Policing with the Community

An inspection of Policing with the Community in Northern Ireland

March 2009

Criminal Justice Inspection
Northern Ireland
a better justice system for all

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

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Contents

List of abbreviations

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
ACN	Active Citizen Network
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
CJ	Criminal Justice
CJI	Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland
COPS	Community Oriented Policing Services (United States)
CORE	Corporate Opportunity for Resilience and Efficiency (PSNI project)
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
CSR	Comprehensive Spending Review
CSU	Community Safety Unit
DCU	District Command Unit (in PSNI)
DPP	District Policing Partnership
DSD	Department for Social Development
DTO	District Training Officers
FLO	Family Liaison Officer
GB	Great Britain
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
IAG	Independent Advisory Group
KIN	Key Individual Network
MIT	Major Investigation Team (PSNI unit)
MSF	Most Similar Force
NCPE	National Centre for Policing Excellence
NhP	Neighbourhood Police
NhW	Neighbourhood Watch
NI	Northern Ireland
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NIM	National Intelligence Model
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
NIPB	Northern Ireland Policing Board
NPIA	National Police Improvement Agency (formerly Centrex)
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
OCMT	Occurrence and Case Management Team (in PSNI)
OCU	Operational Command Unit (in PSNI)
OPONI	Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland
OOC	Office of the Oversight Commissioner
PACT	Partners and Community Together
Patten Report	Shortened term for the report published by the Independent Commission on Policing in 1999.
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
PDO	Professional Development Officer
POPT	Police Officer Part-Time
PPS	Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
PwC	Policing with the Community
RPA	Review of Public Administration
SCNI	Supporting Communities Northern Ireland
TNA	Training Needs Analysis
TSG	Tactical Support Group
UK	United Kingdom

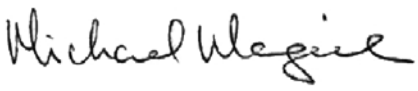
Chief Inspectors' Foreword

The vision of policing for Northern Ireland stated in the report of the Independent Commission on Policing (the Patten Report) was one of Policing with the Community at the core of the service, with officers having been grounded in neighbourhood policing and only taken into specialist and other functions for limited periods, before returning to the core function. The Patten Report's definition of what was meant by community policing was *"…the police working in partnership with the community; the community thereby participating in its own policing; and the two working together, mobilising resources to solve problems affecting public safety…"* This vision remains as relevant today as it was in 1999.

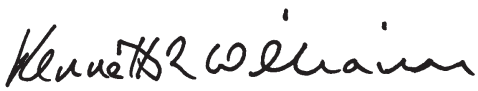
The implementation of a new approach to policing in Northern Ireland was central to the reform of criminal justice. Its on-going implementation continues to represent challenges for the police service. Much work has been achieved and significant steps have been taken to deliver on the vision for community policing articulated in the Patten document. The relationship between the police and the local community now is very different from what it was when the report was published.

Our review of the delivery of community policing, however, shows that much work remains to be done to fully embed policing with the community as the core function of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, and the core function of every police station. There are significant challenges ahead to make best use of resources to implement the critical dimensions of community policing – such as the introduction of more effective call management and the recruitment of police community support officers. The successful delivery of policing with the community will not be achieved, however, by additional resources alone. It will only be achieved when it becomes central to the work of every police officer in Northern Ireland.

The Inspection was led for CJI by Bill Priestley and by Dave Jones for HMIC. We would like to thank on their behalf, all those whom they contacted in the course of the work for their parparticipation.



Dr. Michael Maguire
Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice
in Northern Ireland



Ken Williams CVO CBE QPM
HM Inspector of Constabulary
Northern Region & Northern Ireland

March 2009

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland ('Patten Report') was published on 9 September 1999. It drew on experiences of policing from many jurisdictions and its radical proposals on police reform were probably the most complex and far-reaching ever articulated. Recommendation 44 stated that, *'Policing with the community should be the core function of the police service and the core function of every police station.'*

The report outlined what it meant by Policing with the Community (PwC) as, *'… the police working in partnership with the community; the community thereby participating in its own policing; and the two working together, mobilising resources to solve problems affecting public safety over the longer term rather than the police, alone, reacting short term to incidents as they occur.'*

Inspection criteria were developed by a steering group comprising representatives from Criminal Justice Inspection (CJI), the Police Service for Northern Ireland (PSNI), the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC). The agreed inspection criteria were: relevant Patten recommendations; the five principles of Community Policing[1]; progress of the Neighbourhood Policing Programme; and progress against the HMIC baseline inspection of 2006. A breakdown of the inspection criteria can be found in Appendix 2.

The Patten vision of policing for Northern Ireland was one with PwC at the core of the service, with all officers having been grounded in neighbourhood policing (NhP) and only taken into specialist and other functions for limited periods, before returning to the core function. The recommendations made in the Patten Report regarding PwC and the subsequent approach by the PSNI to implement them, form the basis of this inspection.

Overall findings

The overall findings of this report are:

- There has been substantial progress of NhP since the HMIC 2006 baseline report (Appendix 2, annex 3);
- There has been substantial progress in implementing the PwC recommendations of the Patten Report and the principles of Community Policing; and
- Progress can be linked to implementation of the NhP programme.

However, work remains to be done to fully embed PwC as the core function of the police service and the core function of every police station.

1 Identified in section 2 of the PSNI PwC policy as: Service Delivery : Partnership: Problem Solving: Empowerment: Accountability

Progress since the 2006 HMIC baseline report

Implementation of the NhP programme in 2007 had resulted in the appointment of a project manager for NhP. Corporate guidelines had been consulted on, designed and communicated. Each Police District had appointed a Community Safety Superintendent to liaise with the local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). There was a communication strategy in place that addressed both internal and external marketing of NhP and, for the first time, there were tangible PwC goals in the NIPB Policing Plan which included a target aimed at reducing the time NhP officers spend away from their core duties (abstraction target).

Policy and strategy

A corporate end goal or vision of PwC had not been clearly identified or communicated across all districts. The PwC policy had not been reviewed since being written in 2002 when the NhP programme had been instigated. There had been some alignment of service policies to enable delivery of PwC, but there had not been comprehensive implementation of these policies service-wide.

Policy decisions taken by the PSNI in the wake of the comprehensive spending review (CSR) had impacted on the ability of the PSNI to deliver PwC. The proposed recruitment of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) had been shelved. This, together with falling numbers of Reserve Constables, the stalling of recruitment of Police Officers Part-Time (POPT), and deployment issues (including restricted working hours), had impacted on the PSNI's ability to adequately resource NhP.

PwC could be better supported by a structure that would deliver local accountability for its operational deployment. Under the current structure responsibility for PwC lies with the Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) for criminal justice, a headquarters-based role. Giving operational responsibility for NhP to the two regional ACCs or in future to one ACC with service-wide responsibility for operational matters, would provide better local accountability for delivery of PwC. Strategic responsibility for PwC should remain with police headquarters.

Resourcing PwC

Inspectors found that many police officers were engaged on tasks that did not require the application of the powers of a Constable. Civilianisation and workforce modernisation had not delivered the numbers of officers required to effectively resource NhP and where officers had been freed up, the focus was not on strengthening NhP teams with full-time officers.

Effective call management is a critical enabler of delivering PwC. The current call handling arrangements are staff intensive. A more effective system of assessing and allocating calls would enable NhP officers to be freed up to undertake more pro-active patrolling in their areas, thereby improving accessibility and visibility.

Partnerships and community engagement

PwC is a shared responsibility between strategic partners. Inspectors found many instances of excellent partnership work being pursued and sustained locally by the dedication of NhP officers and community partners often under difficult conditions. The PSNI had provided a PwC fund which had a positive impact on community safety by helping to fund locally identified and managed projects. Where DPPs and CSPs were working closely together, there was a more cohesive approach to PwC. The optimum position following the Review of Public Administration (RPA) would be as set out in our report into CSPs[2]. That is to have one operational community safety/policing tier in each council area.

In England and Wales partnership arrangements are cemented by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which established obligatory partnerships between the police, local authorities, probation service, health authorities, the voluntary sector, and local residents and businesses. This legislation does not apply to Northern Ireland. Making partnership arrangements obligatory could help deliver better co-ordinated and integrated local policing services.

Individual officers and NhP teams had worked hard to engage with communities and to deliver effective, problem-solving local policing. Community groups provided many examples of excellent PwC work being undertaken by officers and there was a real willingness by communities to work in partnership to deliver effective policing in their areas. However, community groups articulated a fear that the opportunity for the PSNI to deliver PwC in difficult areas was time limited and may be lost.

Internal partnerships with specialist units such as Tactical Support Groups (TSGs) and with Human Resources (HR) need to be further developed so there is complete organisational buy-in to PwC as the core policing function.

Monitoring

The Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) has a central role in furthering PwC practice and principles in the PSNI. There were tangible goals for delivering PwC in the policing plan 2008-2011 with associated quantitative targets for NhP. However, performance and target setting elsewhere has been evolving towards using a combination of qualitative and quantitative targets such as that outlined in the 'Policing' Green Paper[3]. Measurement based on quantitative methods alone, does not take account of the effort expended by NhP officers and community members to engage effectively to deliver local policing solutions. A framework that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative measurement of police performance at neighbourhood level needs to be agreed with the NIPB and implemented.

PwC as envisaged in the Patten Report is the provision of local policing solutions for issues affecting local communities. Measurement of the performance of local District Commanders with regard to PwC needs to be integrated into their performance meetings with regional ACCs.

2 CJI: An Inspection of Community Safety Partnerships; November 2006
3 Policing Green Paper, published on 17 July 2008

Recommendations

PSNI specific strategic recommendations

- Inspectors recommend that PSNI implement a revised PwC strategy in line with it being placed at the core of the policing function and embedded in every policy and process. The strategy should be founded on a clear corporate vision of PwC and should raise and support its status within the organisation.

- Inspectors recommend that as a matter of urgency PSNI develop and implement a service-wide call management strategy that reflects advances in technology to enable effective call handling in support of the delivery of PwC.

- Inspectors recommend that PSNI implement policies regarding:
  - the recruitment of PCSOs;
  - the measurement and management of performance in PwC;
  - corporate structures to support and sustain PwC; and
  - the allocation of resources to support and sustain NhP

  that place PwC as the core policing function.

Other strategic recommendations

- It would be helpful if arrangements could be developed in Northern Ireland which would enable the composition of the police service to be set by a tri-partite partnership involving the Chief Constable, the Ministry for Policing and Justice, and the NIPB, whenever Policing and Justice is devolved (paragraph 4.3).

- Inspectors recommend that legislation is introduced, equivalent to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, to establish obligatory partnerships so that a more cohesive approach to local policing and community safety strategies can be implemented (paragraph 5.12).

Recommendation from CJI report into Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs)

- As regards the future relationship between CSPs and DPPs, the optimum position post-RPA would be to have one operational community safety/policing tier in each council area. We would recommend policy makers to look again at the vision laid out in the Patten Report and echoed to some extent in the Criminal Justice Review (paragraph 5.21).

Suggestions for Improvement

NIPB

CJI does not inspect NIPB, nevertheless we make two suggestions for their consideration.

Evidence collected by Inspectors during this inspection suggests that NIPB should consider their approach to assessing police performance. This could be done by using a wider range of qualitative as well as quantitative indicators and applying the principles of improving police performance as outlined in Chapter 7 of the 'Policing' Green Paper to the PSNI. (paragraph 5.15).

Having a more co-ordinated approach to collecting local information involving all relevant local groups producing a comprehensive set of data, would help the process of setting local policing plans and priorities for neighbourhoods. Including questions in local surveys on NhP would also provide detailed local data on which to assess the performance of local commanders in delivering PwC (paragraph 6.4).

PSNI

Giving operational responsibility for NhP to the two regional ACCs or in future to one ACC with service-wide responsibility for operational matters, would provide better local accountability for delivery of PwC (paragraph 2.8).

It would be helpful if members of the NhP Programme Board would attend each board meeting in person. Minutes of meetings should be actively communicated and published to the service through its intranet system (Policenet) (paragraph 3.4).

Setting minimum operating levels for NhP teams would help to deliver a better community-oriented local policing service and would raise the status of NhP internally (paragraph 3.5).

The work of neighbourhood officers needs to be marketed internally especially by District Commanders who set the policing tone for their area (paragraph 3.9).

The service needs to move to empower and entrust officers within its overall supervisory framework, so that they can respond more effectively to community needs (paragraph 3.12).

If the service is to continue with allocating POPT to NhP teams as the alternative to using PCSOs, then it should consider ways to better utilise their existing skills and local knowledge, and empower them to deliver a better service to the community (paragraph 4.12).

Skills identified by the TNA as being necessary for NhP officers such as developing and managing community relationships, should be interwoven not just into initial officer training, but also into Detective training, POPT training and other operational training programmes, to fully embed PwC principles across the whole service (paragraph 4.14).

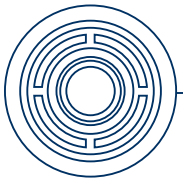
Inspectors believe that a more overt approach to PwC principles throughout the training programme would assist officers and help to embed the principles in the wider police service (paragraph 4.19).

To help to embed the ethos in newly attested officers, PSNI should consider attaching probationer officers to NhP units for the whole of their 10 week tutorship period (identified as weeks 11–20 in the probationer management policy) (paragraph 4.20).

The use of the signal crimes perspective and other social indicators may help the PSNI to better gain community insight and to improve local partnership working (paragraph 5.17).

The reorganisation of police districts and centralisation of call handling places even more onus on district commanders to establish effective and inclusive consultation arrangements with local communities (paragraph 6.6).

In order to better manage public expectations, there needs to be more effective consultation, dialogue and engagement with communities by district management teams with an emphasis on customer focus (paragraph 6.7).



Section 1

Inspection Report

CHAPTER 1:

What is 'Policing with the Community?'

Introduction

1.1 The aim of this inspection is to assess the progress of the PSNI in implementing Policing with the Community (PwC) against the following inspection criteria:

- the remaining issues and incomplete recommendations identified by the final report of the Office of the Oversight Commissioner (OOC).
- the 25 areas of assessment for NhP identified by the PSNI
- the five principles of Community policing, which are[4]
  - Service delivery;
  - Partnership;
  - Problem Solving;
  - Empowerment; and
  - Accountability.
- completed Patten recommendations – to verify continuance; and
- progress against the NhP element of the 2006 HMIC baseline assessment. A detailed breakdown of the inspection criteria can be found in Appendix 2.

1.2 As part of the inspection process the PSNI conducted a self-assessment on their performance in PwC against the agreed criteria. This self-assessment was of good quality, detailed and well presented. It clearly set out the position of the PSNI as regards PwC and gave a detailed assessment of progress of the NhP programme in each police district. Details of NhP resources allocated within all districts were provided and just prior to the drafting of this report, an update was also made available. For the purpose of inspection we examined four police districts (two urban and two rural). A detailed breakdown of the inspection methodology can be found in Appendix 1.

What is 'Policing with the Community'

1.3 Recommendation 44 of the Patten Report stated that, *'Policing with the community should be the core function of the police service and the core function of every police station.'* In the final OOC report[5] published in May 2007, progress against this key recommendation was reported as, *'Full compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved. (Substantial Progress).*

1.4 The author of the PSNI PwC policy, former Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) Peter Sheridan told Inspectors that, *'Policing with the community needs to be embedded within the PSNI as the core style of service delivery and should form an integral part of every police*

4 Identified in section 2 of the PSNI PwC policy

5 Overseeing the Proposed Revisions for the Policing Services of Northern Ireland - Report 19 - Published 31.05.2007. by the Office of the Oversight Commissioner for Northern Ireland.

process. It should be tested at every level and role until it becomes second nature'. The PSNI confirmed the status of PwC as a core function by adopting the PwC policy published in 2002 which stated that, *'It (PwC) cannot be properly implemented in an organisation where reactive policing is the underlying style.'* The same policy sets out the aim of PwC as *'to improve community safety by reducing crime and the fear of crime, and tacking anti-social behaviour.'* The policy identified that to fully embed PwC as the operational practice would require fundamental changes, *'If the transition from philosophy to operational practice is to be realised, fundamental changes are required in the structure and culture of the police organisation.'*

1.5 Former ACC Sheridan saw PwC as a straightforward concept of shared responsibility between the community and the police together with a focus on excellence of service delivery. The Patten Report proposed the use of the term 'Policing with the Community' as; *'it encapsulates better what most people want to see – the police participating in the community and responding to the needs of that community, and the community participating in its own policing and supporting the police."*[6]

1.6 A former head of PwC for the PSNI addressed this issue in a thesis (published on the PSNI website)[7] setting out three defining features:

- responsibility for policing society is not simply the responsibility of the police; it is a *shared responsibility* between the police and the people;
- policing is not simply about reacting to calls for service from the public once a crime has been committed. Rather, it is about proactively attempting to address local problems and small issues before they grow into bigger ones and/or crimes; and
- community policing entails greater officer *discretion* with police being given greater flexibility and freedom over how they do their jobs and respond to community needs, without the need to resort to formal rules and arrest procedures.

1.7 The development of the ethos of PwC may best be followed in North America where the community policing philosophy is the dominant model of policing there. The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) was created by the Justice Department to support innovative work in community policing. One of the main enablers of public partnership in such programmes has been various Neighbourhood Watch (NhW) schemes. Research in North America and subsequently elsewhere has shown that a major limiting factor in NhW schemes is that those communities who are most in need of them find them the most difficult to access and implement[8]. This is a theme that is of particular relevance in the Northern Ireland context of some communities emerging from a long period of disengagement with

6 Report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland, 1999: 7.2.
7 Implementing Policing with the Community in Northern Ireland: An Exercise in Strategic Organisational Change. Micaela McGinley December 2006

official policing services. To deliver the PSNI aim of, *'Making Northern Ireland safer for everyone through professional, progressive policing,'* communities should not just be defined in the geographical sense but rather should take account of socio-economic, cultural and ethnic factors which impact on the accessibility of neighbourhood watch and other similar schemes.

1.8 COPS defined community policing as *'a policing philosophy that promotes and supports organisational strategies to address the causes and reduce the fear of crime and social disorder through problem-solving tactics and police-community partnerships.'* As defined by COPS, community policing focuses on crime and social disorder through the delivery of policing services that includes aspects of traditional law enforcement, as well as prevention, problem-solving, community engagement, and partnerships. The community policing model balances reactive responses to calls for service with proactive problem-solving centred on the causes of crime and disorder. Community policing requires police and citizens to join together as partners in the course of both identifying and effectively addressing these issues.

1.9 The Patten Report drew on experiences of policing from many jurisdictions and its radical proposals on police reform were probably the most complex and far-reaching ever articulated. The report outlined what it meant by PwC as, *'… the police working in partnership with the community; the community thereby participating in its own policing; and the two working together, mobilising resources to solve problems affecting public safety over the longer term rather than the police, alone, reacting short term to incidents as they occur.'* The recommendations that it went on to make regarding PwC and the subsequent efforts at implementation by the PSNI form the basis of this inspection.

1.10 The Patten vision of policing for Northern Ireland was one with PwC at the core of the service with all officers having been grounded in neighbourhood policing (NhP) and only taken into specialist and other functions for limited periods before returning to the core function. To pursue such a change and to meet public expectations would have required a major shift in existing police structures, culture, ethos, and the skills base of the officers. The profile of an officer engaged in PwC would be markedly different from the stereotypical image of an officer approaching retirement, engaged in what many saw as amounting to social work. It would require highly skilled officers adept at engaging with communities and using up-to-date problem solving methods to effectively tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. Officers would have to deliver results to their communities in the form of a reduction in criminal activity impacting on the quality of life of the communities they served.

8 Fleming, J. (2005) *Working Together: Neighbourhood Watch, Reassurance Policing and the Potential of Partnerships*. Canberra, Australian Institute of Criminology: 1

1.11 NhP was described to Inspectors as a tactical element of the overall PSNI PwC strategy. Delivering PwC involves much more than deploying neighbourhood teams in every police district. Policies and strategies that go right across the organisation should support PwC as the core function of the service. These include policies and strategies regarding Human Resources, Estates, Information Communications, Crime Management, Community Safety and others. Inspectors found that through the NhP programme there had been some alignment of service policies to enable its delivery but, there had not been comprehensive implementation of these policies service-wide. Many staff within districts were not aware of the organisational view of NhP as a tactical element of an overall PwC strategy. There needs to be better communication of the status of both PwC as the core function, and of NhP as one of many tactical elements enabling the PSNI to deliver a citizen-focused service. This could be achieved by identifying an end goal or vision of PwC for the organisation and ensuring that this is embedded throughout the service.

CHAPTER 2:

Implementation: The Challenges

External monitoring

2.1 Following the recommendations of the Patten Report on policing a 'plan for change' component of the 2002-05 Policing Plan, released in March of 2002, committed the NIPB and the service to establishing PwC as the preferred delivery philosophy. The PwC strategic plan together with implementation and communication arrangements had been endorsed by the NIPB and commenced in September 2002. Monitoring the implementation of all the Patten recommendations was carried out by the OOC and an early report[9] concluded that there had been many early initiatives launched by District Commanders demonstrating their acceptance of PwC as the core standard of operations. The report went on to comment that, *'In some cases these early experiments had to be abandoned or suspended due to increased demands for public order policing. However, this must be balanced against a lack of progress in other areas, such as the reduction of sick leave and the freeing-up of police officers with civilian staff. Concerted action in both of these areas would have reduced resource pressures experienced by the Police Service due to public order incidents.'*

2.2 The OOC continued to monitor progress of the Patten recommendations reporting three times a year up until its final report published in May 2007. The progress reported against PwC recommendations had initially been positive and encouraging. Progress had not been consistent, nevertheless progress was reported and there had been many examples of excellent local policing initiatives aimed at delivering PwC.

Social and Political context

2.3 The period between the publication of the Patten report and the implementation of the NhP programme in 2007 was not a smooth transition to a normal society. In July 2000, there had been widespread disorder following the Parades Commission ban on an Orange Order parade at Drumcree. Army personnel were back on the streets in Belfast during August following a violent feud between rival loyalist groups which lasted until December. In the summer of 2001, the Drumcree event passed off peacefully but there was large scale rioting in the Ardoyne area of Belfast following the Twelfth of July parades.

9 Overseeing the Proposed Revisions for the Policing Services of Northern Ireland - Report 6 - Published 10.12.2002, Office of the Oversight Commissioner for Northern Ireland

Interface violence was also widespread, particularly in North Belfast where shots were fired during rioting in a mainly Protestant area of Ardoyne. Further sectarian rioting and interface violence became commonplace in the run up to the summer months of 2002. In 2003, another loyalist feud erupted and as late as November 2004, the Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC) reported that paramilitary violence remained *'disturbingly high'*.

2.4 Policing does not operate independently of social and political dynamics. Cognisance must be taken of the changing political and operational policing arena in Northern Ireland since the publication of the Patten recommendations and progress in police reform needs to be seen in this context. The pace and scope of police reform and implementation of the PwC recommendations of the Patten Report may have been affected by these and other factors[10]. The pace of change and implementation of a PwC style had been linked to political progress, and at the time of inspection fieldwork, DPPs had just become fully politically representative. Over the period of the OOC monitoring reports difficulties in applying the Patten recommendations were acknowledged in the context of an unstable political scene, for example, the comprehensive roll-out of the schools programme into contested areas.

2.5 Since the inspection fieldwork there has also been an increase in dissident republican terrorist activity, particularly in some border areas. This must be taken into account when assessing progress towards implementing PwC as the core policing function. It is also true to say that the threat is not consistent across the whole of Northern Ireland and opportunities to embed PwC as the core policing ethos should be pursued as fully as possible. To deliver PwC as the preferred policing style requires that it should be embedded at all levels of the organisation and deployed as widely as possible in prevailing circumstances.

Resources and structures

2.6 The Patten Report had made six recommendations about the size of the police service. The most relevant to this inspection recommended that; *'Provided the peace process does not collapse and the security situation does not deteriorate significantly from the situation pertaining at present, the approximate size of the police service over the next 10 years should be 7,500 full time officers'*. This recommendation had been achieved and police numbers currently sit around the 7,500 named full-time officer mark and the police budget is predicated on that number of full-time officers. Total police numbers had been reducing during the period of implementing the Patten recommendations as regards PwC. Progress against the PwC

10 Policing Northern Ireland; Conflict, legitimacy and reform; Aogan Mulcachy, 2006
Topping, J. R. (2008) 'Community Policing in Northern Ireland: A Resistance Narrative', *Policing and Society* 18(4), pp. 377-396

recommendations should be seen in the context of how that had impacted on the number of officers available for operational duties, and difficulties in realigning officers whilst overall staff numbers were falling. However, the PSNI had been taking steps to redress imbalances and at the drafting stage of the report, Inspectors were told that they were beginning to implement a project to move posts to support the resourcing of the NhP programme.

2.7 Throughout the period of the OOC monitoring reports, many instances of excellent PwC work undertaken by individual officers or NhP teams were reported. Inspectors also found that there had been much excellent individual work undertaken in all of the districts by officers dedicated to providing an effective service to the community. A selection of cases illustrating the achievements of officers operating under the PwC ethos is presented in Chapter Three. Inspectors were told of cases of good community-oriented policing by PSNI officers and members of the public in all of the police districts visited.

2.8 The changes envisaged by Patten would have required a major shift in existing police structures, culture, ethos, and the skills base of officers. There has been substantial change to the police service since the publication of the Patten Report as monitored and reported by the OOC. Upon agreement of the PwC strategy, overall responsibility for it had been the responsibility of the Deputy Chief Constable. This had since transferred to the ACC for criminal justice. It had been helpful to districts to have organisational direction on PwC through the NhP programme, co-ordinated by the headquarters-based team, and led by one ACC. Giving operational responsibility for NhP to the two regional ACCs, or in future to one ACC with service-wide responsibility for operational matters, would provide better local accountability for delivery of PwC.

2.9 Given that there are issues unique to Northern Ireland that may in the medium term require an enhanced level of police resources (such as the number of historic cases to be investigated) when crime rates are compared across forces Northern Ireland remains a relatively low crime area (see Table 1). It has a crime rate of just over 13 crimes per officer, half that of the nearest other police service area in the Most Similar Forces (MSF) group in addition to the Metropolitan Police Service.

Table 1: Number of crimes and detections per officer

	Total Crime March 07 to end Feb 08	Total Detections March 07 to end Feb 08	Number of officers	Detections per Officer	Crimes per Officer
PSNI	**99118**	**25054**	**7500**	**2.74**	**13.22**
Nottinghamshire	126691	28818	2401	12.00	52.77
West Yorkshire	230067	56580	5740	9.86	40.08
Greater Manchester	300104	75327	7930	9.50	37.84
Northumbria	110074	42572	4063	10.48	27.09
West Midlands	251595	66607	8057	8.27	31.23
Metropolitan	868671	215587	31090	6.93	27.94

CHAPTER 3:

Neighbourhood Policing Programme

Programme framework and aim

3.1 In July 2007 the PSNI initiated a formal NhP Programme following on from its identification as a key policing function by the Corporate Opportunity for Resilience and Efficiency (CORE) project. The stated intention of the programme was to embed NhP within the service, and to provide every neighbourhood in Northern Ireland with access to local policing. It also aimed to offer opportunities to influence local priorities, deliver positive interventions with partners to tackle identified priorities, and provide answers on what has been done.

3.2 The PwC branch of the PSNI had developed a framework of 25 recommendations on NhP. The recommendations covered critical themes such as the identification of neighbourhoods, community engagement, performance measurement, marketing and abstraction of neighbourhood officers. A full breakdown of the elements of the NhP programme can be found in Appendix 2.

3.3 Inspectors found that one of the main tenets of the programme was that PwC is a whole organisation activity. This position reflects the assertions made in the Patten Report that, *'We do not favour separating "community policing" from other policing tasks. It is a central theme of this report that policing with the community should be the core function of the entire police force. We would certainly reject any idea of an upper tier of policing superior to neighbourhood police officers, and implicitly excused from community policing obligations.*[11]*'*

Implementation

3.4 Inspectors found that the programme had been well structured and had been clearly communicated to districts. It had also included feedback from districts in its design and development. At the time of inspection the programme had been in existence for only seven months. The programme had been managed and governed through a programme board, corporate implementation team and district implementation teams. The programme executive was the ACC for criminal justice whilst the board was comprised of senior users and the senior supplier. At the time of inspection fieldwork, the Programme Board had met twice. However, for the second meeting some members had been absent and many of the senior users had delegated responsibility to more

11 Report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland, 1999: 12.8

junior staff. Between February and December 2008 principals attendance at the Governance Board had been 45% and 47% at Corporate Implementation. Inspectors recognise that senior users have busy schedules; however, having users present who are empowered to take decisions at board level would greatly improve the chances of the programme being delivered. It would be helpful if members of the NhP Programme Board would attend each board meeting in person. Minutes of meetings should be actively communicated and published to the service through its intranet system (Policenet). This would reinforce to the service in general, the commitment of senior staff to the PwC ethos, and to NhP in particular.

3.5 Inspectors found that the PwC Branch, with limited resources, had been actively promoting the NhP programme within police districts as well as to DPPs at public meetings. It had consulted on the development of policies and one senior officer in a police district said that, *'The PwC team has been very good; they have adopted a participative style and kept us in the loop. A real departure for any headquarters department.'* The PwC Branch had used a variety of methods of communication including a dedicated section of the internal PSNI website to consult with officers on districts and to keep them informed. Many officers said there had been noticeable improvement in guidance and support in relation to NhP, from headquarters. However, lack of guidance on what NhP should look like in a few years time, and the fact that the CORE recommendations had not set resource levels for NhP were regarded by officers in districts as unhelpful. The decision as to the level of resources allocated to NhP varied between districts and had been entirely the responsibility of the District Commander. There had been no corporate prioritisation of the CORE work streams, of which NhP was one; therefore the effectiveness of NhP within each district was dependant on the priority given to the programme by each Commander. Districts had identified the minimum level of resources for response policing but no such minimum had been set for neighbourhood teams. Corporately, minimum levels had been set for TSGs and for MITs. The only protection from abstraction afforded to NhP teams was the service procedure relating to abstraction. They were not protected from abstraction by having recognised and agreed minimum operating levels. Most forces in England and Wales had defined parameters for their NhP teams setting out their composition. Parameters varied from force to force depending on the approach, but the best performing forces had a common standard of implementation across the service area[12]. Setting minimum operating levels for NhP teams would help to deliver a better community-oriented local policing service, and would raise the status of NhP internally.

3.6 One of the major elements of the NhP programme had been the identification of neighbourhoods.

12 HMIC Inspection Report: Lancashire Constabulary; October 2007

PwC branch had undertaken consultation internally as well as externally with the NIPB DPP working group and the Devolution Stakeholders Group. The work of the Department for Social Development (DSD) in identifying Neighbourhood Renewal areas had been incorporated into the police methodology for identifying neighbourhoods. A set of guiding principles had been developed based on internal and external feedback and these were flexible enough to incorporate local community needs. Inspectors found varying levels of implementation of these principles in districts. For example, at the time of inspection, 'A' district had already established neighbourhoods around historical boundaries and existing estates. To identify some neighbourhoods the district had also consulted with Belfast City Council. 'D' district had used existing neighbourhood boundaries identified around wards. At the same time 'H' district had also been mapping neighbourhoods to electoral wards whilst 'F' district had been using a combination of pre-existing neighbourhoods, parishes and sometimes electoral wards. Some areas within the districts had involved community partners in discussions about identification of neighbourhoods, for example, in Antrim. However, most areas had used existing boundaries of one sort or another, and consultation had been through existing channels such as public meetings of the DPPs.

Embedding PwC

3.7 By March 2008 progress had been made in embedding PwC principles in operational units. Inspectors found that the principles of PwC were present in the processes of crime investigations. Policies such as those relating to community impact assessments had been deployed on most occasions when undertaking operations. Neighbourhood officers confirmed that consultation with them prior to, for example, search operations, had increased over the year prior to the inspection fieldwork. Officers at strategic level with crime investigation responsibilities said that there had been a conscious effort to improve the effectiveness of operations by adopting PwC principles and completing impact assessments using the local insight of neighbourhood officers. Community impact is a standing agenda item on their strategic monthly management process, and positive feedback from members of the community on the work of Family Liaison Officers (FLOs) was evident.

3.8 However, although there were examples of response officers using PwC principles and problem solving approaches, these were the exception rather than the rule. Officers told Inspectors that due to pressures of the number of calls allocated to them, they had little time to employ problem solving approaches. Officers had also experienced difficulty accessing problem solving folders which had restricted their access to a repository of good practice recorded across the service area. More work is required to be done to fully embed PwC principles throughout the PSNI in all operational units and policies. The principles need to be practiced widely throughout the PSNI to

establish it as its core function. Embedding PwC principles by way of deployment of policies, driven by leaders at strategic level, needs to be sustained and further developed amongst all specialist units following on from the positive steps already taken with investigative processes.

Challenges

3.9 At strategic level within districts there had been recognition that NhP needed to be made more attractive to officers. However, the stereotypical image of neighbourhood policing as amounting to social work and suited to those officers nearing the end of their career, was still present at operational levels. Many neighbourhood officers and POPT said that their profile within the service as a whole was not a positive one, especially amongst officers young in service and those engaged in specialist work. Officers told Inspectors that this had been exacerbated by some senior managers dissuading those young in service that NhP would be a wise career choice, and instead promoting specialist units. The work of neighbourhood officers needs to be marketed internally especially by District Commanders who set the policing tone for their area.

3.10 PSNI Inspectors had been identified by all of the districts as being central to the success or failure of the NhP programme. Some PSNI Inspectors said that they were unsure of their role in the programme since the rank of Chief Inspector had been designated NhP lead for the districts. There was recognition within districts that the NhP programme needed to be marketed better to Inspectors or there was potential for some blockage. Some explanatory briefings had taken place, for example in 'F' and 'H' districts, but more work needed to be done to ensure that the NhP programme was embraced by disenfranchised officers.

Recognition of good practice

3.11 The service had been recognising excellent work in PwC since 2004. High profile awards held each year had rewarded nominees from within neighbourhood units for what they had achieved within communities. These awards had been extended to enable officers from all sections of the PSNI to be nominated, and this is to be welcomed as it had promoted the ethos of PwC as being an integral part of all policing activities. This type of marketing and recognition, which was not feasible when there were 29 districts, could be further developed at district level now that there are only eight large districts. Local recognition would improve the image of NhP internally and may assist in defining it as a viable career path for officers.

3.12 Many examples of excellent work performed by NhP teams and individual neighbourhood officers were related to Inspectors by community members, CSP co-ordinators and DPPs. The four examples outlined here are designed to give a flavour of the type of work found to be ongoing in each of the districts visited. This work is testament to the commitment of individual officers and teams engaged with neighbourhood policing initiatives. Inspectors were also told

of examples of some officers attending what they considered to be important community meetings in their own time, because they had not been empowered to adjust their working hours to accommodate such meetings. The service needs to move to empower and entrust officers within its overall supervisory framework, so that they can respond more effectively to community needs. This is happening in some areas of some districts but it is not consistent across the service area.

3.13 Successful PwC case studies include:

Coleraine NhP Team

The Coleraine team polices a mixed religion area comprising town centre, rural, private and public housing. The team piloted the use of POPT in NhP posts. Each officer is responsible for and accountable to the communities within their geographical area. This includes staffing police clinics, attending forums and dealing with Level Two calls (non-response), problem solving, and general NhP duties. Coleraine area produced evidence of a reduction of reported incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB). There was also evidence of partnership working and joint enforcement activity involving NhP officers, Council employees, Housing Executive officers, and Fire Service officers. Occasionally joint operations had been carried out with National Car Parks officers and the Driver Vehicle Testing Agency. The team had been involved in a taxi forum, flag forum, neighbourhood renewal, community safety committee, midnight soccer, town centre partnership and residents groups. Partner working with the community safety unit included projects such as a youth intervention project in three areas of the town aimed at ASB. There had also been joint projects aimed at protecting older and vulnerable people within the community. Inspectors were told of the success of these and other projects by community members as well as members of the DPP. There had been measurable outcomes from the various projects in that reports of ASB had declined whilst referrals to Youth Diversion Officers (YDOs) had increased. Community members also told Inspectors that NhP officers had policed bonfires around the town area which resulted in decreased tensions and a low number of incidents. The PwC fund had been used for projects instigated by individual officers, and a radio link scheme of retailers had reduced incidents of theft from shops. In various estates around the town, neighbourhood watch schemes had been supported by NhP officers.

Moyle NhP team and CSP

The rural Moyle area had the highest concentration of sheep in Europe and over a three year period theft of sheep in the area amounted to around 25% of all sheep thefts in Northern. Ireland. Individual identification of animals had not been possible as there had been no cost effective identification method available to assist in preventing their theft. PSNI neighbourhood officers working in partnership with the local farming community, community safety partnership and the veterinary division of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), encouraged farmers to report thefts and the initiative was supported by consulting with farmers unions, the Agri Food and Bio Sciences Institute (AFBI), the Agricultural College and the Datatag Company. The

partnership resulted in a three-tier approach to the theft problem involving biometric scanning, property marking using transponder technology, and an alert system using text messaging. At the time of inspection fieldwork, there had been no further incidents of theft of sheep in the area and DARD had recognised the scheme as an example of good practice.

Lower Shankhill NhP

A part-time police officer working in Lower Shankill neighbourhood policing team following a contentious parade in 2005 proposed she and her beat partner should perform a beat as a sign of reassurance to the wider community and a sense of return to normality. Tensions were very high in the area but the officer was well known locally and used her community contacts to assess the response to the proposal. There was some resistance to it but with her patrol partner she performed the first beat. This was met with some abuse by some community members but she maintained her respect for their opinion and began to establish better communications with the community in a time of high tension. This allowed for valuable conversations between herself and the community, opening channels for further communication. The officer and her patrol partner maintained the only beat patrol of the area for a period of around three months continuing to deliver a policing service to the community. In 2007, the same officer helped to maintain community relations following a series of police searches and established links with community groups. She ensured that women in the area were supplied with personal attack alarms following a rape. Her actions had greatly contributed to better community relations in the area.

Roadsafe Roadshow

The Roadsafe Roadshow partnership initiative began in 2001 as an idea of Road Education Officers, part of Roads Policing. Successful approaches were identified as involving partnership with appropriate agencies, and as a result other emergency services, Accident and Emergency hospital staff, and victims of road accidents were approached.
A roadshow was designed in consultation with partners as the medium to communicate the issue to members of the community most at risk. Whilst the PSNI are present, they do not take a central role leaving the actual presentation to a variety of people including other emergency services, an A&E consultant and other individuals who have been personally affected by road trauma.
The roadshow currently takes the form of a professional stage presentation, with a complimentary educational support package, accredited by educational authorities. Funding comes from external sponsorship from the private sector. At the time of inspection fieldwork Inspectors were told that the roadshow had reached around 48,000 of its target audience, young people aged between 17 and 24. The roadshow challenges negative young driver behaviour in a relevant and non-confrontational way. The roadshow had been adopted by some authorities in other parts of the UK and the Republic of Ireland and as a cross-border initiative funded by the European Commission.

CHAPTER 4:

Resources into outcomes

PCSOs

4.1 Police services in England and Wales rely heavily on PCSOs to staff neighbourhood teams. One of the best performing forces in this arena is Lancashire which had adopted a structure of about 1000 small neighbourhood teams. Feedback from members of the public to Lancashire police was that the small teams had been extremely accessible and involved at the street or estate level. Customer feedback on the performance of these teams had been regular and often carried out by way of a telephone survey of a random sample of people encountered by the teams. This sort of structure had provided for genuine accountability at neighbourhood level.

4.2 PSNI plans had been well advanced to recruit 400 PSCOs with a view to them performing similar roles to that undertaken in England and Wales. However, following recent funding decisions, the PSNI had decided not to recruit PCSOs. The decision not to recruit PCSOs coupled with the reduction of Reserve Constables, the stalling of recruitment of POPT and deployment issues (including restricted working hours), had impacted on the PSNI's ability to adequately staff NhP. There were clear differences in approach as to how resources may be found to implement NhP. The view of the PSNI after exploring options with the funding department, the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) was that resources were fixed and this had led to the decision not to recruit PCSOs. The Patten vision of placing PwC at the core of all police activity would require a greater focus on realigning existing resources to reflect that approach. PCSOs are unlikely to be recruited in the near future although at the time of report drafting, Inspectors were told that the PSNI were investigating alternative ways of funding some recruitment. During the fieldwork period some districts had begun to supplement NhP teams using POPT.

4.3 The Patten Report suggested that police numbers in NI should be higher than the (then) average of 1 officer per 390 head of population in England and Wales. It proposed that the figure should be around 1 officer per 220 head of population and that this should be reviewed after a period of ten years. The present number of 7500 officers equates to 1 officer per 226 head of population. The current average figure in the MSF group (excluding the Metropolitan Police) is 1 officer per 362 head of population. The report also stated that *'it is an important proposition of this report that the Chief Constable should have some*

discretion as to the precise numbers and ranks of officers and civilians who should be employed within the budget at his/her disposal; so the figure of 7,500 is a notional one, which we believe should form the basis of the budget given to the Chief Constable.' Police services in England and Wales have greater influence over the use of their funding and the composition of their work force. Officer numbers are determined by each service in consultation with the Home Office and the local Police Authority. The particular make-up of police services is a function of a tri-partite consultative process and not pre-determined. To enable the flexibility of composition of the police service described in the Patten Report **it would be helpful if arrangements could be developed in Northern Ireland which would enable the composition of the police service to be set by a tri-partite partnership involving the Chief Constable, the Ministry for Policing and Justice, and the NIPB, whenever Policing and Justice is devolved.**

Allocation of resources

4.4 In October 2004 the PSNI reported that there were 120 NhP teams operating with 875 officers assigned to community beat teams across the 29 DCUs, and 775 consultative forums of all types reported by District Commands. Table 2 illustrates the numbers of officers deployed on NhP duties at the time of the PSNI self-assessment in December 2007, compared to the figures available as of 7 July 2008. Across the service, total numbers of all ranks deployed to NhP decreased from 616 to 562 in 2008. However, there was an increase of POPT designated to NhP teams. The overall total including POPT rose from 1140 to 1335 between December 2007 and 7 July 2008.

4.5 Resourcing was often raised by police officers as an issue whilst carrying out the inspection fieldwork. It was also raised on many occasions by concerned members of the public who felt that the numbers of police allocated to delivering local services had declined. Without exception, community groups visited perceived that in the latter half of 2007 many officers engaged in neighbourhood policing had been moved and those remaining had additional duties or neighbourhoods allocated to them which meant that service delivery was spread much more thinly. This seems to be at odds with the figures reported to Inspectors in the PSNI self-assessment and up to the period of drafting the inspection report (Table 2). However, the perception amongst people receiving the service was based on their individual experiences. Inspectors were told by officers and members of the public that NhP officers had been removed from particular areas to bolster police resources, for example, at night clubs. The fact that this had been happening on the same evenings each week had been noticed by the public and by those in the area engaged in anti-social behaviour. Members of communities told Inspectors that they felt more vulnerable during the times that NhP officers were absent.

4.6 Police resources in NI compare very favourably with similar forces in

Table 2 Officers in Neighbourhood Policing Teams: 07/07/08

	Insp	Sgt	Const	POPT	
A District (North & West Belfast)					
Pre Inspection (Dec 2007)			69	50	
Post Inspection		10	43	53	
B District (South & East Belfast)					
Pre Inspection (Dec 2007)	9	13	85		
Post Inspection			73	97	
C District (Ards, Castlereagh, North Down & Down)					
Pre Inspection (Dec 2007)			80	135	
Post Inspection			79	135	
D District (Antrim, Lisburn, Newtownabbey & Carrickfergus)					
Pre Inspection (Dec 2007)	8	14	64	95	
Post Inspection	8	14	57	165	
E District (Armagh, Craigavon, Banbridge, Newry & Mourne)					
Pre Inspection (Dec 2007)		8	40	63	
Post Inspection			63	90	
F District (Cookstown, Omagh, Fermanagh, Dungannon & S. Tyrone)					
Pre Inspection (Dec 2007)		13	52		
Post Inspection		9	42	44	
G District (Foyle, Limavady, trabane & Magherafelt)					
Pre Inspection (Dec 2007)	9	15	67	68	
Post Inspection	6	11	56	64	
H District (Coleraine, Ballymoney, Moyle, Ballymena & Larne)					
Pre Inspection (Dec 2007)		12	62	109	
Post Inspection	7	13	85	111	
Total Number all ranks					**616**
Pre Inspection Total	**26**	**75**	**519**	**520**	**1140**
Post Inspection Total	**21**	**57**	**498**	**759**	**1335**
Total Number all ranks			**562**		

Table 3: Comparative numbers of officers per head of population using the MSF group and the Metropolitan Police

	Population	Officers*	Officers per 1,000 population
PSNI	**1,698,000**	**7,500**	**4.42**
Nottinghamshire	1,041,380	2,401	2.31
West Yorkshire	2,118,579	5,740	2.71
Greater Manchester	2,500,000	7,930	3.17
Northumbria	1,500,000	4,063	2.71
West Midlands	2,630,000	8,057	3.06
Metropolitan	7,200,000	31,090	4.32

* January 2008 figures from Home Office United Kingdom (UK) Police Directory to aid direct comparison.

Great Britain (GB). Table 3 illustrates the number of officers per head of population and it can be seen that the PSNI is still well ahead of all GB forces. The PSNI has 1/10th of an officer more (per 1000 population) than the Metropolitan Police and over 2 officers (per 1000 population) more than Nottinghamshire Police. It is accepted that NI still has policing issues that are unique and which are rooted in the many years of conflict. Apart from legacy issues other features such as being unable, when necessary, to share resources with neighbouring forces, and having an international land border to police, have impacted on budget and resource allocation. However, the move towards normalisation has been rapid and represents an opportunity for the PSNI to reassess its structures to reflect a changing work arena.

4.7 On visiting police stations during fieldwork it was apparent to Inspectors that many police officers were engaged on tasks that did not require the application of the powers of a Constable, for example, in police station reception areas, Occurrence and Case management Teams (OCMTs), and in call handling teams. It should be possible to free up officers to undertake PwC activities by pursuing civilianisation as part of a wider process of workforce modernisation. However, this long running programme had not delivered the numbers of officers required to effectively deliver PwC. The monitoring reports of the OOC reported little progress in freeing up officers by using civilian staff where appropriate and Inspectors found that this was still the case. Where officers had been freed up, it was apparent that the focus was not on strengthening PwC activities by bolstering neighbourhood policing teams. Table 2 illustrates that numbers of full-time NhP officers had decreased and teams had been supplemented by using POPT. Inspectors found that call centres were being staffed by teams of police officers when they could just as

effectively be staffed by non-police personnel with police expertise on hand as required. Officers were being used to staff OCMTs, some performing the role of inputting information which did not require police powers. Officers from specialist units such as Major Investigation Teams (MITs) and TSGs provide support to police Districts in dealing with major crime and public disorder as well as other regular operational support. However, there is opportunity for more effective use of officers from specialist units to support PwC as the core function.

Police Officers Part-Time (POPT)

4.8 Whilst these figures indicate an increase in total officers assigned to NhP, Inspectors found that particular issues arose when deploying POPT to NhP teams. POPT had brought additional attributes to NhP teams. Similar to the concept of PCSOs operating in GB police forces, Part-Time officers had been recruited locally to serve in their local area, where their skills and knowledge could be used to the full. This had provided advantages in enhanced local knowledge and familiarity with local issues that may take Full-Time officers years to develop. However, Inspectors found that Part-Time officers often had limited availability to perform duty, partly due to their other work commitments. In contrast, PCSOs are full time employees without the same restrictions of POPT as to their availability for duty.

4.9 Inspectors spoke with over 50 POPT in the four districts visited. Their experience of operating on the ground differed markedly from the concept of PwC proposed in the Patten Report. There were restrictions on the total amount of working hours POPT were allowed to work. For most POPT, this had been restricted to between 16 and 20 hours a month. Their experience was that they had been used mainly at night, due in part to them having other work during the day, but some whose full time employment involved shift work said that they had not been deployed on day time police duties except for special events. Only a handful of those interviewed had any involvement with community engagement initiatives, and most had never attended meetings of local community groups in their POPT capacity.

4.10 Whilst Inspectors found that POPT had been nominally deployed to NhP teams their supervision in some cases was allocated to a particular Sergeant on their home station. NhP Sergeants did not consider the Part-Time officers' general supervision to be within their remit whenever there was an allocated Sergeant to perform that task. POPT interviewed in the two urban areas said that although they were allocated to NhP teams, they did not feel an integral part of the team. They had usually been allocated patrol duties accompanying other POPT and rarely with Full-Time officers. NhP Sergeants regarded them as additional support rather than part of the team. Many POPT said that their experience of regular officers was that they had little regard for the skills and experience of local issues they could bring to the service.

4.11 POPT were being attached to NhP units more frequently as shown in Table 2. POPT bring a wide range of skills to the police family. Empowering them to use the skills they have as well as those they have been trained in, would support more effective deployment of NhP. None of those interviewed by Inspectors were aware of any attempt to utilise their existing skills for the benefit of delivering a policing service in partnership with the community. A skills audit had not been undertaken and NhP Sergeants in some areas were not aware of the potential skills available to them through these officers. Some POPT spoken to had teaching qualifications but had not been considered for use in the PSNI schools programme. Examples were also given of the under-use of POPT in relation to the training they had received. All the officers spoke highly of their training except for the fact that none had received a promised accreditation certificate from the University of Ulster. However, POPT indicated that much of their training had remained unused. Sergeants explained this to Inspectors as being due to their limited availability which could cause delays in submitting essential paperwork. For example, POPT said that they had received training in how to deal with cases of sudden death. However, none of those spoken to by Inspectors had dealt with such a case. Some POPT said they had often been deployed without having had adequate briefing and, since the reorganisation of the service into eight districts, to areas well away from their locality.

4.12 The views of POPT as regards their deployment and lack of empowerment were consistent across the service; however, those interviewed in the two rural districts were more positive about their contribution to PwC. Whilst there were particular localities in the rural districts where all the issues raised previously existed, for example, Ballymena, Larne, and Omagh, there were other areas such as Enniskillen and Coleraine, where POPT felt that they were an integral part of the NhP teams and contributing significantly to PwC. If the service is to continue with allocating POPT to NhP teams as the alternative to using PCSOs, then it should consider ways to better utilise their existing skills and local knowledge and empower them to deliver a better service to the community.

Training

4.13 NhP officers felt that they had not been sufficiently empowered to deliver local policing solutions to their communities. Officers said that there had been little training for officers deployed to NhP units since the demise of the Community Beat Officers' course in 2004. Some training had been delivered locally through District Training Officers (DTOs), for example in both 'A' and 'H' districts. However, this training had been limited in its scope and could not deliver training on identified gaps such as negotiating and influencing skills. At the time of inspection there had been a review of training for neighbourhood officers and there was an intention

13 Topping, J. R. (2008) Training for Neighbourhood Policing: Views from the Front Line; and, Topping, J. R. (2008) Views from the Community Sector

to conduct a training needs analysis (TNA) with a view to designing an accredited training package. This is an aspiration which Inspectors believe needs to be pursued to equip NhP officers with essential skills to deliver the ethos of policing with the community effectively.

4.14 Results of the TNA, conducted amongst officers as well as within the community sector[13], were made available during the drafting of this report. It had found that communities and officers recognised a need for a more structured community involvement in training to build relationships as well as providing the local context such as knowledge of community infrastructures. Outsourcing of some training to the community sector was suggested as a way of achieving this. It had also identified that there was a need for more time to be spent on the concepts of NhP during officer's training and probationary periods. Skills identified by the TNA as being necessary for NhP officers, such as developing and managing community relationships, should be interwoven not just into initial officer training but also into detective training, POPT training, and other operational training programmes, to fully embed PwC principles across the whole service.

4.15 In June 2005 the OOC reported that the recommendation that '*all probationary police officers should undertake the operational phases of their probationary training doing team policing in the community*' could not be implemented. The Commissioner reported that the requirement had proved impractical. At that time the role of NhP officers had not been clearly articulated and therefore probationer officers' development was being impeded by a lack of opportunity to apply basic enforcement and investigative skills and, '*This practice in effect clashed with the requirements of the instrument used to direct and assess probationer performance.*' In March 2008 the role of NhP officer had been better defined under the NhP programme and had been expanded to include much of the policing activities previously unavailable to probationers undertaking NhP work.

4.16 The PSNI probationer management policy states that probationer officers must spend a minimum of 12 weeks during their two year probation with community police teams. During the inspection fieldwork, officers on NhP units said that they rarely had probationer officers attached to them and when it did happen it was for a very limited time only; typically two days to one week. However, Inspectors were told by supervisors that once the officers had been absorbed by sections they had to *'sink or swim'* and that any ethos of community policing was likely to be swamped by the high demands of response policing with limited resources.

4.17 Some districts, for example, 'H' district, were moving to having probationer officers spend their first 2 weeks on district with NhP units, co-ordinated through Professional Development Officers (PDOs). This is a positive development. All the supervisors spoken to as part of the

inspection recognised that the first few weeks spent on district were very important in helping to form newly appointed officers' approach.

4.18 NhP officers had been dealing with virtually the same range of incidents that probationers would encounter on response duties with the exception of being the first attendees at a scene. The majority of skills that probationer officers are expected to provide evidence of in their development portfolio would be encountered whilst performing neighbourhood duties. Any gaps in the skills base, such as first attendance at scenes, could be covered by short attachments to response policing. This structure would better reflect the Patten vision of PwC being the core of policing to which officers could return following short development opportunities elsewhere in the service.

4.19 To embed PwC principles takes longer than a period of a few weeks and more than a series of lessons, however good or well integrated they are within the curriculum, delivered at the Police College. The knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes, and behaviour articulated during initial training requires a nurturing approach when officers first engage on patrol work so that they become '*second nature*' as espoused by former ACC Sheridan. At the time of inspection fieldwork, some probationers had been undertaking a period of 10 weeks tutorship on arrival at districts which included short attachments to some specialist units such as the case building teams. This followed training at the Police College and a 10 week period of operational training both of which had integrated elements of PwC in lessons throughout the programme. The PwC elements often had not been overtly identified or measured in terms of lesson objectives or evaluations, and at the time of inspection fieldwork the foundation programme was under review. Inspectors believe that a more overt approach to PwC principles throughout the training programme would assist officers and help to embed the principles in the wider police service.

4.20 The focus of officers' development needs to move from response to PwC so that it becomes embedded as the preferred policing ethos of the organisation. To help embed the ethos in newly attested officers, PSNI should consider attaching probationer officers to NhP units for the whole of their 10 week tutorship period (identified as weeks 11–20 in the probationer management policy). This should include short attachments to response policing co-ordinated by the PDOs, so that they can better assimilate the skills required to effectively deliver policing based on PwC principles. Probationer officers should then be required to undertake a further two four week periods of attachment to NhP teams. The first should be just prior to their attendance at Stage Four of their training, and the second should be just prior to their confirmation in the rank of Constable.

Abstraction

4.21 An issue that was raised repeatedly with Inspectors during fieldwork

was that of officers being removed temporarily but frequently from NhP duties (abstraction). Officers (including POPT) spoken with in all the districts visited said that the focus was on supporting response policing at the expense of NhP teams. For example, shift changes had been imposed on NhP officers purely to provide minimum numbers for response teams. The issue of abstraction had also been a recurring theme of the OOC reports, which found that officers allocated to NhP work were often redirected depending on local demands. Officers told Inspectors that this had often been done to deal with specific incidents of public disorder or to provide additional police at night clubs away from the NhP officers' normal patrol area. Officers undertaking locally delivered NhP training had also been abstracted to perform other duties when there had been a shortage of personnel.

Call Handling

4.22 Districts had centralised their call handling facilities. For example, 'H' district's call handling centre had been relocated to Coleraine whilst 'D' district had located theirs in Antrim. Local DPP members and other people from community groups said they had been told local issues would continue to be dealt with by staff that possessed relevant local knowledge based in the central call handling facility. However, members of the public who had contacted the police for assistance gave several examples of problems in making reports to the call handling centres. In many cases, it was apparent to the member of the public that the call handler had no appreciation of what they believed to be relevant local information. This often related to repeat occurrences such as persistent anti-social behaviour in a particular locale, or of damage to property and even dangerous driving. The complainants said that this compared unfavourably with previous, more locally delivered services.

4.23 Lack of effective call handling had impacted on the ability of the PSNI to effectively discharge PwC obligations. Members of the community and DPPs concluded that it had affected service delivery, exacerbating problems caused by already thinly spread resources. From discussions Inspectors had with members of the community, this situation had negatively affected public perception of the police. Call handling had been identified by the PSNI as an area for development.

4.24 The PSNI had instigated Project Unity, to deliver effective call handling and call management by 2010. However, in August 2008 following the CSR this project, in the same way as the PCSO project, had been put on hold. DPP and community group members had been briefed on Project Unity and many told Inspectors that the delay of this project was one amongst many examples of the police, '*over promising but under delivering.*' Effective call handling is central to delivering PwC. Under present arrangements, Inspectors found that NhP officers in some areas had become a second tier response unit, dealing with calls that would otherwise have been allocated a different police response. Inspectors

found that the call handling system currently in place was staff intensive and had created lists of incidents for NhP officers to deal with when they returned to duty. This had resulted in officers spending much of their duty time following up calls that had not been subject to adequate scrutiny and categorisation. This meant that the time NhP officers could spend actually pro-actively patrolling their areas had been reduced. A more effective system of call management would enable NhP officers to be freed up to undertake more pro-active patrolling in their areas thereby improving accessibility and visibility.

4.25 During the drafting of this report Inspectors were told of a scheme being implemented by 'H' district designed to enhance their call handling arrangements. The scheme had been well thought out and consultation had taken place with police headquarters. Although the scheme was not sophisticated in that it would rely on existing technology, it nevertheless would provide call handlers with the means to deal more effectively with call management decisions. The proposals had been designed to enable the more effective delivery of PwC as the core of police activity in 'H' district. The scheme went live in December 2008, therefore Inspectors are unable to comment on its effectiveness. This initiative is commendable and demonstrates the district's determination to deliver a better service for its public. Inspectors were confident that the scheme would help deliver better call handling services for 'H' district. The project in H District had been developed in consultation with Project Unity and the PSNI intended that it should be implemented as a proof of concept, designed to facilitate early thoughts on corporate strategic direction. Call management is a service-wide problem on which all districts need to be supported as effective call management is a critical enabler of PwC. **Inspectors recommend that as a matter of urgency PSNI develop and implement a service-wide call management strategy that reflects advances in technology to enable effective call handling in support of the delivery of PwC.**

CHAPTER 5:

Partnership and Community Engagement

Introduction

5.1 Partnership in policing is an important factor in making communities safer and in helping people to feel safer within their communities. The Patten Report constantly referred back to the Belfast Agreement regarding *'constructive and inclusive partnerships with the community at all levels'* and many of the report's recommendations had been designed to provide a framework for such partnership working arrangements. More recently, the importance of partnership working was recognised by the Criminal Justice and Policing Minister when he paid tribute to members of the CSPs and DPPs from across NI *'for the crucial and valuable contribution they are making in creating safer communities'*.

5.2 Internal partnerships are also important in pursuing the PwC ethos. This had been recognised by PwC branch in implementing its consultative and inclusive programme to work through the 25 recommendations to embed neighbourhood policing. The work it did to establish agreement on approaches across the eight police districts was recognised as helpful by senior officers on districts as well as by local DPPs. Internal partnerships between the PwC unit and other specialist operational roles, as well as with Human Resources in the PSNI, could be further developed so that the status of PwC becomes elevated to become the core function of the whole service. Without buy-in from these internal strategic partners, embedding PwC as the core policing function will not happen. Just as external partnership is central to accountability, internal partnership is central to effective deployment of any agreed PwC strategy.

Building engagement with local communities

5.3 Frameworks for developing external partnerships were set out in the Patten Report and had been central to the development of proper accountability. The creation of an independent policing board (NIPB) provided a tier of accountability for the new policing service. Further partnership tiers were added by the formation of DPPs and following the 2000 Review of Criminal Justice, CSPs became fully operational from 2004 onwards having been piloted in some areas, such as Antrim. Development of Neighbourhood Watch and associated schemes in partnership with the PSNI had also been an important element of policing in partnership.

5.4 The development of the CSPs has already been commented on by CJI in our report published in November 2006[14]. PwC inspection fieldwork was aimed at establishing the extent to which NhP had interacted with the activities of CSPs and how cohesive the approach to establishing safer communities was. The same can be said of the inspection approach to DPPs. Although their function differs significantly from CSPs, they are important contributors to public confidence in delivering the NhP programme.

5.5 Inspectors found that there had been many instances of excellent work being progressed locally under the direction of CSP co-ordinators and with the active participation of local police. Many projects undertaken locally aimed at improving community safety had been instigated by local NhP officers and at least part financed by the PwC fund. This fund, which had been started in 2005, had approved over 277 partnership projects that had received matched funds from other statutory and voluntary organisations. The gross spend at the time of inspection was around £2.8 million pounds which had contributed significantly to delivering PwC to local communities. However, Inspectors were told that the future sustainability of the fund was in question following the spending review. Loss of the fund would deal a blow to the sustainability of projects financed by it and overall could impact on the effectiveness of how PwC is delivered in local communities.

5.6 Partnership is one of the cornerstones of effective policing. Inspectors found that the PSNI had been developing and maintaining partnerships with many of the main statutory groups, and that individual officers had forged relationships with local community groups. Much of the development in this area was in progress during inspection fieldwork. A 'policing in partnership' programme designed to build trust between communities and the police was in operation. This had been deployed as far as District management teams with aspirations to extend it to operational level. Independent advisory groups (IAGs) had been formed and had been working closely with the police with regard to youth, older people, disabled people, and multi-cultural communities. For example, four separate district based IAGs for youth had been established within 'C', 'E', 'F' and 'G' districts. Since inspection fieldwork, a business advisory forum had been formed to further implement the business crime strategy approved by the Chief Constables Forum (CCF) and the NIPB. In addition, a PSNI Partnership Policy had been approved in June 2008.

5.7 The establishment of Key Individual Networks (KIN) had been very effective in developing NhP in forces in England and Wales. KINs are usually a representative cross section of individuals who play a key role in the community (e.g. community wardens, rangers, business owners and shop keepers, faith group representatives, young people,

14 An Inspection of Community Safety Partnerships; CJI, November 2006

residents and those who work and commute in the area). The PSNI had decided to use the term Active Citizen Network (ACN) to more accurately describe what they intended to establish along the same lines as KIN. Although the term ACN was not widely known amongst neighbourhood and other police officers, the NhP officers had been effectively developing networks in their local areas. At the time of inspection fieldwork the development of these networks was well under way in most districts building on previously established links.

5.8 Despite the myriad of projects Inspectors found had been undertaken locally such as; the Smartwater project, Crumlin; the trailer marking project in Omagh; and the Seafront Rangers project in Ballycastle; we found little evidence of overall co-ordination of these activities within the wider PwC agenda. Evaluation of the effectiveness of projects had only just started in some areas, such as Antrim and Ballycastle, whilst in other areas, evaluations had not got past the planning stage. The interaction of a large group of partners including community wardens, security staff, rangers, police, council officers and community volunteers in effectively policing with the community was, in most areas, ad-hoc and without an overall focus. Despite this Inspectors found that community members were aware of the existence of various projects, though often not their origins or detail, and had been welcoming of them.

Structures for engagement

5.9 The PSNI had re-organised into eight operational districts ahead of the final outcomes of the RPA. Inspectors found that the move from 29 districts to eight had an impact on community perception of policing services. The majority of people from the community that Inspectors spoke with said that they now felt more distanced from the police than they had done previously. Many attributed this to their experience of call handling in districts since the re-organisation. However, some also said that they had felt more distanced because of less contact with District Commanders, and perceived that there had been a decrease in opportunities to consult directly with officers empowered to make decisions regarding use of local resources. Re-organisation of the districts from 29 to eight had also resulted in some mismatching of boundaries with partner agencies. A decision to move to 11 council areas had caused further uncertainty within the PSNI at district level, as to boundaries and identification of local partners to enable them to develop and sustain the delivery of PwC in the future.

5.10 In some districts the structure of consultative meetings had been retained along the lines of pre-existing Community Police Liaison Committees (CPLCs). One of the 25 recommendations of the NhP programme was to establish a neighbourhood consultative forum in each neighbourhood in accordance with Partners And Community

Together (PACT) principles. Inspectors found that PACT was being pursued in different ways by the districts. 'H' district had used PACT principles as an umbrella structure for what had already been happening. The district had formed a strategic focus group with representation from all 5 DPP's in the district. At the time of fieldwork, the focus group had been charged with establishing a working definition of NhP which should assist with the proper recording and monitoring of abstraction rates of NhP officers.

5.11 The variation in approach by districts reflected a flexible approach by PwC Branch. Each district had been expected to develop a consultative forum based on PACT principles, but taking account of local community needs. Districts visited had broadly delivered on this expectation. However, members of the community spoken to by Inspectors were generally not aware of this approach. Communication with local community groups needs to be clear, open, and comprehensive to avoid alienating people who already feel more distanced from police following reorganisation into larger districts. The onus is on police District Commanders to find more effective ways of communicating with communities and either fulfilling, where possible, or managing their expectations of local policing. The formulation of a district communication strategy based on PwC principles, would help the further development of community engagement.

5.12 In England and Wales partnerships are cemented by legislation (Crime and Disorder Act 1998) which established obligatory partnerships between the police, local authorities, probation service, health authorities, the voluntary sector, as well as local residents and businesses. No such legislation exists in Northern Ireland. Inspectors were told by the majority of community groups, DPP members and CSPs that such legislation may help to get people moving in the same direction, thus providing a co-ordinated approach to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour at a local level. The present situation encountered by Inspectors had delivered some good partnership working, but often this had been inconsistent across the service area and within districts. Community members in rural areas felt that they had been involved only on the periphery, and only because of their own determination to enhance the policing service that they had experienced in their area. Following on from the RPA, making partnership arrangements obligatory could help to deliver better co-ordinated and integrated local policing services. **Inspectors recommend that legislation is introduced, equivalent to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to establish obligatory partnerships so that a more cohesive approach to local policing and community safety strategies can be implemented.**

Monitoring

5.13 The NIPB committed to delivering PwC by establishing NhP in all Districts as set out in the Policing Plan 2007.

Policing Plan 2007 – 10
Domain 2.0 To ensure that PwC is at the core of the delivery of the policing service
Performance indicator 2.1
Implementation of the PwC strategy by establishing the NhP model in all Districts

The NIPB monitors the implementation of the PwC strategy by requiring the PSNI to report to its Community Engagement Committee twice yearly, in particular, to establish the extent to which PwC has become the ethos in all areas of policing. The NIPB had commissioned work on a framework for measuring progress of PwC and NhP which had been carried out by a former member of the OOC. The report provided the NIPB with example performance measurements on both PwC and NhP. The PSNI are reporting to the NIPB against targets set out in the framework and expect these to be further refined following feedback on their operation.

5.14 One of the NIPB continuous improvement targets was '*To increase the engagement of neighbourhoods in the prevention of crime*'. Measurable targets had been set and published within the policing plan 2008 – 11 for delivery of PwC:

To demonstrate our contribution to the establishment of community engagement meetings in line with Partners and Community Together (PACT) model in all neighbourhoods, reporting twice yearly to the Board.

9.1.2 To ensure that Neighbourhood Officers work at least 80% of their duty hours on neighbourhood policing duties.

5.15 NIPB has a central role in furthering PwC practice and principles in the PSNI. Performance targets set out in the policing plan have become the focus of police activity and resources and structures are aimed at delivering against these targets. Inspectors were told that performance against previous policing plan targets had been integrated into District Commanders' performance assessment with regional ACCs. Targets had been quantitative and the PSNI had performed well against those targets over the past few years. However, performance and target setting elsewhere had been evolving towards more qualitative style targets. For example, Chapter 7 of the Green Paper[15] sets out how the Government intends that police services in England and Wales will deliver improved performance. It concentrates on developing less reliance on top down targets, and an emphasis on a system in which police services are held to account much more at local level and assessed using a qualitative framework. Local arrangements in Northern Ireland focus not on local accountability (paragraph 4.11) but on DPPs:

- identifying community concerns regarding the policing of the district;
- providing views to the police concerning the policing of the district; and
- making arrangements for obtaining the co-operation of the public in the prevention of crime.

The development of a system to improve local accountability in Northern Ireland using a qualitative

15 Policing Green Paper, published on 17 July 2008

framework of measurement would reflect the maturation of the system in England and Wales. **Inspectors recommend that the principles of improving police performance as outlined in the Chapter 7 of the 'Policing' Green Paper should be extended to Northern Ireland.**

DPPs

5.16 The Patten report described real partnership between the police and the community as: '*a partnership based on openness and understanding; a partnership in which policing reflects and responds to the community's needs*'. The mechanisms for creating such a partnership proposed by the report had been the NIPB and DPPs. However, Inspectors were told by many DPP members that the partnership between them and the police had not been an equitable one. This message was consistent and went across political divides. It was expressed to Inspectors in different ways but the message was the same. DPP members felt that they were not being listened to by the police. They said that especially during public meetings, but also at other times the police had been very defensive, had used what they described as the *'excuse'* of lack of resources to defend their position, and, were not responding to community concerns properly raised. There were frustrations amongst many DPP members over what they saw as lack of progress in adopting a PwC ethos. Conversely, police officers told Inspectors that they regarded DPP members as too parochial and lacking understanding of many of the restrictions that the PSNI operated under.

5.17 DPPs were active in partnership with the police in their other areas of responsibility, for example, identifying community concerns regarding the policing of the district and providing views to the police concerning the policing of the district. However, other groups spoken to by Inspectors had also provided very similar information to local police. For example, Loughgiel Community Association had provided information on anti-social behaviour in an effort to boost local policing services. CSPs such as Ballycastle had also undertaken projects identifying areas of concern to local people. These and many other initiatives instigated by local groups, indicated a real willingness on the part of local community groups to engage with the police, and to provide information on those incidents which had a high impact on quality of life but had often gone under-reported. Such high volume, under-reported incidents or crimes have been termed 'signal crimes or signal disorder[16]'. The use of the signal crimes perspective and other social indicators, may help the PSNI to better gain community insight and to improve local partnership working.

5.18 DPP members admitted that at times their understanding of police procedures and restrictions could have been better, and at those times, they felt less able to effectively monitor police performance against

16 Innes, M. (2004) "Signal crimes and signal disorders: notes on deviance as communicative action", British Journal of Sociology. (55/3) pp. 335-55

local policing plans. There was a certain frustration amongst DPP members that the role as defined under the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 (as amended), did not include responsibility to hold local police to account for their performance. This role is assigned to the NIPB. Given that, DPP members recognised the extent of their activities, but regarded effective monitoring of performance as being able to ask searching questions of local police. To an extent this had been happening by being able to table questions in advance and receiving answers. However, this was where DPP members had experienced defensiveness on the part of the police, and many said that they felt under prepared as regards understanding some of the technicalities of policing. Inspectors experienced this at first hand during an open meeting where a question had been answered in terms that members of the public, and DPP members present, found difficult to understand.

5.19 DPP managers told Inspectors that the PSNI had developed a knowledge sharing project to encourage the exchange of ideas and problem-solving initiatives, both internally and externally, to promote public co-operation with policing. Workshops covering subjects such as youth issues, damage, burglary, and violent crime had been held for DPP managers in 2006. The workshops included input from community police officers setting out initiatives they had undertaken to deal with crime and the fear of crime. DPP managers said that the workshops had been useful and that they would like to see the initiative expanded to include other groups external to the PSNI. The NIPB Annual Report into Human Rights[17] reported that *'We consider that the knowledge sharing workshop is a very positive initiative, demonstrating pro-active partnership development by the PSNI'*. The report went on to recommend that *'The PSNI consider extending this model to a variety of partnership agencies'*. The NIPB 2008 Annual Report into Human Rights[18] stated that the recommendation had been implemented. This is a very positive development that should help to further develop effective partnership working and empower partners charged with monitoring responsibilities to effectively discharge their obligations.

Wider community engagement

5.20 Partnership between the PSNI and community restorative justice groups was sporadic. In some areas, for example, the Twinbrook area of Belfast, there had been good examples of partnership working based on clear understanding of each others' respective roles, and on good personal relationships between neighbourhood officers and scheme members. However, the sustainability of such relations was questioned by community partners following redeployment of police officers to other duties. In other areas partnership working with restorative

17 Monitoring the compliance of the PSNI with the Human Rights Act 1998: Annual Report 2007
18 Monitoring the compliance of the PSNI with the Human Rights Act 1998: Annual Report 2008

justice schemes had not been advanced as far, but this should improve when the schemes are accredited. Partnerships in areas where policing services had previously been limited, are very important to produce conditions that could help deliver PwC in local communities. It was these same, often socially deprived areas that had the least coverage of NhW schemes.

5.21 The amount of information provided to the police from disparate sources had made it more difficult for District Commanders to identify local priorities and deliver policing based on community needs. As outlined in the CJI report on CSPs[19] there are many local partnerships impacting on policing. These include: Local Strategic Partnerships; Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships; Area Partnership Boards; Belfast Regeneration Office; DPPs and CSPs. In those areas where DPPs and CSPs worked closely together such as in Antrim, Coleraine and Enniskillen, there was more of a cohesive approach to providing the police with local input and securing co-operation. However, following on from the RPA, Inspectors believe now would be an opportune time to implement the recommendation set out in our report into CSPs that: ***'As regards the future relationship between CSPs and DPPs, the optimum position post-RPA would be to have one operational community safety/policing tier in each council area. We would recommend policy makers to look again at the vision laid out in the Patten Report and echoed to some extent in the Criminal Justice Review.'***

5.22 Inspectors found that NhP officers had been actively engaged in developing partnerships with community groups, statutory and non-statutory bodies, often in their own time. Individual officers received much praise from community groups in all of the four districts visited for the commitment they had given to delivering PwC in local areas. The actions of these officers were amongst the most positive aspects of the inspection fieldwork. In the words of one community member but echoed by many others, *'they had done the same as some of us and took risks to make the community safer.'* However, members of various community groups had provided examples of officers cancelling their attendance due to being abstracted away from NhP duties or being unable to adjust their shift pattern to enable them to attend. This had resulted in disappointment amongst some community groups and a questioning of the organisation's commitment to PwC as the core policing function

Neighbourhood Watch

5.23 The importance of NhW schemes in the North American context was referred to in Chapter 1. Just prior to the inspection fieldwork, NhW schemes had been reported on in a report commissioned by the NIPB on behalf of a partnership supporting NhW comprising the PSNI, NIPB and the Community Safety Unit (CSU) of the NIO[20]. The report recognised

19 An Inspection of Community Safety Partnerships; CJI November 2006
20 Research into the Views and Experience of People Involved in Neighbourhood Watch Schemes in Northern Ireland: November 2007

NhW initiatives as having an important role to play in community safety and Inspectors found that where there were schemes in operation, members of the community said they felt better connected to local policing services, for example, in the Coleraine area. Some NhP officers had been active in helping NhW co-ordinators and many community groups were positive about the work they did. The CSU reported that there were over 300 schemes in operation covering around 30,000 households. However, in many areas schemes had been difficult to set up often due to historical mistrust. Inspectors found that NhP officers had been supportive of schemes but were told by many officers that their input had been limited due to other priorities, both core neighbourhood issues and other policing duties. A recommendation of the NIPB commissioned report was that, *'PSNI standardises the police approach to Neighbourhood Watch schemes. This could include appointing designated police contact(s) in each command unit and for all Neighbourhood Watch schemes. The police officer(s) should ensure that a variety of means of contact between the police and scheme are made available including meetings, phone and email etc.'* Whilst some police officers had been very active with local NhW schemes, Inspectors did not find evidence that a standardised approach had been deployed across the service. Inspectors believe that implementation of the recommendation in the CSU report to standardise the approach to NhW schemes, would help improve PwC.

CHAPTER 6:

Community Perspective: A window of Opportunity

Introduction

6.1 To establish community perceptions of how policing with the community was being delivered, Inspectors examined public survey data as well as conducting many face to face interviews with individuals and focus groups. These groups represented a wide variety of communities, urban and rural, across the four police district areas included in the inspection fieldwork. The fieldwork focused on obtaining information as to how police were perceived locally, and in particular, how PwC was being delivered through the NhP programme and other initiatives.

6.2 In 2000, nationalists were reported as believing there was a deep rooted antipathy towards them within the police (at that time the Royal Ulster Constabulary), whilst unionists believed that the police gave preferential treatment to nationalists[21]. The community consultation carried out by Inspectors indicated that both nationalists and unionists were keen to engage effectively with the PSNI to help deliver local policing.

Survey data

6.3 During the drafting of this report the most recent public attitude survey figures were published by the NIPB based on the questions contained in the Omnibus survey carried out by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)[22]. Many of the questions in the survey relate to overall performance of the PSNI across Northern Ireland. However, for the first time in the survey there were three questions particularly aimed at neighbourhood policing. NISRA reported that 64% of respondents had heard of NhP. Of those who had heard of it, 26% thought it was working well or very well, and 29% said that they knew that a neighbourhood/community policing team operated in their area. Whilst overall performance may be measured from such a baseline, the information cannot be disaggregated into more useful local data for use by police District Commanders.

6.4 Whilst it is useful to have such survey data, it provides only high level information which is of limited use to police District Commanders who do

21 Attitudes to the Criminal Justice System; Review of the Criminal Justice System in Northern Ireland March 2000; Research report 12: Seamus Dunn, Valerie Morgan and Helen Dawson

22 Full report available at http://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/index/publications/omnibus-surveys.htm

not receive a local detailed breakdown of the figures. In step with the moves in England and Wales to drive accountability to a more local level, it would be useful to survey less often (presently twice a year) and with more local detail. This would provide District Commanders with detailed information so that policing services could be better directed towards those issues that are of particular local relevance. Providing local data is presently often done by DPPs, augmented by CSPs, and various local community groups. For example, in 2008 a DPP survey reported that 8% of people knew the names of or recognised the police officers policing their local area. Having a more co-ordinated approach to collecting local information, involving all relevant local groups and producing a comprehensive set of data, would help the process of setting local policing plans and priorities for neighbourhoods. Including questions in local surveys on NhP would also provide detailed local data on which to assess the performance of local Commanders in delivering PwC.

The community perspective

6.5 Because this was the first time NhP questions had been included on the omnibus survey, it was not possible to refer to previous figures with regard to comparing police performance in these three question areas. However, Inspectors collected a large amount of qualitative data from meetings with DPPs, CSPs, community groups, and tenants associations. A wide range of issues were raised regarding policing with the community and numerous examples were provided to Inspectors that could not always be verified. However, from all of the meetings there were three main issues that were common to all four of the police districts. They were:

- Accessibility;
- Engagement and consultation; and
- Visibility.

Accessibility

6.6 The rationale of closing some small PSNI stations had been understood by many members of the community spoken with by Inspectors. However, promises of effective alternative arrangements had, in many cases, not been delivered, for example, mobile police stations and police clinics. Where these had been provided such as in 'F' district and parts of 'H' district, members of the community were positive about their experiences of them, whilst recognising they gave limited access to opportunities of face to face contact. Community members said they felt more distanced from the police following reorganisation into eight districts and the centralisation of call handling arrangements. Many community members spoken with said that they had experienced difficulties in obtaining response to incidents they had reported to the police. They attributed this to a lack of understanding of local issues on the part of the call handler. People contrasted this with previous experiences of being able to access a call handler with knowledge of local issues. Incidents of repeat anti-social behaviour, including minor damage, nuisance and driving incidents, had in the views of members of the public, not received the appropriate response. Most community members

spoken with perceived that District Commanders had become more remote since reorganisation. Police had experienced a similar situation in England and Wales following centralisation of call handling and the establishment of larger districts. This places even more onus on District Commanders to establish effective and inclusive consultation arrangements with local communities.

Engagement and consultation

6.7 Within communities Inspectors found that there was a willingness to engage with the PSNI and recognition of some excellent local, often individual work, being undertaken by NhP officers. The overwhelming view of people was that the present situation represented an opportunity to fill the policing void in some areas where it had been seriously lacking in the past. But there was also a strong view that this opportunity would not last. Inspectors were given examples of incidents that had not been resolved by the police and where paramilitary groups had been approached by members of the community to deal with, for example, anti-social behaviour. Members of the community said that this had arisen out of frustration with perceived lack of action on the part of police. These claims were made by several members of different community groups in areas where traditionally there would have been at least tacit support for the police. Inspectors were told by people in these situations that they feared that this trend would continue, and that the opportunity for police to engage and deliver PwC in their areas, was time limited. Inspectors were told that the approaches had not resulted in any action, but that people in communities were apprehensive of a return to this style of 'self-policing'. Inspectors found that within these communities, there was an eagerness for real engagement with the police to deal with issues such as anti-social behaviour, that severely impacted on quality of life issues.

Consultation by the PSNI was regarded by many community groups as an exercise in 'fait accompli' with an attitude of 'PSNI know best'. They did not consider the ethos or style of the PSNI to be community focused. All of the groups spoken to believed the Patten vision for policing with the community had not been delivered. Group members who had in their own words been, '*putting their necks on the line to make a difference*' said they would like to see PSNI engage better with their communities. The overall perception was that the police were not really committed to community policing. In order to better manage public expectations, there needs to be more effective consultation, dialogue and engagement with communities by district management teams with an emphasis on customer focus.

Visibility

6.8 Communities had recognised that there had been neighbourhood teams operating in their areas. Members of groups said that they knew the officers allocated to their area by name and that these officers had been very active in delivering policing using the PwC ethos. However, most groups at the time of inspection fieldwork, said they had detected a

decrease in the visibility of officers in their area. The advantage of knowing officers by name had meant that community members had been able to identify very clearly when they were absent from the area. Community members said that neighbourhood officers had been allocated extra areas to police and also had regularly been taken away from the area to provide police cover at events and to police nightclubs. For example, Inspectors were told of officers being moved to provide policing outside night clubs in the Portrush/Portstewart areas and in Omagh. These abstractions had left gaps in NhP teams, especially in rural areas, and residents in these areas said that they felt more vulnerable, especially to incidences of anti-social behaviour at these times. Community groups and DPPs knew their local neighbourhood officers, including POPT, and recognised that they had contributed very positively to delivering PwC locally. However, they also were aware that POPT and other officers, had often been deployed away from their area to bolster police resources elsewhere.

Section 2

PSNI Action Plan

PSNI Action Plan

PSNI Specific Strategic Recommendations	Police Response and Action Plan
Inspectors recommend that PSNI implement a revised PwC strategy in line with it being placed at the core of the policing function and embedded in every policy and process. The strategy should be founded on a clear corporate vision of PwC and should raise and support its status within the organisation.	The PWC Strategy will be refreshed during 2009 and will have a corresponding Implementation Plan.
Inspectors recommend that as a matter of urgency PSNI develop and implement a service-wide call management strategy that reflects advances in technology to enable effective call handling in support of the delivery of PwC.	Project Unity was put on hold until funding could be secured in August 2008. The current position is to deliver a series of transitional improvements by mid 2009 and a strategic continuation of Call Management will follow on from this to be delivered 2012/2013. The scope and shape of this strategic direction will be determined in 2009.
Inspectors recommend that PSNI implement policies regarding: • recruitment of PCSOs; • measurement and management of performance in PwC; • corporate structures to support and sustain PwC; and, • allocation of resources to support and sustain NhP that place PwC as the core policing function.	The recommendation of PCSOs under the Neighbourhood Policing Framework (NFP) is being kept under review. Funding is currently unavailable for PCSOs. Police Officer's Annual Performance Review will reflect PWC Principles from April 2009. This will be considered for all support staff during the PWC Strategy refresh. Corporate Structures are currently under review by the CORE Project.

Suggestions for Improvement	Police Response and Action Plan
Giving operational responsibility for NhP to the two regional ACCs or in future to one ACC with service-wide responsibility for operational matters would provide better local accountability for delivery of PwC (paragraph 2.8).	Regional ACCs will be given responsibility for Neighbourhood Policing, the tactical arm of PWC once the NPF has been implemented, but not for the PWC Strategy. The Strategy covers the whole organisation, Police and Support Staff and to be placed with Regional ACCs would give it an operational element only.
It would be helpful if members of the NhP Programme Board would attend each board meeting in person. Minutes of meetings should be actively communicated and published to the service through its intranet system (*Policenet*) (paragraph 3.4).	Minutes of the Corporate and Governance Board meetings are currently published on the internal Policing with the Community web page.

Setting minimum operating levels for NhP teams would help to deliver a better community-oriented local policing service and would raise the status of NhP internally (paragraph 3.5).	District Commanders have the autonomy for the operating levels within their Neighbourhood Teams, which is reflective of the needs of individual neighbourhoods, and the District as a whole.
The work of neighbourhood officers needs to be marketed internally especially by District Commanders who set the policing tone for their area (paragraph 3.9).	As part of the Neighbourhood Policing Framework, (Recommendation 25), each District has a Communication and Marketing Strategy which deals with internal and external communication. This recommendation has been implemented throughout all Districts.
The service needs to move to empower and entrust officers within its overall supervisory framework so that they can respond more effectively to community needs (paragraph 3.12).	Through PACT principles, neighbourhood issues are identified, prioritised and actioned by neighbourhood officers, community and partners.
If the service is to continue with allocating POPT to NhP teams as the alternative to using PCSOs, then it should consider ways to better utilise their existing skills and local knowledge and empower them to deliver a better service to the community (paragraph 4.12).	Neighbourhood Sergeants will maintain their own database of POPTs skills and local knowledge, enabling better productive use of their expertise.
Skills identified by the TNA as being necessary for NhP officers such as developing and managing community relationships, should be interwoven not just into initial officer training but also into detective training, POPT training and other operational training programmes to fully embed PwC principles across the whole service (paragraph 4.14).	The Police College is committed to the continued integration of PwC principles into training programmes. Consultation recently took place with a small number of community groups on the NhP TNA. The TNA, community consultation, together with the current CLDP (Core Leadership Development Programme) Neighbourhood Police training modules, will form the basis of a new NhP Officers course. Once shaped, this should build upon the integration of PwC that already exists within training. When finalised, further consultation with the various training programmes, can take place to establish how best to extend the PwC principles within all training.
Inspectors believe that a more overt approach to PwC principles throughout the training programme would assist officers and help to embed the principles in the wider police service (paragraph 4.19).	The Police College has recently sourced and conducted a pilot training course for Call Handling in conjunction with Lancashire Police – Dec 2008. Work is currently ongoing regarding the construction and delivery methods of a new NhP course. The College would see these two programmes as important to the progression of PwC within training. This could place PwC more into context for many front-line officers and staff. Other recent initiatives include, taking forward innovative and customer led PwC training such as the joint DPP/DCU Command events conducted at the 'Hydra Minerva' suite at Steeple.

To help to embed the ethos in newly attested officers, PSNI should consider attaching probationer officers to NhP units for the whole of their 10-week tutorship period (identified as weeks 11–20 in the probationer management policy) (paragraph 4.20).	The current Policy Directive is currently under review. The area of probationer officers into NhP teams is being examined as to how best progress this within Districts.
The use of the signal crimes perspective and other social indicators may help the PSNI to better gain community insight and to improve local partnership working (paragraph 5.17).	This area is incorporated into PACT and EVAs, (Environmental Visual Audits) are one of the many engagement tools available to neighbourhood officers, their partners and community.
This places even more onus on District Commanders to establish effective and inclusive consultation arrangements with local communities (paragraph 6.6).	The establishment of PACT principles in each neighbourhood, with a dedicated neighbourhood officer, will provide a named point of contact. The completion of neighbourhood profiles will ensure that the appropriate level and form of engagement with the whole community is achieved. In addition each District has a Marketing and Communications Strategy and a Community Engagement Strategy in regards to neighbourhood policing.
In order to better manage public expectations, there needs to be more effective consultation, dialogue and engagement with communities by district management teams with an emphasis on customer focus (paragraph 6.7).	This is being managed through the PACT Principles at neighbourhood level, where engagement is community led, representative of the community, partnership involvement and action not talk. In addition each District has a Communication and Marketing Strategy and an Engagement Strategy, which are both completed recommendations within the Neighbourhood Policing Framework.

Section 3

Appendices

Appendix 1: Methodology

This Inspection commenced in December 2007 when a steering group consisting of representatives from the PSNI and NIPB convened in the offices of CJI and agreed the terms of reference for the inspection. A self-assessment was proposed as the starting point of the inspection based on the 25 NhP criteria identified in the PSNI neighbourhood policing framework.

The PSNI produced a self-assessment in January 2008 which was used to identify specific areas to focus the inspection on. Whilst the self-assessment covered service wide activity it was agreed that four of the eight police districts should be inspected in depth; two rural areas and two urban areas. The police areas inspected are listed below.

PSNI District	
A District	North and West Belfast
D District	Antrim, Lisburn, Newtownabbey and Carrickfergus
F District	Cookstown, Omagh, Fermanagh, Dungannon and South Tyrone
H District	Coleraine, Ballymoney, Ballymena, Moyle, and Larne

Fieldwork with the PSNI commenced in February 2008. A team from HMIC joined two teams from CJI to conduct individual and focus group interviews in each of the four police districts as well as with key headquarters based personnel. The following is a list of the personnel, by post, interviewed during this phase of the inspection fieldwork in the four police districts:

District Commanders:
District Superintendents Community Safety;
Area Commanders;
District Inspectors focus groups;
District heads of HR;
District Constables focus groups;
District Sergeants focus groups;
District crime analysts and higher crime analyst; and
Call handling staff.

The following headquarters based staff were also interviewed:

Deputy Chief Constable;
Assistant Chief Constable crime operations;
Assistant Chief Constable criminal justice;
Assistant Chief Constable operational support;
Head of HR;
Head of Northern Ireland Police College;
Police college staff;
Members of NhP implementation team;
Head of PwC branch;
Members of PwC branch; and
Superintendents Crime Operations.

As part of the fieldwork Inspectors made unannounced visits to two stations to observe the day to day functioning of neighbourhood policing. Following the period of fieldwork in each district, focus group interviews with POPT were conducted during which time a total of 52 part-time officers contributed to the inspection.

During February to May 2008 an extensive programme of community consultation was undertaken to establish the community views on PwC. A series of structured and semi-structured interviews with 14 DPP managers and 11 CSP co-ordinators was completed. Inspectors also conducted focus group interviews with 14 DPPs across the four police district areas. A total of 115 DPP members took part in these focus groups.

Eighteen community groups comprising over 150 individuals across the four districts were consulted by way of focus group interviews. These included both rural and urban based groups and members of various tenants associations. The organisation Supporting Communities Northern Ireland (SCNI) also organised a focus group session involving representatives from Lurgan, Portadown, Enniskillen, Coleraine, Antrim, Lisburn, Bangor and Omagh; together with three SCNI staff and a Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) representative.

Inspectors also had access to information collected as a result of other CJI inspection activity in the geographical areas that we were examining, including fieldwork evidence from restorative justice scheme assessments and other research work being carried out independently in those areas.

Inspectors shared emerging findings from the inspection with the Chief Constable, the PSNI Chief Constables' forum and members of the Community Engagement committee of the NIPB. Draft reports were shared with interested agencies prior to finalising the report for ministerial permission and publication.

Appendix 2: Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference for inspection of Policing with the Community

Introduction

Recommendation 44 of the Patten Report stated that, *'Policing with the community should be the core function of the police service and the core function of every police station.'* In the final report of the Office of the Oversight Commissioners (OOC)[23] progress against this recommendation was reported as, *'Full compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved. (Substantial Progress).*

The PSNI confirmed the status of Policing with the Community (PwC) as a core function by adopting the PWC policy which stated that, *'It (PwC) cannot be properly implemented in an organisation where reactive policing is the underlying style.'* The same policy sets out the aim of PWC as *'to improve community safety by reducing crime and the fear of crime, and tacking anti-social behaviour.'* The policy outlined the five principles of community policing in Northern Ireland as:

- Service Delivery;
- Partnership;
- Problem Solving;
- Empowerment; and
- Accountability.

The Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) committed to delivering Policing with the Community (PwC) by establishing Neighbourhood Policing (NHP) in all Districts as set out in the Policing Plan 2007.

Policing Plan 2007 – 2010
Domain 2.0 To ensure that PWC is at the core of the delivery of the policing service.

Performance indicator 2.1
Implementation of the PWC strategy by establishing the NHP model in all Districts.

The NIPB states that it monitors the implementation of the PWC strategy by requiring the PSNI to report to its Community and Human Rights Committee every six months, in particular to establish the extent to which PwC has become the ethos in all areas of policing. The NIPB has recently commissioned a piece of work on a framework for measuring progress of PwC and NhP which was carried out by a former member of the OOC.

23 Overseeing the Proposed Revisions for the Policing Services of Northern Ireland - Report 19 - Published 31.05.2007.

Context

Progress of PwC was monitored through the functions of the OOC from its formation in 2001. The role was extended by a further two years in 2005 by the then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Paul Murphy so that the full implementation of the reforms set out by the Patten Report could be independently verified. The OOC ceased operations in June 2007 having signed off the majority of Patten recommendations. From 2001 to May 2007, the OOC produced 19 reports which included progress against the recommendations of the Patten Report on PwC. The OOC recognised that 'substantial progress' had been made against Recommendation 44 of the Patten Report and detailed those areas which required further effort.

PwC was flagged as an area for inspection by CJI/HMIC and discussed at length during the CJI Stakeholder Conference in January 2007. Plans to conduct such an inspection were discussed with the PSNI and in further consultation with HMIC, it was agreed that a joint inspection of PwC should be carried out during the latter part of 2007 and early 2008 following agreement of a terms of reference.

Inspection criteria

The aim of the inspection is to assess the PSNI's progress in implementing its PwC policy against agreed inspection criteria. CJI and HMIC propose four main inspection criteria based on:

1. Remaining Issues and incomplete recommendations identified by the final OOC report;
2. Areas of assessment for NHP;
3. The five principles of Community policing[24] – Service delivery;
   Partnership;
   Problem Solving;
   Empowerment;
   Accountability;
4. Completed Patten recommendations – to verify continuance; and
5. Progress against the NHP element of the 2006 HMIC Baseline Assessment.

1. OOC remaining issues and incomplete recommendations

'A framework for measuring performance and accountability requires early attention by the Police Service and the Policing Board.'

'As matters stand, lack of an adequate call management system is a risk to public acceptance of effective policing throughout Northern Ireland'.

'The Policing Board and DPPs will have to maintain a close scrutiny with respect to the outcomes of the new structures and the impact they have on policing with the local communities.'

24 Identified in section 2 of the PSNI PwC policy.

Incomplete Patten recommendations

Patten Rec 44. Policing with the Community should be the core function of the police service and the core function of every police station.
Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/District Commanders

Patten Rec 45. Every neighbourhood (or rural area) should have a dedicated policing team with lead responsibility for policing its area.
Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/District Commanders

Patten Rec 49. NHP teams should be empowered to determine their own local priorities and set their own objectives, within the overall Annual Policing Plan and in consultation with community representatives.
Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/District Commanders

2. Areas for Assessment re NHP element

This inspection will not grade PSNI performance as 'Excellent, Good, Fair or Poor'. The specific areas to inspect regarding NhP have been specifically adapted to the Northern Ireland context and implementation time line.

3. The five principles of community policing

Performance will be measured by using existing quantitative data such as response rates; crime figures; incidences of ASB etc., as well as qualitative data. There is also a possibility of commissioning or conducting a survey prior to the inspection fieldwork in February 2008 to establish community perceptions in those areas that are to be inspected during inspection fieldwork. Presently, public perception/confidence is measured in the twice yearly omnibus survey which cannot be broken down into locality specific information. In addition, qualitative data will be gathered during the fieldwork phase of the inspection through interviews with stakeholders and key officers on District as to their perceptions of PwC, their satisfaction levels and their perception of the status of PwC within the PSNI as a whole.

4. OOC completed Patten recommendations to verify continuing compliance (annex 2)

These areas will not be the main focus of the inspection. However, it is important to be able to report to the public on the continuing implementation and development across the service area of recommendations previously assessed as completed.

5. Progress against HMIC Baseline Assement

Areas for Improvement (AFI's) identified in the baseline assessment are set out in annex 3.

Methodology

Following agreement of terms of reference the PSNI will be invited to conduct a self-assessment on their performance in PwC against the agreed criteria. This self-assessment should be presented to CJI/HMIC by 1st February 2008 and will form the basis for development of hypotheses and of specific inspection questions. The self-assessment should be evidential based and should make judgements on where the PSNI is with regard to achieving the stated aim of PWC. Where possible evidential material should be included along with the self-assessment together with any other supporting evidence of PWC activity that is relevant to the inspection.

During January 2008 Inspectors will gather evidence and submissions from identified stakeholders of PwC and may conduct the proposed public survey if approved. Evidence from the self-assessment and stakeholder consultation will be used to formulate hypotheses which will be fine tuned by the Inspectorates prior to inspection fieldwork.

Inspectors will conduct the fieldwork visit in the week commencing 18th February. Fieldwork will consist of a series of semi-structured interviews with key officers and staff who can provide informed comment on PwC. Strategic level interviews will be conducted with the Deputy Chief Constable and with the ACC lead for PwC. Inspection visits will be conducted in four police Districts, two urban and two rural. Individual interviews will be conducted with those officers responsible for delivering PwC in those areas; Chief Inspectors and Inspectors. District Commanders will also be interviewed individually. Focus group interviews will be conducted with at least two PwC/NhP teams and separate focus groups of their first line supervisors in each of the areas visited. Additional interviews will be conducted with staff in the PwC branch of the Criminal Justice Department. Members of the NhP Programme Board and the corporate implementation team will also be interviewed. The inspection will also involve interviews with members of the PSNI Crime Operations department. A draft framework for an inspection fieldwork programme of interviews will be prepared in partnership with staff at the PSNI Inspection and Review Department and agreed in advance. For the inspection fieldwork there will be two teams of two available from the Inspectorate with a third team being used to conduct any additional interviews as well as speaking to stakeholders.

Evidence from all of the interviews will be used to assess the validity of the PSNI self-assessment and to check other qualitative data gathered during the inspection process so that Inspectors can begin to make judgements about PSNI progress with PwC.

Steering Group
The inspection will be treated as a thematic though the great majority of it will be concentrated on the PSNI delivery of PwC. However, the involvement of other partner organisations and stakeholders in PwC is an important integral part of the inspection. A Steering Group will be formed for the duration of the inspection. A Steering Group is advisory to the Chief Inspector: It does not share corporate responsibility for the content of the report. However, members of the Steering Group are selected for the contribution they can bring both personally and as representatives of their organisations, and the Chief Inspector aims to ensure that their advice is reflected in the report.

The Steering Group for this inspection will comprise one representative each from the NIPB and PSNI together with a nominated support officer or deputy if required. It is anticipated that there will be four meetings of the Steering Group over the course of the inspection as detailed below.

Members of Steering Group:

Chief Inspector and Deputy Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice;
Lead and Deputy Lead Inspector;
HMIC Inspector;
PSNI nominated member and/or deputy; and
NIPB nominated member and/or deputy.

Meeting 1	5/12/07	Terms of reference
Meeting 2	TBA	Agree terms of reference
Meeting 3	TBA	Emerging issues
Meeting 4	TBA	Draft report

Writing up report
At the emerging issues stage of the inspection (anticipated early/mid March) a meeting of the Steering Group will be convened to guide the interpretation of data prior to formulation of a draft report. The drafting of the inspection report will commence after the second meeting of the Steering Group and regular contact will be maintained with the PSNI and the NIPB to allow for early accuracy checking of data.

Annex 1

25 Areas for assessment re NHP element of PWC

- Ownership
- Project Plan
- Identification and establishment of neighbourhoods
- Neighbourhood Profiles
- Key Individual Networks
- Linkage with NIM
- Neighbourhood teams
- Named officer
- Resource allocation
- Abstraction policy
- Leadership
- Role profiles
- Training
- Police family
- Community engagement
- Consultation
- Partnerships
- Problem Solving
- Reward & Recognition
- Community Impact assessments
- Evaluation of project
- Philosophy or style of policing

Annex 2

Patten Rec 46. Members of the policing team should serve at least three and preferably five years in the same neighbourhood. They should wear their names clearly displayed on their uniforms, and their uniforms should also bear the name of the locality for which they are responsible.
Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Patten Rec 47. All probationary police officers should undertake the operational phases of their probationary training doing team policing in the community.
Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Patten Rec 48. Where practical, policing teams should patrol on foot.
Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/District Commanders

Patten Rec 50. The Northern Ireland police should, both at a service-wide level and at patrol team level, conduct crime pattern and complaint pattern analysis to provide an information-led, problem solving approach to policing. All police officers should be instructed in problem-solving techniques and encouraged to address the causes of problems as well as the consequences (the priority being to train beat managers and their teams); and they should be regularly appraised as to their performance in doing so.
Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Patten Rec 51. DPP members and other community leaders should be able to attend police training courses in problem-solving techniques.
Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Annex 3

HMIC 2006 baseline Assessment Areas for Improvement

- Whilst there is an overarching PwC strategy there are no corporate guidelines within which DCU Commanders work when developing neighbourhood policing (NP) within their DCUs. There is no clear understanding as to what NP should look like or indeed what the expectations are of the chief officer group (COG). Is it teams of officers and staff lead by Inspectors or is it, at the other extreme, one community officer working a beat? Whilst there can be benefit in letting individual DCUs develop their own model at their own pace this is unlikely to be sustainable in the long term and in the new DCU structure.

- The recent change from the DCC's portfolio to that of the ACC (criminal justice) coupled with the decision on the new DCU structure provide an ideal opportunity to undertake a fundamental review of PwC and NP. It would:
  - assess progress to date;
  - build on best practice both within the province and in England and Wales that accords with the 10 national centre for policing excellence (NCPE) principles and practice advice;
  - agree a clear vision and understanding of PwC in Northern Ireland; and
  - give DCU Commanders clear corporate guidelines regarding the expectation of the chief officer group.

- There is currently a central steering group to oversee strategic issues in relation to PwC but this is unlikely to deal with day-to-day issues associated with any review. The Service should consider the appointment of a project manager to oversee any changes, drive the implementation and develop an effective communication strategy.

- Working in partnership, problem solving, addressing quality of life issues and reducing crime and the fear of crime lie at the heart of any neighbourhood policing strategy but these are driven by effective performance and delivery. The monitoring of performance is essential and there is currently no effective performance framework that assesses the work of officers or staff engaged on PwC. In some DCUs, individual Commanders have introduced local indicators but a corporate model needs to be developed to effectively drive performance.

- The relationships between the DCUs and the CSPs are varied. In some areas there is effective engagement and progress whilst in some there is little or no engagement, with the bulk of DCUs lying somewhere on this continuum. The advent of larger DCUs presents significant opportunities one of which is to adopt a liaison officer based in the local authority/CSP. In a number of forces, there have been tangible benefits from this appointment with the post pitched at Inspector or Chief Inspector level and known as the local authority liaison officer (LALO). The individual would be charged with forging

links with the authority, the CSP and other partnerships and accessing funding on behalf of the DCU Commander. This should be considered during the design and implementation of the new structure.

- The abstraction of officers from the NP teams is a concern expressed by DPPs, local authorities and DCU Commanders. It has also been mentioned repeatedly by the Oversight Commissioner (OC), most recently in his report dated June 2005. The cause is related to both abstraction and the shift system adopted across the Service. HMI understands that the 12-hour shift system is currently the subject of review which should address concerns in relation to officers' rest day patterns but the abstraction for other duties clearly still needs to be addressed. The demands on the Service are significant, especially during the marching season but the restructure should allow for some economies of scale to the benefit of NP. PSNI should develop a clear abstraction policy for staff engaged on NP in order to maximise the time spent with their communities.

- NIM processes are predominantly crime based and little attention is given to quality of life issues that are generally of far greater concern to the community, local councils and partners. It is important that the NIM approach is adopted and utilised for non-crime issues to drive effective delivery. There are examples where this is working effectively but overall it is not universally embedded effectively. The review and Service restructure once again offer opportunities to take cognisance of the need to embed community intelligence at the heart of any neighbourhood policing style.

- Community intelligence is the lifeblood of neighbourhood policing and processes for dealing with the collection and assessment of such intelligence and how it informs delivery via the NIM are vital. The process is currently patchy and not as effective as it could be. In the design of the new DCU structure the Service needs to ensure that effective processes are put in place to develop, collect and assess community intelligence so that it better informs the NIM and results in tangible activity that addresses the concerns of the community.

- Good partnership arrangements are essential for a neighbourhood policing style and effective problem solving. In some cases local authorities and partners view this as the right thing to do however in some there is a reluctance to engage effectively. In England and Wales, Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act places the onus on local authorities to work effectively with the police in tackling issues. The absence of such legislation in Northern Ireland is an inhibitor to progress and PSNI should continue to urge the NIO to pursue similar legislation as the political situation stabilises.

- While reassurance is at the core of all media and marketing communications it is recognised by PSNI that there is an absence of a specific communications strategy for PwC. This should be developed not only to inform the communities but also to effectively inform all staff within PSNI what PwC is all about, what their role is within it, what is expected of them and the support they can, in turn, expect.

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