is difficult to isolate commercial victims from other burglary victims. Some cyber and fraud data may also be available, though again it is difficult to isolate business-specific crime.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 4

The PSNI should consider, as part of the Business Crime Action Plan, using the principles of the Reducing Offending in Partnership model to develop a more targeted approach to dealing with persistent shoplifters.

Status: Achieved

⁶ Most Similar Forces are groups of police force areas that have been found to be the most similar to each other based on an analysis of demographic, social and economic characteristics which relate to crime.

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Inspectors' assessment

CJI clarified this recommendation did not infer the PSNI should set up a dedicated Reducing Offending in Partnership scheme for retail crime, but rather that the benefits of the '*Catch and Control*' approach - a cornerstone of the Reducing Offending in Partnership model - should be used by local police to target prolific shoplifters, instead of individual cases being dealt with by different Officers.

In its 2018 update, the PSNI said they were developing an understanding of high volume and repeat offenders and would target them in terms of prevention, intelligence and enforcement options. It was envisaged this work would be progressed through Neighbourhood Policing Teams. Prolific offenders, including those involved in crimes against businesses, were to be managed within their Reducing Offending in Partnership Unit.

In February 2020 the PSNI reported this recommendation was being progressed. They said that prolific offenders who target businesses are dealt with through Reducing Offending in Partnership principles. The Reducing Offending in Partnership methodology now incorporates a recommendation of prosecutions for burglary where possible, rather than theft, when they investigate shoplifting.

This represents a response to businesses' desire that persistent shoplifters should be prosecuted for burglary rather than theft, because they can then potentially receive more significant court sentences and also be made subject to Exclusion Orders.

The success of this approach led to the PSNI being asked to deliver presentations on it for the NBCC and An Garda Síochána.

CHAPTER 3: **CONCLUSION**

Almost three years after publication of the CJI Business Crime inspection report, the PSNI are assessed to have made considerable progress in implementing the recommendations. Five are deemed 'Achieved' and one 'Partially Achieved.'

CJI can only assess the practice of the PSNI in this instance, but it is clear that things are currently working well across all sectors involved in business crime. This is due to the commitment of established personnel and value of the BCP as a forum for meaningful engagement. It is imperative that the PSNI's succession planning ensures consistency of personnel at all levels.

Information sharing has improved considerably and training has been targeted on those with the greatest needs. Tangible steps, such as termination of police involvement in 'Making Off Without Payment,' where the incident is civil rather than criminal in nature, have helped. Recommendation of prosecutions for burglary, where possible, when retailers are targeted, has demonstrated responsiveness to business requirements.

It will always be challenging to define 'business crime' in a way that can be consistently and accurately recorded and to set meaningful SMART targets. However, the effort must continue, otherwise it will not be possible to obtain a true picture of trends or impact.

CJI will return to the theme of business crime in the future. In the meantime other oversight bodies such as the NIPB and the BCP have important roles in ensuring the PSNI continues to meet business needs.

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