In the business of preventing crime together

Involving the private sector in local partnerships

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This is third in a series of papers that support a strategic approach to involving the business sector in local crime prevention. This paper looks at long-term approaches to establishing mature multi-agency partnerships with business.

Nacro's community safety mailing and work

This briefing is part of Nacro's free mailing for community safety practitioners. If you do not already receive this mailing and would like to add your name to our mailing list, please write to Crime and Social Policy Mailing at the address below.

The mailing is just one part of our work on community safety. Nacro works with local people, practitioners and inter-agency partnerships to reduce crime levels, lessen the fear of crime and regenerate communities.

Our research, our work with Government and our experience of delivering services at a local level give us an excellent national perspective on what works in community safety and how to adapt and apply this at a local level. Community safety practitioners from a range of community safety partnerships use this expertise at every stage of partnership development. More information is available from the address below.

Contents

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Essential reference points

We suggest that you have copies of the following papers to hand whilst reading this briefing, as they are referred to extensively:

- The Nacro briefings *Open for* **business** and *Making it our business* can be downloaded from the Nacro website (www.nacro.org.uk/templates/publications/briefingListing.cfm).

- *Working with Business: A guide to gaining business support for your organisation* can be downloaded from the Drugs Prevention Advisory Service website (www.dpas.gov.uk/drugcommunications/cppwwb.pdf).

INTRODUCTION

The context

'[Government policy on crime prevention has] concentrated almost entirely on the residential sector and on private individuals - burglary of dwelling and violence in the street.'[1]

The first briefing in this series *(Open for* **business)** looked at why the business sector should be involved in local strategic crime prevention and this included linking the affects of crime against legitimate business, to the regeneration agenda. As engagement with new partners will normally begin with consultation, the second briefing *(Making it our business)* then outlined how a strategic approach could be taken to consulting the business sector on community safety issues - an approach that would also provide an initial base to start engaging with the business sector about issues of information exchange and auditing on which the strategic problem-solving process is founded.

This third paper builds on the previous briefings by looking at long-term approaches to establishing mature multi-agency partnerships with business. It does not suggest a prescriptive approach to initially working partnerships with business, but rather explores some of the issues involved in partnerships between different sectors, and gives some case studies of the some of the many options currently being used locally.

The suitability of such models locally will depend on: the maturity of the local community safety partnership; the attitudes and understanding of business; resources; and interest from the business sector, particularly the local Chamber of Commerce and other economic interest groups. Approaches to working with business will also depend on the size of the business. In the case of small businesses who are struggling for survival, it may be appropriate for the partnership to focus on providing advice and help to business[2] (particularly for small businesses that have never received crime reduction advice). Medium to larger businesses, however, may be in a better position to make a more active contribution to strategic community safety partnerships.

The ultimate aim should be for the local community safety partnership to become a focal point for strategic joint work between the public and private sectors.

A stakeholder approach

All the briefings in this series attempt to offer a balanced view of the issue of 'business crime', and so ultimately support a stakeholder approach prepared to tackle crime against and crime generated by business. As well as the core agencies involved in community safety partnerships, such stakeholders could include the following.

Partners in both the public, private and voluntary sectors work with the non-residential sector. Regeneration agencies, for example, could be invited on to the partnership. Trading standards and environmental health would also be important partners on a more mature partnership that tackled crime generated by some businesses.

The private sector should include representation of:

- small, medium and large businesses

- various types of businesses within the chain of distribution

- (in a more mature partnership) interest groups within the private sector, such as employers, employees, consumers and the wider public

'Crime generated by business' may not be an easy issue to raise in the early days of partnership with the business sector. This, however, is not an issue that should be forgotten in the longer term. Crime generated by poor business practice and unethical behaviour can have a real impact (either physical or financial) on staff, other businesses and the general public, and it is in such cases where business responsibility to deal with the problem is particularly clear. The key to tackling this issue is a relationship of trust between the sectors that can only be established within a more mature partnership.

The future

Public-private partnerships are likely to be part of our future. International pressure from world trade organisations and developments in modern policy analysis has pressured governments into creating policies that allow greater private sector incursions into services traditionally delivered by the public sector. The reality is that parts of the private sector now see public services as a growth market. Criminal justice has already been affected by such trends: private security firms and prisons, and use of external consultants, are part of this growth. A further international trend, corporate social responsibility, is also leading to greater private-sector involvement in social policy.

Public and private sector bodies can therefore choose to attempt to shape their relationship on a voluntary basis at this stage, rather than wait for an external agenda to be imposed on them later. This paper does not explore the issue of PPPs (public-private partnerships), but the author has suggested that 'ethical testing' should be integrated into the Best Value process to ensure that only social responsible agencies deliver public services.[3] This is particularly important in relation to criminal justice, where unethical practices by either the private or public sector could have a disastrous results in terms of public confidence in the crime justice system.

INITIATING PARTNERSHIP

The benefits of partnership with the business sector

Some of benefits of having business on a community safety partnership, for both the business sector and the wider partnership, are explored in *Open for business.* Partnerships should have a formal strategy for how they are going to approach businesses, as otherwise there could be conflict and overlap between the partnership and individual partners (who may, for example, also be seeking funding separately).

More broadly, involvement with the business sector can offer the following.

Non-financial contributions from business[4]

- A means of spreading your message to employees via in-house newsletters, noticeboards, intranet, training, etc. This is particularly important in terms of raising employee awareness of the risks of crime and how to reduce them.

- A valuable source of skills. A personnel department may be able to find volunteers or secondees who can contribute vital marketing, financial, personnel or other skills to your agency. This could include larger companies offering mentoring or staff secondment positions to the public sector. Historically, many community safety partnerships have not marketed themselves particularly well to the general public or business, and marketing skills could come in very useful. Financial and performance management skills could also be used in relation to producing bids and community safety strategies.

- Potential source of mentors/volunteers for crime prevention projects.

- Resources that will reduce your costs - anything from carpets and computers to hosting an important reception for you at their offices.

- A possible source of employment for people who are at risk of offending or in the process of rehabilitation.

- Contracts for your service (eg a business might contract you to provide a confidential helpline).

- Local credibility and support. If a respected company backs you, this sends a positive message to others.

- Contacts. Any company is likely to have useful contacts, for example with local media suppliers and other businesses.

- Direct relationships with the local community that can be used by the partnership to tap into the community in a way which might be vital to the success of a local initiative. For example, landlords will be a channel to tenants who may be suffering high levels of burglary: without their co-operation, it would be very difficult to reach tenants and reduce their risk of burglary. Another example would be small shops on a housing estate, which have a vital role in relation to sustaining a sense of community and act as key facilities for the vulnerable who are not able to access facilities elsewhere.

- A source of information, in relation to both reporting crime and identifying ways to reduce it.

- Some companies will also have a direct role in relation to crime prevention (eg private security and insurance companies).[5]

The business sector might even be delivering some local crime prevention services. Coventry City Council, for example, contract out the maintenance of the town centre to a private company. This private company then sits on Coventry's Strategic Crime Prevention Partnership and provides a channel for the partnership to reach town-centre businesses. The company will also directly work with businesses to reduce town-centre crime.

Financial contributions from business

Do not regard the private sector as a cash cow. Business is vital to the local economy and the reality is that businesses are made up of individual people. These people may be vulnerable to crime and disorder, and just because they spend some of their time in the non-residential sector their needs should not be ignored. The business sector and the individuals within it must be treated as real partners. They must be listened to, included, and their interest in crime prevention must be retained over the longer term.

Remember, however, that the business sector also includes small businesses who will be vulnerable both to crime, and financially, and these businesses will require help, rather than be able to make an active contribution to the partnership. Small and medium-sized businesses account for some 99 per cent of UK business, 56 per cent of all employment and 52 per cent of private sector output.

It should also be noted that the National Council for Voluntary Organisations found that the corporate sector only provided 4.9 per cent of voluntary-sector income.[6] The financial position or focus of a business may also change, so you should be wary of relying on business for long-term funding. Their primary responsibility must be to shareholders and when the economy is less buoyant, corporate giving is reduced. Corporate support for charities fell by 11 per cent in 1993 compared to 1992 as a result of the recession, according to a report published by the Charities Aid Foundation.

The success of a long-term partnership will depend on proper resourcing and business will have a role in contributing to this partnership. Although some of this may be financial (often sponsorship), however, much of it is likely to be non-financial.

Funding from business: case studies

By law, police forces throughout the UK can now raise up to one per cent of their annual budgets through sponsorship. There is no limit on funds raised for charitiable purposes. Police Trusts were set up as charities in some areas, (eg Dorset, Avon and Somerset, and Thames Valley) as bodies to raise donations of money, labour and equipment from business. Due to their nature they also emphasise close working between the business sector and the police, and so take business crime very seriously.

Dorset Police Trust have learnt from their close relationship with business and now provide business management consultancy to local crime prevention projects in relation to bidding, strategy, implementation, marketing, etc.[7]

Stars in Rhyl is a limited company set up as a continuation of a Nacro Safer Cities Project. An independent body, the company includes a local bank manager and chamber of commerce on its board of

trustees, and it has a good relationship with local business, including getting 'in kind' contributions such as use of local venues, etc. It is not specifically centred on business crime, but rather tackles a wider variety of local community safety issues.

A number of police forces also have business liaison officers who are responsible for bringing in additional funding, such as sponsorship for individual projects and forces are represented on a National Police Forum for Income Generation known as PolFIG.

The benefits of partnership for business

Possible contributions that the existing partnership could offer business

- Advice on crime reduction (either for individual businesses or more generally).

- Opportunities for staff to volunteer, and develop teamwork and other skills. Can you develop training programmes and certification that staff can take back to the business for their own career development?

- Useful contacts and links with the community.

- Press coverage.

- Insight into local community for companies planning a new business development.

- Increased sales.

- Opportunity to stand out from their competitors.

- Chance to build their brand image and/or corporate reputation.

- Opportunity for improving government relations.

- Increased customer loyalty.

- Opportunity to meet/network with influential contacts.

- Access to a focused target audience.

- Increased tax allowance due to charitable contribution.

- Reduced core business costs. Can you show them how their contribution will have cost benefits?

- Input into developing new services.

A key interest for business will be opportunities for promoting themselves (and their active approach to social responsibility) to consumers. Research International has shown that:

1 86 per cent of consumers agreed that when price and quality are equal, they are more likely to buy a product associated with a cause.

2 86 per cent of consumers agreed that they have a more positive image of a company if they see it doing something to make the world a better place.

3 73 per cent of consumers agree that they would switch brands if price and quality were equal.

4 61 per cent said they would change retailers for the same reason.

A media strategy

Crime is one of the highest concerns for the general public. This means that there is real potential for publicity for businesses that get involved in crime reduction. However, businesses will have to be persuaded that their involvement in crime reduction will not result in negative publicity. The existing partnership should also be aware of the implication becoming involved in private sector advertising. Essentially, the partnership will need a very good media strategy. **A statement on what the partnership would consider appropriate and ethical advertising, should be produced before business is invited on to the partnership.** Once business is involved, a wider media strategy, including processes for involving business and handling both posititive and negative publicity, should be agreed by all partners.

A learning process

Business can learn a lot from the partnership, including how to use community safety consultation exercises to improve workplace relations and reduce rates of workplace crime.[8]

Funding incentives for business

There are a number of national funding initiatives that could be used in the prevention of business-related crime. Such initiatives may be particularly attractive to business as, although they may require some leverage from business itself, they also generate further funding from external sources. Currently such initiatives include:

- CCTV Initiative.

- Other Home Office funding, such as the Targeted Policing Initiative and Beacon Status, have been used by some areas (eg Merseyside and Warwickshire) to fund initiatives to reduce commercial burglary.

- Regeneration funding can include monies for crime prevention and community safety.

- Small grants for up-grading security. In June 2001, the government announced a three-year, £15 million programme to improve the security of high-street shops in England and Wales.

Business, however also needs to understand there are limited resources for community safety, that central government funds are highly rationed and that there are other cost-benefits to working in partnership (see also **An holistic, complex approach,** p. 15).

> To be perfectly honest with you, being mercenary, financially it is in my interests ... to reduce crime ... because I am a landlord, and the value of my property in a particular area improves if we can make that area safe'.9

The selling pitch to the business sector

The stages of selling partnership involvement to business are:

- Use and consult partners in the existing partnership who already work closely with business, or will have people within their organisation who have this role. Crime prevention officers, regeneration officers and business liaison officers will already work with business.

- Decide what you want from business, put together a 'seller's argument' and put some materials together for presenting this to business. You should remember that many businesses will have no knowledge of community safety partnerships (the recent British Chamber of Commerce Survey revealed that 82 per cent of their members are not aware of a community safety partnership operating in the area in which their business is located), so you will need to take time to explain what they are and what they do.

- Approach a business association - preferably a strategic one such as the local Chamber of Commerce as they may have already been briefed on crime prevention issues by their national body. (See pages 4 and 5 of *Making it our business* for a suggested approach to involving an association and raising wider business awareness.)

- In some cases the association may have already been involved in a local regeneration partnership. Such partnerships are good launching pads from which to establish a more strategic public-private community safety partnership.

- The association may then provide an invaluable strategic partner, potentially taking a place on your strategic community safety partnership. They can also be used to access other businesses, starting with a consultation process, to show that the existing partnership is serious about wanting to involve and help the business sector.

It is very much in businesses' interest to take action on crime reduction. The British Chamber of Commerce have recently undertaken a national survey of business crime whereby they found that firms are twice as likely than individuals to be the victims of crime and that crime costs their members over £18 billion a year (see www.britishchambers.org.uk). Where local chambers chose to participate in this survey, local results should also be available.

However, some local chambers or other associations may not be interested in becoming more deeply involved with a strategic approach to crime prevention and some chambers may also be skewed towards a particular membership. In such cases it may be necessarily to approach individual businesses. But remember that particular business types will lobby for their crime concerns to be prioritised, which might skew any wider agenda to tackle 'business crime' or involve the private sector in general.

Approaching individual businesses

Refer to *Working with* **business,**[10] as it provides detailed directions on how to undertake this selling exercise. **Be prepared to listen,** offer a menu of opportunities and motivate business into becoming involved. Business, however will expect what has been promised to be deliver, so the sales pitch must be realistic and take in the realities of the existing community safety partnership.[11]

Before approaching the business, You must take time to:

• Identify particular businesses. Some will be more willing to be involved than others depending on whether they want to become involved in a local initiative, their type of business, their financial viability, etc.

• Create a wishlist. Hold a brainstorming exercise and then prioritise. What are you currently lacking and how can business help with this (eg personnel, equipment, etc)? Ensure there is consensus on this list and be specific.

• Understand the business structure and who you will be making contact with and appealing to. This is one of the hardest tasks. If you approach larger businesses, each department will have differing interests and offer different opportunities. Here you need to use the wishlist you have devised to highlight which departments you should be contacting. It might also be the case that headquarters rather than local branches have responsibility for allocating charitable funding or making decisions about partnership or crime prevention.

• Understand what the business needs from you.

• Prepare to make contact (personal contacts are likely to meet with the most success).

• Prepare for your first meeting (just as for a job interview: find out as much as you can about the company and ensure your interests are matched).

• Ask properly.

• Prepare for a sustained relationship.

For direction on which businesses to approach you could look at members of business interest groups such as Business in the Community (see www.bitc.org.uk or contact your local Business Link). An organisation called Business Connections (www.bcconnections.org.uk) also provides some help in searching for business partners.

One example of successful business involvement is provided by Dorset Police Partnership Trust, which identified that business could be an important partner in building a safer and better community. They decided to set up a police trust in partnership with the local probation service, local authority and local businesses. They first contacted those businesses that they already had strong links with, such as insurance, motor industry and security firms.

Selling business involvement to other partners

Historically, community safety partnerships have focused on the residential sector. There may therefore be a need to sell business involvement on the partnership to officers and councillors, through initial joint training and awareness-raising events with the private sector. This series of briefings provides a foundation for selling the concept of business involvement in local community safety partnerships; there will also be officers and councillors (some who may also be business people) who will immediately understand the need to work with business.

A reality check

It is not easy to establish long-term, effective partnerships between the public and private sectors. The cultures of the sectors are very different and it takes a great deal of patience and understanding - on both sides - to establish and then work towards common goals. A relationship of trust will depend on establishing a rational and logical process for problem identification and decision making, where all interests can be balanced within a democratic framework. This, however, will be a problem as some businesses may under-report crime, and give low priority to auditing and consulting process used to reveal the problem of crime locally. A potential problem in the longer term is that the public, private and voluntary sectors may be competing to deliver public services.

Tolerating difference

Partnership is born in the understanding and tolerance of difference. The cultures and aims of the public, voluntary and private sectors are different and so it is necessarily that everyone identifies and understands these differences from the start. If they are structural, the partnership will need to tolerate them and then learn to work around them in the longer term. Different cultures include the following.

The public sector

The public sector includes local and national governmental agencies, and public utilities and companies. The public sector has to work within a democratic and political framework (maintaining a high level of bureaucratic and legal accountability) and attempt to meet demands for which there will often be inadequate supply. Often the work of agencies and officers will be defined by the needs of the day and results in complex and ambiguous tasks, some of which may have been created by market failure. This is why the work of the public sector often results in the bureaucracy, 'talking shops' and inflexible structures/processes which business finds difficult to understand or tolerant. See www.lga.gov.uk and www.acpo.police.uk for further information on some of the main public sector agencies involved in community safety.

The business/private sector

The business/private sector includes all sizes of business, from sole traders to massive international corporations (industrial, commercial and financial). Activities in the private sector may be 'for' or 'not for profit', but are carried out voluntarily by individuals or groups in the market place. Business has a much more defined agenda than the public sector: survival and profit will be key factors, and its role as a deliverer will be much clearer. If demand increases then it will increase supply. Therefore business is likely to be much more optimistic and focused on future opportunities than public agencies and will want to follow a clear set of

actions within set deadlines and resources. It will also be more flexible about its structures than the public sector, and will change these according to the requirements of the market. The agenda of business will also be defined by its size and whether it is a longer term concern or struggling for survival. See www.bitc.org.uk and www.britishchambers.org.uk for further information.

The voluntary sector

The third/voluntary sector can include a diverse number of organisations - from micro to the international. They can range from everything from trade unions, to well-known charities or local clubs. To register as charities, organisations must prove some public benefit. These organisations will have been created with a specific purpose and mission, although these may be diluted over time. They may also be influenced by their funding sources, which may be a mixture of corporate, governmental and public. Historically, the third sector has been more independent than the public or business sectors, as it is neither directly accountable to politicians or stockholders. They are usually less bureaucratic and more prepared to innovate than the public sector. Many voluntary-sector bodies, however, are chaotic, because they have to negotiate through a variety of different values, often including balancing highly ethical or moral missions with the need to survive financially. Voluntary-sector organisations may also be very focused on grass roots, and the cases of the 'individual' or smaller groups' (including the excluded). See www.ncvo-vol.org.uk for further information.

The community

Many partnerships will include some community representation, through a local community groups or fora, and connections with local politicians. The community is often seen as the client group of the partnership and the key delivery mechanism. It is important to recognise, however, that members of the community will be found in both the residential and non-residential sectors.

Social entrepreneurs

It is important to recognise the importance of these individuals, as they can be key (the catalyst) in the delivery of social projects at local level. In some areas, public-private partnerships act as the facilitator providing grants that are then accessed by social entrepreneurs, who then deliver a project at ground level. Business may prefer to provide funding to such social enterpreneurs, rather than to the public sector itself. See www.ncvo-vol.org.uk for more information on social entrepreneurs.

The existing mix of partners within community safety

All community safety partnerships are already multi-agency and should involve both the public and voluntary sectors. This mix should already recognise and tolerate difference:

- New partners should have been welcomed, listened to and included within the existing framework of partnership.

- Each partner will have arrived with a particular role and agenda.

- Some partners, because of their size, resourcing and status, will have more innate 'power' than other partners.

- Some partners are focused on particular aspects or issues within criminal justice - from probation to Victim Support. Others are more generic (eg the local authority or health services).

- Some partners (eg the police) have a longer-term history in relation to crime prevention, which stretches back to before multi-agency and holistic approaches to crime prevention were created. Other partners have only become more involved since the Crime and Disorder Act and will only know the holistic multi-agency approach to crime prevention.

- Some partners have statutory requirements to be involved in crime prevention (a growing number of public services), whilst others are involved on a voluntary basis (particularly the voluntary sector).

FORMING CONSENSUS

Existing common ground

Business people are part of the same community as everyone else. They will support democracy. Many will also accept some of their social responsibility on a voluntary basis and already have some involvement in addressing social issues (eg through attendance on a local forum, volunteering or sponsorship).

Crime can blight the lives of individual business people and their colleagues - they are likely to take it seriously. Some businesses may already have risk management strategies and departments in place; some will already be involved in local/national projects or sponsorship that contribute towards the prevention of crime.

The application of managerialism to the public and voluntary sectors has also meant that they now share language and processes' with the private sector, using the evidence-led, problem-solving process and project management. It may be that smaller businesses will operate on a less technical level but most businesses will recognise the validity of such approaches.

Moving into longer-term strategic partnership

You may find some businesses and associations only wish to offer sponsorship or support to an individual project or programme. Because such an approach is likely to move in 'fits and starts', this paper promotes moving towards a longer-term strategic partnership.[12]

Essentially business has to be fitted into the existing mix of the partnership, whilst recognising its unique culture.

A clear framework

The existing partnership has a mission, strategy, etc, which have all been decided within a legislative

framework (the Crime and Disorder Act 1998). The processes and documents that the Act requires will already have been produced to support this (eg the audit, strategy, information exchange protocols, etc). Any business that wishes to become involved in the community safety partnership must understand from the beginning that it works within this legislative framework, which is democratic and can not be changed locally. The audit provides the foundation for problem identification and deciding structures, and then evidence on what works provides the foundation for consensual agreement on solutions.

These processes and documents can be adjusted to include the business sector: a consultation process and information exchange protocol agreed by the local Chamber of Commerce, for example.

The importance of a media strategy has been stressed in **The benefits of partnership for business.** The media strategy and information protocol will also be key to establishing trust between the sectors in the longer term.

Business will have to go through a steep learning curve at the beginning of their partnership with the public and voluntary sectors. Key to this will be raising their understanding of the holistic multi-agency approach to crime prevention. Because of this, it will be important that representatives (eg from the Chamber of Commerce) be invited to joint training events on the basics of community safety. Similarly, representatives from the community safety partnership (eg community safety officers) should attend some business association meetings to gain some understanding of the business sector and its interest in crime prevention.

A Scottish model

In Scotland, where the Crime and Disorder Act does not apply, a 'Safer Trading Environment' model is being rolled out. Most of the businesses which participate are retail, although some also involve industry and business parks. It has been found that the winning ingredients are a small to medium-sized affluent town, with a manageable crime problem and with people who are in key positions and can act as driving forces.

A clear role

The private sector will need to be offered a role and a place within the partnership that is matched to the role and culture it brings to the table. This culture can be defined as non-bureaucratic, optimistic, action-oriented, time-limited and outcome-focused. The private sector role could include:

- Help other partners understand and use business management processes and practices.

- Market the partnership to others.

- Provide resources (see **The benefits of partnership with the business sector,** p.3 ff).

- Work on issues of direct relevance to business, eg business crime.

- Give a representative body such as the Chamber of Commerce a place on the strategic community safety partnership and therefore direct access to senior officers. At this level the partnership will be open to the public and the media.

- Give other businesses representatives (eg from Business Watches) a place on working groups or project steering groups, where they have direct access to practitioners and community, and will see the direct results of delivery.

It will also be necessary to draw up business plans so that businesses know what they are embarking on.

Case study: St Helens Business Crime Steering Group

St Helens Business Crime Steering Group sits under the strategic community safety partnership. The Chamber of Commerce representative chairs this group and provides the secretariat. The groups focuses on getting business crime recognised and reported and undertakes specific surveys with the business sector.

A balance of power

Business is a very powerful - perhaps the most powerful - player in modern society. If the private sector is to be encouraged to engage in a new form of partnership, therefore, it must first be educated into understanding the basic principles of what the partnership is trying to achieve and accept them, rather than impose its own agenda. This will mean compromise. In return, the partnership should take crime against business seriously and tackle it in a strategic manner. Both sides will have to accept that crime against business will have to be weighed and prioritised against other crime and disorder affecting society; this process must be democratic.[13]

Establishing realistic opportunities with business is covered in *Making it our business.* Equally other agencies, which traditionally may have been very strong in the partnership (ie the key statutory agencies), must recognise that they will not be able to impose their individual agenda or performance indicators within a public private partnership.

Be aware of how businesses will view the process of their involvement! Figure 1 shows a model devised by Business in The Community to plan out stages of business involvement in the community.

Making crime prevention a key issue

Crime affects individuals within businesses, and costs the business sector a lot of money. Home Offices research suggests that 44 per cent of the total costs of crime - or £25 billion - falls annually on business and other organisations.[14]

The impact of crime on the business sector

Crime affecting the business sector can encompass a whole range of issues:

- Be prepared to go beyond residential crime and crime against commercial premises and property. Crime can directly affect individuals including employers, employee and consumers eg from crime against the person and crime against property in the workplace to the financial costs of business crime for the individual consumer.[15]

- General crime and disorder taking near businesses or in business districts (eg street crime, street drinking, vandalism) can badly affect trade or individuals

Figure 1 Business *involvement in the community*

	First wave	Second wave	Third wave
Rationale	• Philanthropy	• Strategic philanthropy	• Community investment
Management	• *Ad hoc* administrator • Detached	• Systemised manager • Line structure	• Professional entrepeneur/ consultant • Integrated
Approach	• Passive • Chairman's whim • Primarily cash • One-offs	• Respond in target area • Range of help • Working with issues	• Initiating • Business-focused • Business resources • Nuturing/building capacity
Communication	• Little communication	• Active communication	• Consultation

working for a business. Crime on public transport and in relation to the nighttime economy are also key concerns for both the public agencies and businesses that rely on employees and clients physically getting to them by public transport. The same is true of vehicle crime. The community safety partnership will be dealing with all these issues and may focus on crime types or areas where the business sector is directly affected.

- Business can be affected by residential and general crime.

'All of us are affected by it, you see. Let's take bullying for example. If employees have problems with their children at school, they are not going to have their minds on their jobs. They are going to take time off from their jobs. Domestic violence is exactly the same.'

'Our own staff, their spouses, and families all live in and around the city and, therefore, we have a responsibility to make sure that if we can, to do anything to improve the environment in which they are living, reducing their fears about working late, dark passages, all the usual things, that is a duty that we owe our staff to look at. And if we can make the city a more attractive place to work it might make our longer term staff recruitment easier than it would be if it was a horrendous place to work in.'[16]

Certain crime types can have a particularly serious impact on business.

The DTI Foresight Committee (DTI) raised the issue of **new forms of crime** being born out of globalisation and new technology. It should be noted that many of these can be partially generated by unthinking business enterprise, but it is also the case that the majority of such crimes will probably be focused on business and the individuals within the business sector. Business will have the access and expertise to help deal with these problems - for example, dot.com businesses have been helping the police tackle the issue of cyberporn.

Drug-related crime can have a major impact on business. The findings of the NEW ADAM Programme, quoted in the Home Office Toolkit on Communities against Drugs, revealed that the most prevalent offending types among drug users include shoplifting (57 per cent), handling stolen goods (47 per cent), burglary of

commercial premises (26 per cent) and theft from shops (28 per cent). Being in the community safety partnership, business will have access to the drug and alcohol action team.

Business against Drugs suggests that business can help in the following ways:

- Guard against being used for money laundering by being vigilant if they are involved in international business.

- Support and sponsor action in the local community.

- Undertake joint activity with their local community safety partnership.

- Work with groups helping young people to find a better alternative to drug-taking.

- Work with local employment initiatives.

- Act as mentors and role models for young people.

- Make it harder for drug abusers to finance their habit by shoptheft, etc.

- Make sure that their own employees have ready access to information about the dangers of drug abuse.

Illegitimate markets are undesirable for both legitimate businesses and public agencies who wish to protect the vulnerable and regenerate an area. The European Commission has estimated that illegitimate markets represent between 7 and 15 per cent of the gross domestic product of the UK - between £58 billion and £ 108 billion a year (which gives no tax benefit to society).

Business is often a key target for **terrorism.** The public and private sector are therefore important partners in the prevention of terrorism. It is also the case that some businesses have been connected to organised crime and terrorism (eg recently such connections have been made to certain *bureaux de change* across the world).

The Corporation of London has a long history of partnership with business in fighting terrorism. The Corporation uses secure communication systems to keep businesses aware of the state of security in the city and ensure that in the case of threat, both public services and businesses will be in a position to act quickly. Most businesses in the city will have contingency planning in place, and the Corporation will also give advice on such plans, ensuring that they are up-to-date and best practice. Businesses in the city are also willing to provide sponsorship, contribute the one per cent of police

funding allowed by statute, and part-fund the city's mounted police.

Crime in the workplace can be very damaging to business. JQ Wilson[17] suggests immoral business practice can be as damaging to wider capitalism as inefficiency. Management Today and KPMG Forensic accounting recently undertook at business ethics survey showed how widespread unethical behaviour was. This could easily spill into criminal behaviour and, as one manager put it, these survey results 'were only the tip of the iceberg'.[18] The community safety partnership, therefore, could be useful in reaffirming where moral and legal boundaries lay through consultation processes which reach both the workplace and the wider public.[19]

Fraud, theft from a shop, and **handling stolen goods** are all massively under-reported within official crime statistics. A NERA report on the economic costs of fraud (commissioned by the Home office and Serious Fraud Office) estimates over nine million fraud offences each year, but even this report acknowledges this figure may be only partial. The Commercial Victimisation Survey counted nearly six million customer thefts in 1993. Farrington (1999) found that police only recorded 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 shoplifting incidents in two department stores studied: a multiplier of 100 offences per recorded offence therefore seems a conservative one. Estimates of corporate fraud in the UK range from between £25 million and £42 million a day.[20]

Assumptions may be made that **youth crime** is the key type of offending of concern to business, although a number of research studies have shown that such assumptions can be wrong. It is often employees or travelling/older/specialist offenders who are responsible for the most serious crime within the business sector. A 1988 study found that most thefts taking place in a shopping centre were committed by adults who were not identified by tenants as a threat. Young people, however were involved in many incidents of gathering or loitering, which worried tenants and shoppers.[21] In Australia, young people are now involved in designing some shopping malls, to tackle this issue of how different groups use and occupy the same space. Another researcher found that '90 per cent of all financial losses are on the inside of businesses, and approximately 64 per cent of armed robberies involve current or former employees.'[22]

Case studies

Northamptonshire Business against Crime Initiative encourages communication between businesses and offers business regular information through seminars, newsletters and websites. These deal with a whole range of issues: card fraud, drugs, personal safety, internal theft and CCTV. All training and consultation is open to all employess within that organisation. Information can also be sent on to customers if the member sees this as appropriate. The initiative is represented on the crime and disorder reduction partnership, consults the business sector and has input into the local community safety strategy.

The **DTI Foresight Committee**[23] produced several scenarios for how crime would affect the individual in the future and shape our society. Some of these showed a very dystopian future of gated communities and technologies used for both crime and crime prevention, in which no one (whether an employer or member of the general public) would want to live in.

Connections to statutory legislation

Despite all the above, however, crime prevention is not core to most businesses. They see crime prevention as part of the 'risk management' structure and longer-term crime prevention may be placed second to short-term survival by more financially vulnerable businesses (and by unethical businesses). However, it may be possible to to raise the importance of crime prevention or community safety within the private sector by connecting them to other social agendas.

Although business does not have a statutory requirement to become involved in community safety, it does have other statutory demands that are connected with this agenda. These are outlined below.

There is a connection between community safety and risk management. Partnerships should draw the connections with fire safety, environmental issues, etc, and then offer joint advice and services.

Partnerships should also use the connection between community safety and the Health and Safety Agenda. Employers have a legal duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, to ensure, so far as practicable, the

health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. The Management of Health and Safety Work Regulations require employers to assess the risks to employees' health and safety including, where appropriate, risks from exposure to reasonably foreseeable violence. Further guidance on this is contained in HSE (1997), which can be accessed at www.hsegov.uk/pubns/indg69.htm.

Equal opportunities legislation can be used in the following ways:

- **Hate crime** affects both the residential and non-residential sectors. Businesses have to take account of equal opportunity issues in the workplace.

- The CBI recently launched a major campaign to stamp out **anti-gay discrimination** at work, in response to EU rules designed to protect gay staff from harassment and unfair dismissal.

- Last year the GMB union launched a campaign to offer suppport and understanding to victims of **domestic violence** in the workplace, after an American study forund that 50 per cent of a sample of victims of domestic violence were late for work five times a month and 54 per cent missed at least three days of work a month. 74 per cent were harassed at work.

- **Racial harassment** should be tackled within equal opportunities policies. Businesses should keep records of incidents within the workplace. Some national figures will also be available from the Commission of Racial Equality. A Home Office study of crime against small businesses[2]4 found high levels of racial harassment against Asian shopkeepers by members of the public.

Other statutory requirements on business with a link to community safety include consumer protection, trading standards and environmental health.

Connections to regeneration

There is some direct connection between business involvement in crime reduction and the regeneration agenda, in relation to training, employment and regeneration of the built environment. Increasing opportunities for self-employment and enterprise could be particularly effective at drawing people out of illegitimate markets and crime (illegitimate markets can

Regeneration indicators

Key measurements in relation to successful regeneration initiatives can include:

- new jobs

- business/office space

- use of brownfield sites

- inward investment

- reduction of social exclusion (eg related to health and crime reduction)

These indicators are not sufficient to measure community safety issues. Community safety partnerships will have performance indicators to measure:

- levels and rates of victimisation and repeat victimisation

- levels and rates of offending and persistent offending

- levels and rates of particular crime or disorder types (eg burglary) and themes (eg drug-related crime and hate crime)

- social exclusion and deprivation (relating to risk factors for victimisation or offending)

- fear of crime and disorder

They can also focus on improving:

- efficiency and effectiveness of services (eg Best Value and the costs of crime)

- the environment (particularly with regard to reducing disorder in both residential and non-residential areas)

- reporting and recording (and so reveal 'hidden crimes')

Crime and disorder are defined by public definitions or tolerance of particular behaviours. They are constantly changing and so performance indicators must be highly flexible and subtle to reflect this.

also hold back regeneration as people chose to stay within them rather than take new training or employment). It is tempting to make a causal link between deprivation and chaos within the built environment, and crime and fear of crime, by applying the 'broken windows' theory.25 It is also the case that currently some of the most successful public-private partnerships for tackling business crime have been born out of regeneration partnership. Safer Merseyside, for instance, commissioned a comprehensive study,[26] which led to a strategic approach to the prevention of business crime, joint work with the private sector and the creation of Business Crime Direct.

It is important, however, that the private sector understands that the regeneration model is only partially suited to community safety. Although **Open** *for business* connected community safety and business crime to the regeneration agenda, it should be noted that that public-private partnerships to tackle deprivation have not always been particularly successful. Perhaps this has been partially due to the fact that the compromises that result when the public and private sectors work together can lead to focus on the most simplistic and uncontroversial economic indicators. These have often related to the built rather than the social environment. Recently, voluntary sector and community representatives have expressed concern that the new 'single funding pot' for physical, social and economic regeneration would be used by the nine Regional Development Agencies to focus too much on physical, and economic regeneration, and that social projects would miss out.

You should also be aware that:

- It may be found that a local crime and disorder audit locates high levels of crime and disorder in areas which are not connected to an existing regeneration initiative, or even viable for applying for regeneration funding.

- There might also be partners on a community safety partnership who had limited experience of regeneration and they would also have to be convinced on the relevance of the regeneration agenda to community safety.

An holistic, complex approach

Historically the business sector has focused on crime prevention which protects the individual business (particularly premises and property) and is mainly situational in nature. The recent British Chamber of Commerce survey showed that businesses were most likely to report and prioritise commercial burglary and vandalism. This then suggests a situational, often short-term approach (eg CCTV or security guards). Where business has involved other agencies, this has mainly been the police, the security industry (which often relies on policing and situational approaches) and perhaps the local town centre manager.

As in the case of the wider public, business will have to be convinced that crime prevention goes beyond policing and short term situational approaches. From a public sector point of view, care must also be taken to reduce the likelihood of displacement (although this may be of less concern to individual businesses). Therefore there is a need to show business why it should be interested in a multi-agency holistic approach ie there is need to show common group for both the public and private sectors in order to facilitate joint working.

It should be recognised that crime is a complex social construct. Complex social problems are not amenable to quick and easy analysis or simple short-term solutions:

- If an influential party (such as the media) highlights an particular issue with the public this can lead to 'moral panic'[27] followed by social exclusion of a particular group. Criminal justice is a complex issue that must be handled sensitively.

- Some businesses may be part of the problem as well as the solution (ie crime generated by business).

- The private sector should also become aware that there are a variety of explanations of causes of crime, depending on your politics and choice of criminological approach. The community safety approach currently being driven by government is rational and holistic (ie promotes partnership): 'No single organisation can hope to reduce the incidence of crime and tackle the underlying causes of criminal and anti-social behaviour. Local organisations need to work together to develop comprehensive solutions which achieve a permanent improvement to the community's quality of life.'[28]

- Do not assume there is one simple answer that can be applied to all scenarios. This awareness of the influence of theories should also be raised in relation to suggested links between deprivation, crime and fear of crime. It is may be the case that high levels of environmental disorder such as graffiti, vandalism may have some relationship with a raised fear of crime in a locality. However, it is less plausible to suggest that some crime types, such as white-collar crime or cybercrime, have any connection with the external environment. It may also be the case that a very successful and ordered shopping area may also attract a high number of offenders into the area, who may offend against businesses or their customers.

- Although national and local agencies usually set optimistic targets for reduction, a community safety partnership might be successful merely by keeping the levels of crime stable during a time when general/national crime and disorder was on the rise.

Shared interests, knowledge and expertise

Every crime has a victim, offender and location (the key generators of crime), whether it takes place in the residential or non-residential setting. Being part of a holistic multi-agency partnership will allow business to access those agencies (eg probation, YOT and Victim Support) that deal directly with offends and victims, as well as those agencies which deal with the cases of offending and victimisation (eg education and youth services).

There is limited understanding of what works in relation to crime prevention within the business sector. The public-private sector needs to build up an understanding of what works together, leading to a cross-fertilisation of crime prevention work between the two sectors. It should be noted that in recent decades the government has funded a series of expensive research and evaluation programmes for 'what works' in relation to crime prevention. The results of such work, however, have filtered through slowly to the business (including private security) sector. In order to have effective strategies to tackle crime, this evidence of 'what works' must be available and made use of. If it is not, the business sector will be relying on unproven (and therefore highly likely to be ineffective) and costly equipment and security staffing measures.

Sustained interest

Sustained interest will depend on how well you build up partnership and whether you create the conditions needed for trust and consensus (see above). The relationship must be mutual, with a high emphasis on transparency.

You will have to spend a lot of time listening to individual businesses and there must be no room for unnecessary or silly errors, or 'betrayals of trust'. If representatives from the business sector lose their trust in the partnership, it will be very difficult to rebuild a relationship with any businesses in your locality (word will get around).

Be inclusive

The partnership must begin by putting a lot of effort into improving information exchange with the business sector, which will also mean that the business sector has to improve its auditing and reporting of crime and its response to consultation.

The partnership must remain focused on the client - the community, particularly those at most risk of victimisation or offending (including repeat victimisation and offending).

The community safety partnership should ensure that the socially vulnerable and excluded are consulted and supported. In the case of the business sector, individuals from socially excluded groups, from deprived areas or in particularly vulnerable forms of employment must be included.

Do not let business skew the community safety agenda. As described above, complex social problems are not amenable to 'quick and easy' fixes. For example, do not let more controversial issues be ignored, just because business is nervous of these. It may also be necessary to balance some of the approaches promoted by business, such as managerialism, rationalism and technology-led solutions, with other more creative and ethically led solutions. In many senses, it is the business sector which is geared up to take a creative approach, but working in partnership can sometimes lead to placing consensus before innovative or effective problem solving.

Business might also wish to exclude some social groups

because it is assumed that they are the 'offenders'. The partnership must provide a wider understanding of this issue.

It is vital that the partnership continue to use a holistic approach. If it does not, it will have no added value for the business sector - there will be nothing to learn and no additional resources to access.

But do not lose your focus

Do not let community safety get completely subsumed by other policy agendas, eg regeneration (see **Connections to regeneration, p. 14 ff).**

Understand business as a stakeholder

Don't treat the business sector as a single entity: each business type, size and location will have differing agendas, problems, capabilities and interest in participating in partnership. Some business will need advice and support, and will not have the ability participate in strategic partnership.

If you let one business type or locality dominate the agenda, it will be difficult to get other forms of business on board and take a more strategic approach. Try to establish a wider audit and consultation process with the business sector - an approach that is evidence-led, rather than one decided by local lobbying power.

Business must have a role in strategy development, but this must be at representative level. Only a representative of eg a trade association is likely to be able to maintain a long-term presence on the partnership, attend meetings and be replaced if there is turnover. This strategic role must also be reflected in a role in decision making on prioritisation and performance indicators (currently affected by lack of national performance indicators in relation to business crime - one way to deal with this might be to set performance indicators for the business sector in relation to wider priorities, eg reduce racial harassment against small traders, within a wider priority to reduce hate crime). Ultimately there may even be some opportunity for wider strategic prioritises to integrated with the strategies of individual businesses (eg in relation to victim support, working hours, etc).

Business must be involved in delivery and see the results on the ground (eg through steering groups and projects). Business is outcome-focused, so will be a useful partner in ensuring things are achieved on schedule and in budget.

There must be prolonged and regular contact with local businesses (see following Bolton case study).

Ensure that businesses get continuing opportunities to advertise their involvement and the successes of partnership.

Businesses will also want to see the results of their contribution through the results of evaluation processes. As well as producing statistics, ensure that businesses get to see the impact on the individual within the community (eg visiting a satisfied member of the public or attending an informal occasion).

Involve other stakeholders in the longer term

Finally, in the longer term the partnership should involve other stakeholders, such as employees and consumers, who will then ensure that the business sector accepts its wider social responsibilities. This will include crime generated by business. Such crime will be generated by the irresponsible practice of some individual businesses (and the public sector should be careful not to tar all businesses with the same brush), and this criminal behaviour can then impact on other businesses. As importantly, irresponsible business practice can result in higher levels of victimisation (eg violent crime against bar staff within a pub where selling alcohol to the inebriated is encouraged).

For more generic ways of retaining a relationship with business consult pages 14 and 15 of *Working with business.*

Case study: a multi-agency, holistic approach to tackling business crime and disorder

Bolton Business Security Initiative Partnership is an example of a full public-private community safety partnership that follows the multi-agency approach used generally within community safety, and includes business as full partners. Business crime is included in the crime

and disorder strategy and the business plan. The approach connects crime to the regeneration brief and the need to involve business in community schemes.

The Business Security Initiative deals with several aspects of helping the poorest areas in the town. Two of the main initiatives that the Bolton Business Security Initiative Partnership has developed are the Oxford Grove Project, tackling a district retail centre as a whole, and support on two industrial estates through the Social Regeneration Budget (SRB3). These programmes have a total of £ 1.5 million to spend on grants and assistance to reduce crime and improve safety over three years. These grants are available to companies who employ fewer than 250 people and have an annual turnover of less than £32 million. The Initiative Partnership also runs the Town Centre Repeat Victimisation scheme, which encourages businesses to report crime and its effect on their businesses; it is looking at the possibility of setting up a support network for victims of serious business crime.

Bolton recognises that working with business is a long-term relationship and contact goes well beyond that 'one visit a year'. The Initiative includes seminars for local businesses offering advice on risk management and employee vetting, etc.

Bolton is also dealing with crime generated by business by tackling the selling of alcohol to under-aged customers. It does however recognise that the illegitimate market (eg bootleggers) can be harder to tackle.

A POSSIBLE STRUCTURE FOR LOCAL PUBLIC-PRIVATE SECTOR CRIME PREVENTION

If we are to tackle crimes that affect the non-residential and business sectors, we must recognise that the private sector not does adhere to public-sector geographical boundaries. It is also the case that potential victims may regularly travel across geographical boundaries on their way to and from work, during work-related business, or on shopping trips, etc. Offenders may be specialists, targeting particularly types of business, prepared to travel some distance to reach these targets.

One way of tackling the current impasse (ie a public-sector structure that focuses completely on highly localised residential crime) is to involve more strategic and regional agencies, such as RDAs and trade associations. Local Strategic Partnerships, which should encourage the joining of various agendas, will be an integral part of this. Figure 2 shows how the links could be made.

Figure 2 *Making the links: a* structure *for public-private crime prevention*
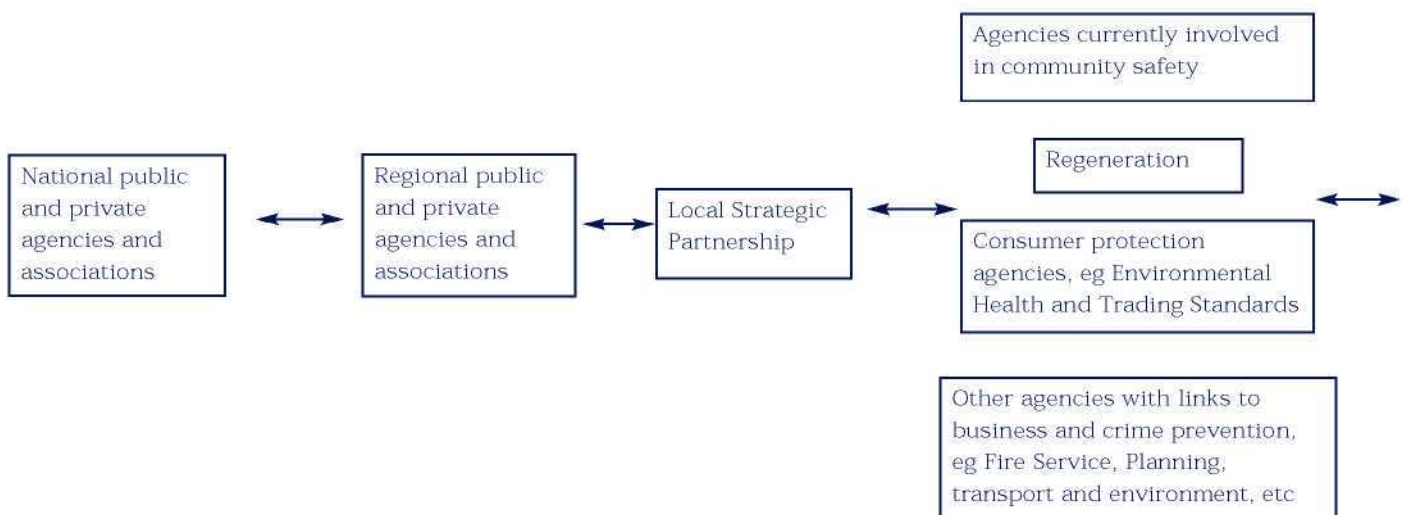
Footnotes

1 Shapland and Wiles (1998)

2 It was concerning that British Chambers of Commerce (2001) showed that 34 per cent of businesses, particularly small businesses, have never received crime reduction advice.

3 Schuller (2001c)

4 Many of the bullet points in this section are drawn directly from Working with Business.

5 The role of insurance companies is not explored in detail within this paper. It is recommended that you consult Litton (1997) for more detail on this.

5 Figures for 2000/01

7 www.police-partnership.org

B Schuller (2001b)

9 Landlord quoted by Liddle (1997)

10 DPAS (2001)

11 See Making it our business, p. 5 regarding realistic expectations.

12 See Mullett (2001) for the processes of establishing partnership.

13 Highly localised party political wrangling, however, is not the same as democratic accountability, and could lead to business becoming alienated from the partnership.

14 Making It Our Business provides a list of references on costing of business crime.

15 Schuller (2000b and 2001b).

16 Employers quoted by Liddle (1997)

17 Wilson (2001)

18 Management Today and KPMG (2000)

19 Schuller (2001b)

20 Ernst and Young (1996)

21 Philips and Cochrane (1988)

22 Sympson (1995: 80) cited in Challinger (1997: 39)

23 DTI Foresight Committee (2000)

24 Ekblom and Simon (1988)

25 Wilson and Kelling (1982)

26 Bowers **etal.** (1998)

27 Cohen (1982)

28 quoted in Mullett (2001)
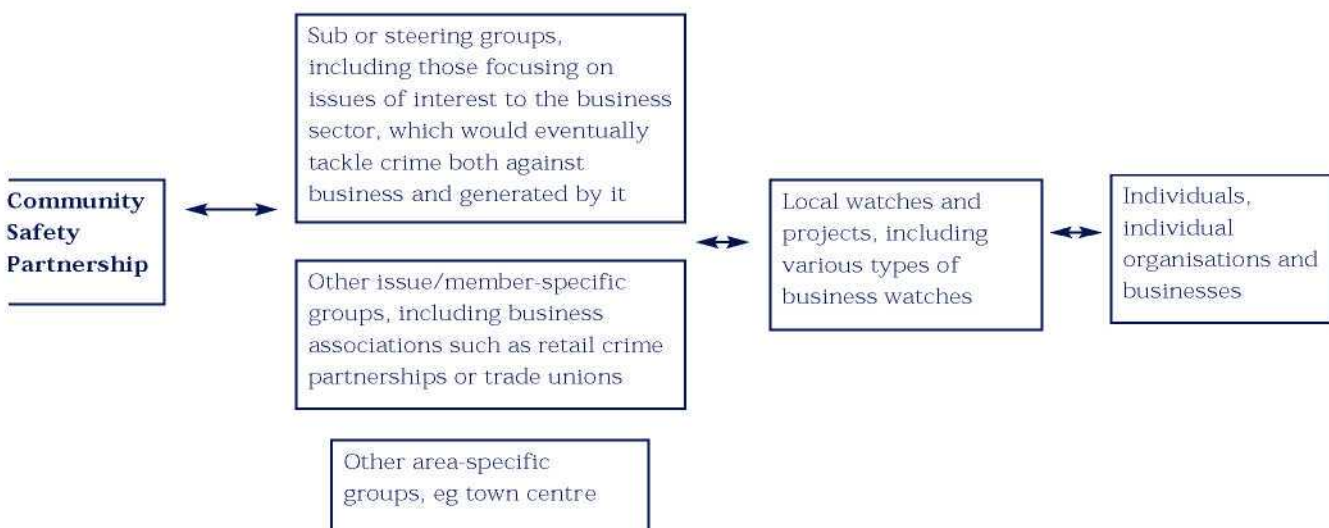
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