

Safe and sound

A study of community safety partnerships in Scotland

PUBLISHED BY AUDIT SCOTLAND

MAY 2000



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- following up issues of concern identified through the audit, to ensure satisfactory resolutions
- reviewing the management arrangements which audited bodies have in place to achieve value for money
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- issuing an annual direction to local authorities which sets out the range of performance information which they are required to publish.

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Audit Scotland is a statutory body set up in April 2000, under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000. It provides services to the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General for Scotland. Together they ensure that the Scottish Executive and public sector bodies in Scotland are held to account for the proper, efficient and effective use of around £17 billion of public funds.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our appreciation to the study advisory group, comprising a range of experts from councils and other bodies. The group provided valuable advice and acted as a useful sounding board for the study team. Membership of the group is listed in Appendix 3.

We would also like to thank the many partnership members and the members of the Scottish Local Authorities Community Safety Forum who have contributed so positively to the study during our field visits.

This report was commissioned by the Accounts Commission as part of its responsibility for the audit of local authorities in Scotland.

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Summary

Improving community safety is about creating safer places for people to live, work and visit, without fear or risk of harm. Many different agencies are involved in dealing with the impact of unsafe environments on individuals and communities. Investment by one agency to reduce risk is likely to bring benefits, not only to the community and the investing agency, but to a range of other organisations.

Given the range of stakeholders involved in community safety, effective partnerships have been recognised as a central mechanism for improving safety and reducing risk in communities. In July 1999, the Scottish Executive published '*Safer communities in Scotland*'. It contains detailed guidance for community safety partnerships on tackling community safety problems effectively.

This study looks at how far community safety partnerships have progressed in Scotland, and the extent to which the Scottish Executive guidance has been implemented. It highlights good practice and recommends steps which partnerships should take to improve their effectiveness.

All Scottish local authorities and police forces have participated in multi-agency activity designed to improve safety in their communities.

- All community safety partnerships in Scotland involve the local authority and police force, and most involve health boards or trusts and the fire service.
- The private and voluntary sectors, housing associations and racial equality councils are less well-represented at a strategic level in partnerships. These agencies, and community and voluntary organisations, are more often involved in local initiatives and task groups.
- Community safety will be only one of a number of strategic partnerships involving the local authority, police and other public sector agencies. Some of these partnerships have overlapping remits. To be effective, community safety partnerships need to ensure that their links to other partnerships and the community planning framework are clear and co-ordinated.

To succeed in the long term, partnerships need to base their strategic priorities on a knowledge of the nature, extent and causes of local community safety problems.

- Only a quarter of partnerships have attempted any systematic analysis of available data, and only one has completed a comprehensive community safety audit. Without the information that would be gained from conducting a community safety audit, partnerships will not have baseline data against which to demonstrate progress. Nor will they be able to know where to target their resources to maximum effect.
- Most partnerships are consulting local communities about community safety problems – nearly half of partnerships have consultation either as a strategic priority, or as a principle underpinning their work.

Across Scotland, community safety strategies are generally at a very early stage of development. Most partnerships have still to develop measures to track progress in tackling community safety.

- The majority of partnerships have agreed their strategic priorities without waiting for the completion of community safety audits. The strategic priorities that have been set can be grouped into themes. The most common themes are concerned with reducing crime, reducing the fear of crime and issues related to young people.
- Most partnerships have focused on developing local initiatives. Although it is through initiatives that many community safety priorities will be achieved, partnerships need to ensure that their initiatives are an outcome of the strategic planning process and designed to meet the partnership's strategic priorities.
- The study proposes a performance management framework, developed in conjunction with practitioners, to assist partnerships to assess their effectiveness. A further bulletin on this work will be published in November 2000.

Resource planning could be improved in community safety partnerships.

- Funding from the Scottish Executive is the main external source of funding for most community safety partnerships. Partnership members expressed some concern about relying so heavily on government funds, particularly as this is offered to support national, rather than local, priorities.
- Few partnerships underpin their strategies with long-term resource planning. The study found limited evidence of partnership organisations pooling resources.
- The main dedicated staffing resource for community safety in Scotland comes from police forces through their provision of Local Authority Liaison Officers (LALOs).
- A number of partnerships are also resourced through temporary secondments. These were seen by partnerships as a useful method of initiating projects and building trust and understanding between partner organisations.

The way forward

The report makes a number of recommendations on what partnerships need to do to improve their management. These include:

- **Links to the community plan.** Community safety partnerships should ensure that they have clear organisational and reporting links to the local authority's community planning framework.
- **Community safety audits.** Partnerships should agree a phased plan for acquiring the information they need to identify community safety problems, and the causes of those problems.
- **Setting objectives.** Strategic priorities should be based on evidence and translated into measurable objectives.
- **Measuring progress.** Partnerships should establish a baseline from which progress will be measured and targets set, agree a set of strategic performance indicators reflecting their local priorities and review progress.
- **Resource planning.** Partnerships should develop clear, long-term resource plans to underpin their strategies.

Audit follow up

The findings and recommendations in this report will be developed into self assessment audit material. This will be designed for use by partnerships to assist them to review progress and to identify those areas where improvements could be made. The self assessment material will be available in summer 2000. Audit follow up, which will provide an objective assessment of partnerships' approach to community safety, will take place in 2001.

1 Introduction

Why look at community safety partnerships?

Improving community safety is about creating safer places for people to live, work and visit, without fear or risk of harm. Many different agencies are involved in dealing with the impact of unsafe environments on individuals and communities. Investment by one agency to reduce risk is likely to bring benefits, not only to the community and the investing agency, but to a range of other organisations. This cross-cutting nature of community safety problems is illustrated in Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1: An example of the cross-cutting nature of community safety problems

Dealing with safety incidents may involve a large number of different agencies.

A malicious fire to an occupied house may result in:

- the attendance of the fire brigade
- the attendance of the ambulance service
- a police enquiry
- the treatment of victims by the health service
- a local authority cleansing response
- the involvement of social work and housing services to arrange emergency rehousing
- the involvement of housing or property services to repair the damage
- a loss to business if the victims were employed and are unable to work.

Beyond the social cost, each of the above elements has a financial impact. Investment by the police service, fire service or local authority to reduce malicious fires will not only result in a saving for them, but will generate savings for other agencies.

Source: Audit Scotland fieldwork

In Scotland, a broad definition of community safety has been developed to include a range of factors that can affect the safety of an individual. These factors may include accidents, fire safety, problems associated with children and young people, anti-social behaviour, domestic violence and crime. A national context for these factors is set out in Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 2: A national context for community safety¹

Community safety problems are wide ranging and can affect many people.

Accidents and injuries

- In 1998, there were about 1500 accidental deaths in Scotland. Road accidents were the biggest single cause of death in the 0-64 age group, and falls were the biggest cause of death for the 65 and over age group.
- In 1998/99, there were over 60,000 emergency hospital admissions in Scotland as a result of accidents. There were just over 1.5 million attendances at accident and emergency departments, at an average cost to the health service of £46 per attendee.

Fire

- In 1997, fire caused 87 fatalities and over 1,500 non-fatal injuries.

Children and young people

- A survey of 12 to 15-year-olds in 1993 found that crime was generally rated as their biggest worry.

Anti-social behaviour

- Over 40% of families in council flats said that vandalism and people drinking or taking drugs are common problems in their neighbourhood, according to the recent Scottish Household Survey. This is twice the average for the whole of Scotland.

Domestic violence

- The Scottish Crime Survey (1996) found that 17% of women and 9% of men had experienced either threats or force at some time from their partner. 12% of women and 5% of men had experienced both threats and force from a partner at some time in their lives.

Crime

- Overall, crime recorded by the police, after rising considerably in the 1970s and 1980s, has been falling since 1991. Petty assaults and breach of the peace, however, have risen continuously since the 1970s.
- The total number of crimes recorded in Scotland during 1998/99 was just over 433,000, an increase of almost 3% compared with 1997/98. The number of violent crimes recorded in Scotland in 1998/99 increased by over 10% in comparison to the previous year.
- The Scottish Crime Survey estimates that in 1995, there were almost a million incidents involving offences against individuals or their property. This estimate includes incidents which were not reported to the police.

Costs of crime

- The costs of crime to local authorities can be significant. In 1992 insurance companies reported that the cost of vandalism to schools was equivalent to £13.50 per pupil, compared with an average of £12 per pupil spent on books.
- The Scottish Business Crime Survey found that about six in ten business premises experienced crime during 1998. The total cost to Scottish businesses was estimated at £678 million.

As Exhibit 2 shows, improving community safety will involve many public agencies – councils, police forces, fire brigades, health boards and trusts, and housing associations – as well as voluntary and community groups and businesses. Given the range of stakeholders and potential issues involved in community safety, effective partnerships have been recognised as a central mechanism for improving safety and reducing risk in communities.

¹ This information is drawn from various sources detailed in Appendix 1.

“No one agency or organisation has all the answers, so the formation of powerful, yet practical partnerships provides the means for sustained involvement from all members of our communities and the agencies which serve those communities.”

Safer communities in Scotland

The Scottish Office, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) agreed a joint approach for developing community safety in 1998². This emphasised that establishing partnerships, under the leadership of the local council and the police force, was essential for real progress in addressing community safety.

The effectiveness of community safety partnerships will be a critical factor in the ability of agencies and communities to make a lasting impact on crime and safety.

Study objectives

In July 1999, the Scottish Executive published ‘*Safer communities in Scotland*’. It contains detailed guidance for community safety partnerships on the steps they need to take to tackle community safety problems effectively, including the development and implementation of strategies.

This study has focused on the extent to which community safety partnerships are implementing the Scottish Executive guidance. Many community safety partnerships are at an early stage of development. The overall objective of this study is to assist the development of effective partnerships by:

- reviewing current progress on the strategic management of community safety partnerships
- identifying any barriers to developing effective partnerships and implementing community safety strategies, and offering advice on how these might be overcome
- in the longer term, working with practitioners to develop performance indicators to enable partnerships to assess their effectiveness.

Methodology

The study was undertaken using desk research and field visits to community safety partnerships. The main data collection methods are shown in Exhibit 3.

Exhibit 3: Data gathering

The principal methods used by the study team to gather data.

Desk research to review

- partnership strategy documents
- annual reports
- community safety audit reports
- minutes of partnership meetings

Fieldwork

- semi-structured interviews with a range of partners in 14 multi-agency partnerships
- comparison visit to two English partnerships

Group consultation

- Study advisory group and expert groups reviewing:
- performance measurement
 - main study findings

² ‘*Safer communities through partnerships – a strategy for action*’, The Scottish Office, 1998.

In December 1999, all community safety partnerships in Scotland were asked for documentation showing when they were formed, what they were hoping to achieve and what they had done so far. Twenty-nine submissions were received and examined against a set of criteria drawn from published good practice³ to provide an overview of partnership development and inform the choice of detailed interview questions for follow-up visits.

The desk research was followed by field visits to 14 partnerships in Scotland and two in England to explore in more detail the findings emerging from the review of documentation. During these visits, interviews were held with representatives of different partner organisations, including councils, police, fire, health and voluntary organisations.

Workshops were also held with council policy officers and police local authority liaison officers to facilitate the initial work on developing relevant performance measures, and to discuss the main findings from the study.

Audit follow up

The findings and recommendations in this report will be developed into self assessment audit material. This will be designed for use by partnerships to assist them to review progress and to identify those areas where improvements could be made. The self assessment material will be available in summer 2000. Audit follow up, which will provide an objective assessment of partnerships' approach to community safety, will take place in 2001.

The Commission may review community safety partnerships' progress in the future and would welcome views on the timing and scope of such a review.

Report structure

The report is set out as follows:

2 Community safety partnerships – membership and challenges looks at who is involved in the partnerships, and the challenges they need to address, together and as individual partners, to increase their effectiveness.

3 Partnership activity – the building blocks for success discusses how partnerships are tackling community safety audits and consultation, and their approach to strategic development and implementation.

4 Partnership resources – investing together presents the study's findings on how community safety is being resourced by partnerships, both financially and through staffing levels.

5 Recommendations summarises the report's recommendations.

There are also four appendices:

- 1 Contextual data for community safety in Scotland
- 2 A proposed framework for performance management in community safety
- 3 Membership of the study advisory group
- 4 Bibliography.

³ See Bibliography.

2 Community safety partnerships – membership and challenges

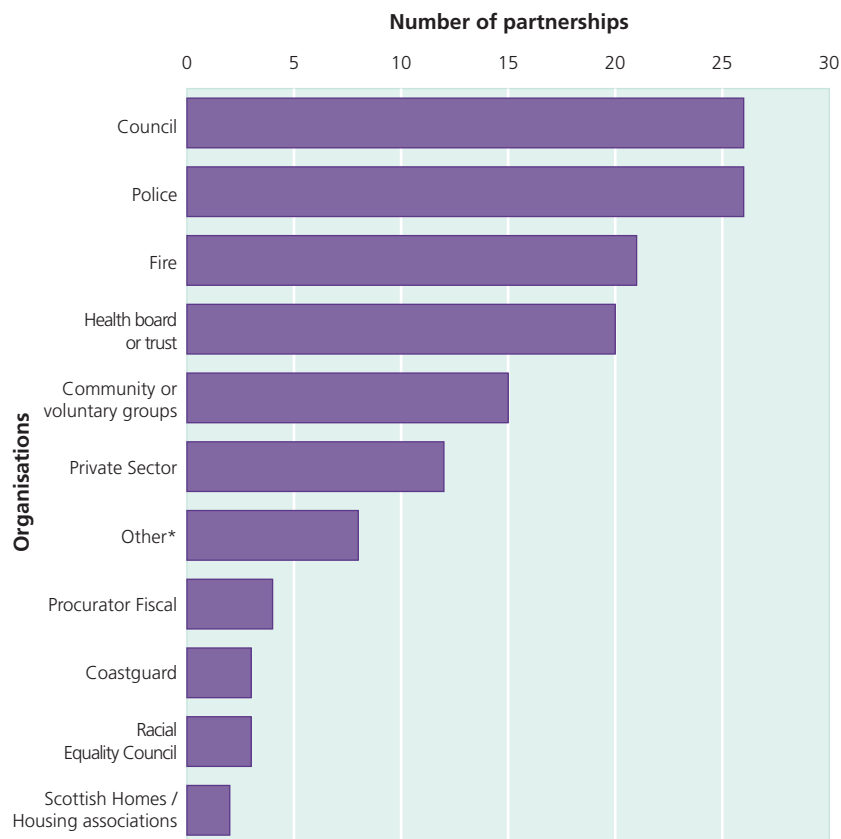
This section describes the partnership arrangements that have been established across Scotland, and identifies the challenges which partnerships face.

Partnership members

Since local government reorganisation in 1996, all Scottish local authorities and police forces have participated in multi-agency activity designed to improve safety in their communities. Formal authority-wide community safety partnerships have been established by 30 councils. Most of these were set up within the past two years. Information has been obtained on the membership, at a strategic level, of 26 partnerships and the results are given in Exhibit 4.

Exhibit 4: Membership of community safety partnerships

The range of organisations involved at a strategic level in 26 community safety partnerships across Scotland.



*Other includes statutory agencies, such as the prison service, that are represented in only one or two partnerships.

Source: Audit Scotland fieldwork

“...about one third of business premises have experience of working in partnership with other organisations to prevent crime and nearly two-thirds of all businesses indicated they would be interested in being involved in such schemes in the future.”

Counting the cost: crime against business in Scotland

‘*Safer communities in Scotland*’ identifies four agencies which should be represented on all community safety partnerships at a strategic level. These are the local authority, police, health board or trust, and the fire service. While this guidance has been broadly followed in Scotland, it is notable that four partnerships, of the 26 for which data was collected, do not include the fire service and five do not include a health board or trust.

The guidance also states that partnerships should consider the role of the private and voluntary sectors, housing associations and racial equality councils. These agencies are much less well-represented at a strategic level in partnerships in Scotland. Only three partnerships, of the 26 for which data was collected, have members of the local racial equality council as partners, and Scottish Homes or housing associations are only represented on two partnerships. These agencies, and community and voluntary organisations, are more often involved in local initiatives and task groups.

The challenges facing partnerships

Partnerships face a number of challenges in developing a joint approach to community safety. These challenges need to be understood and managed to enable partnerships to achieve their strategic priorities. They include:

- developing an appropriate membership and structure
- managing links to other partnerships and initiatives at national, regional and local levels
- maintaining the momentum of the partnership and ensuring the continued commitment of key partner organisations.

Membership and structure

Section 1 highlighted the wide range of issues that are relevant to community safety. Partnerships need to identify how best to address this multitude of problems in an effective way by engaging relevant groups without creating a cumbersome structure. Creating effective partnerships involves identifying the agencies which should be represented, according to what is important locally, and then agreeing their role in policy setting and implementation. It appears that in some partnerships, the lack of a clear distinction between responsibility for policy setting and for implementation is limiting progress.

Recommendation

Partnerships should consider their membership and organisational structure with a view to:

- *assessing whether organisations need to be involved at a strategic or an implementation level*
- *ensuring that the responsibilities for formulating policy and for its implementation are clearly defined.*

Links to other partnerships and initiatives

Local authorities frequently work in partnership with other agencies. Many central government initiatives require local partnerships to be established. Community safety will be only one of a number of strategic partnerships involving the local authority, police and other public sector agencies. Some of these partnerships have overlapping remits (for example, community safety partnerships and drugs action teams), and many require senior level commitment from the partner organisations. One authority reported being a member of 75 different multi-agency partnerships.

“Trying to manage a number of different partnerships is like trying to herd cats.”

– quote from fieldwork

In some authorities there is little co-ordination between different partnerships. Without co-ordination, progress can be hampered as remits and responsibilities may overlap or be duplicated, and partnerships compete with each other for scarce resources.

Each partner organisation needs to co-ordinate its own multi-agency activity, both at strategic and operational levels. To minimise duplication, each partner should be clear where responsibility for co-ordinating partnership activities lies within their own organisation.

Recommendation

Partner organisations should be clear where responsibility lies for co-ordinating all their related partnership activities.

A recurring theme during fieldwork was the overarching impact that interviewees felt community planning has on community safety partnerships. A significant factor for further progress in many partnerships, therefore, will be establishing clear links with the community planning framework. The community safety partnership needs to be an integral and logical element of that framework.

Recommendation

Community safety partnerships should ensure that they have clear organisational and reporting links to the local authority's community planning framework.

Maintaining momentum

Achieving significant improvements in community safety requires long-term investment – the benefits of investment may not be seen for some years, and may not be felt directly by the investing agency. All partner organisations will have to work hard to maintain the commitment and enthusiasm which often accompanies the initial stages of setting up a partnership.

There is evidence that not all partners maintain the same level of involvement that they showed in the beginning. This appears particularly true of the health sector, with a number of partnerships reporting a falling away of health board or trust attendance at meetings.

The partnerships that have sustained involvement and commitment from all members have adopted a number of approaches to help them maintain momentum:

- adopting a balance between targeting resources at 'quick wins', to create initial success, and longer-term strategic priorities
- concentrating on areas of common concern to ensure that the partnership agenda is relevant to as many partners as possible
- sharing responsibility for tasks across partner organisations, eg hosting and servicing meetings.

People involved in partnerships also have a role in maintaining momentum. Most partnerships have a strategic forum which sets policy. The chair of that forum can play a pivotal role in the progress of the partnership. The most effective chairs are able to influence policy within their own organisation and engender corporate commitment from policy makers in other partner organisations.

“...sustainable impact on the problem will take time to achieve and will require a long-term commitment at all levels to working in partnership...”

Safety in numbers

Elected members have a key role to play in community safety. They can bring political commitment and leadership. They can also bring extensive local knowledge of community priorities and concerns, as community safety is often a high priority with their constituents. The study found that most partnerships are chaired by elected members. Many staff interviewed for the study held the view that the inclusion of a committed elected member within a partnership was a central reason for the progress and momentum of partnership activity.

Partner organisations need to know why they are involved in the partnership and what is expected from them. It may be beneficial to partnerships to have some form of written agreement⁴ which clarifies:

- roles – what is expected from each partner
- responsibilities – including who will be the lead partner
- contributions – including who will represent each partner.

Choosing the right partner organisations is a major step towards giving the partnership a chance of success, but this advantage can be quickly lost if the right individuals are not chosen as representatives. During fieldwork, interviewees identified the core attributes that the people who are representing partner organisations should possess. These are set out in Exhibit 5.

Exhibit 5: Working in partnership – representatives' attributes

Working effectively in partnership requires a range of attributes.

Effective partnership working requires representatives who have:

- an appropriate level of authority ie, policymaker for the strategic group and manager for the implementation group
- ownership of the problem
- availability of time
- ability to understand the issues
- excellent communication skills.

Source: Audit Scotland fieldwork

Recommendation

Partner organisations should ensure that their representatives have the skills and attributes necessary to fulfil their obligations to the partnership.

Concerns have been expressed about the turnover of representatives. In some partnerships, meetings may often comprise those who have recently joined the group and those who are about to leave. This may adversely affect the progress that partnerships can make. Where continuity of representation is not possible, partner organisations should ensure that new representatives are fully briefed on the partnership's work.

Recommendation

Maintaining continuity of representation should be given a high priority by partner organisations.

Creating the partnership is just the beginning. The next step is for the partner organisations to tackle their local community safety problems in an effective way. The following section of this report discusses this process.

⁴ 'Effective partnership working: good practice note, no. 1', The Scottish Office, 1998.

3 Partnership activity – the building blocks for success

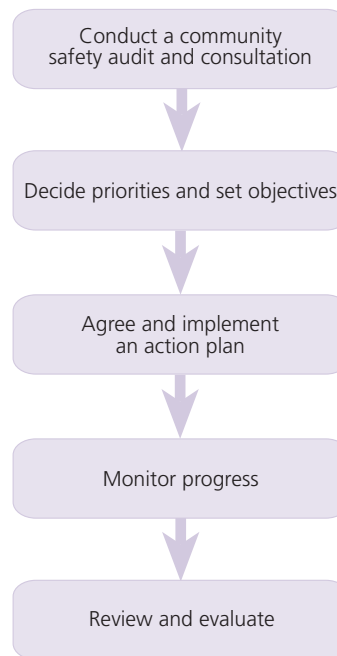
Have community safety partnerships made a difference?
Substantially reducing the actual and perceived risks in people’s lives cannot be done quickly. It requires investment and commitment over a long period of time. Partnerships are still in their infancy, and while individual initiatives can be evaluated, it will be some time before it will be possible to measure progress against strategic priorities.

Partnerships need to know what they have achieved. This is essential, not only to improve safety, but to account for their funding and performance to local communities and partner agencies.

The steps that partnerships need to take to achieve success, and to demonstrate that achievement, are shown in Exhibit 6.

Exhibit 6: Planning for success in community safety

‘Safer communities in Scotland’ outlines a staged process from audit to action.

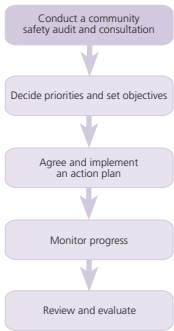


Source: ‘Safer communities in Scotland’

“To succeed, partnerships should develop robust community safety strategies which are responsive to community concerns, evidence-based and led, and outcome focused.”
Safer communities in Scotland

This is commonly known as a problem-solving approach to community safety. There are common weaknesses in these areas across partnerships which suggest that, in the longer term, many may not be able to demonstrate that they have made an impact on community safety.

The remainder of this section looks at the extent to which partnerships are implementing this process.



“Community safety audit – an analysis of relevant data from partner agencies

Consultation – communicating with communities to identify priorities and concerns

Community safety profile – the combined results of the audit and the consultation.”

– study definitions

Community safety audits and consultation

To succeed in the long term, partnerships need to base their strategic priorities on a sound knowledge and understanding of the nature, extent and causes of local problems. *‘Safer communities in Scotland’* recommends that partnerships should carry out a community safety audit to gather the information required for this knowledge and understanding.

To understand local community safety problems and their causes, partnerships need to:

- analyse the available and relevant data from partner agencies, and
- consult with local communities, identifying their priorities and concerns.

When combined, this information will form a community safety profile, which will provide partnerships with an understanding of local community safety problems. It will also give partnerships a baseline from which to measure progress and enable them to know where to target their resources to maximum effect.

Community safety audits

‘Safer communities in Scotland’ contains detailed guidance on the range of information that should be collected in a community safety audit. This includes:

- types of crime, accidents and injuries and disorderly behaviour
- victimised groups
- groups of offenders.

In Scotland, only a quarter of partnerships have attempted any systematic analysis of data. Only one partnership, West Lothian, has conducted and produced a comprehensive community safety audit, as recommended in the Scottish Executive guidance.

Exhibit 7 describes West Lothian community safety partnership’s experience of conducting a community safety audit.

Exhibit 7: An example of a completed community safety audit

West Lothian's community safety partnership conducted a community safety audit in 1999.

The audit was conducted to give a snapshot of community safety in West Lothian. A full-time police officer was seconded to the council for three months to work on the audit. Information was gathered on:

- demographics for each locality
- numbers and types of injuries, the profile of injured patients and where the injuries occurred – from admissions to accident and emergency units
- ambulance call outs – their causes, and when and where they occurred
- road traffic accidents – when and where they occurred
- numbers and locations of fires and false calls
- types and trends in recorded crimes
- reported domestic disputes – when and where they occurred
- reported racial incidents – when and where they occurred
- fear of crime – gathered from a police survey
- numbers and types of incidents which led to referrals to Victim Support
- drug use – including types of drugs, trends in numbers of users and trends in enforcement
- direct costs of criminal damage to council property
- numbers and reasons for referral to the Reporter to the Children's Panel
- numbers and locality of complaints about anti-social behaviour and youth disorder.

In researching this information, West Lothian found that different partner organisations used different geographic definitions for data collection: police information was in terms of police station area; fire and ambulance information was collected by general post code; council services used varying geographic areas, including housing areas, community planning areas, wards and school catchment areas.

The experience of conducting the audit has led to debate within the strategic partnership about how to develop and improve the level of data management within partner organisations.

The partnership is now using the information gained through the audit, together with results from community consultation (conducted through the community planning process), to help prioritise and target its activities.

Conducting the audit has had a number of benefits, in particular:

- providing baseline data against which progress can be measured
- increased understanding and trust between the partners.

The partnership will be looking at how and when the audit should be repeated, and how systems can be put in place to enable the data to be collected on a regular and systematic basis.

As Exhibit 7 illustrates, there are significant barriers to collecting and analysing potentially relevant data. The following difficulties were reported by those partnerships which had attempted detailed data analysis:

- partners using different categories of area (eg, postcode, ward, police beats etc)
- large amounts of data held manually by some partner agencies
- lack of appropriately skilled people to analyse the data
- a reluctance to share data between partner agencies
- systematic data collection being given a low priority in comparison with developing community safety initiatives.

Some partnerships have expressed concern about the public relations and media implications of releasing data from community safety audits – partnerships do not want particular areas portrayed as 'high crime' neighbourhoods. This is an issue which needs to be handled with care, and which partnerships need to consider in the planning stage of a community safety audit.

“Skills required for conducting community safety audits:

- a basic understanding of data analysis
 - familiarity with different IT systems (but not necessarily an IT specialist)
 - good interpersonal skills for liaising with the different agencies
 - persistence.”
- quote from fieldwork

The study identified a number of elements which may help partnerships to ensure that their community safety audits succeed. These include:

- **developing commitment** from all partners to the sharing of information and the value of conducting an audit
- **ensuring understanding and clear agreement** between the different agencies on how the information will be used, and how it should not be used, eg, through the use of data protocols
- **adopting a pragmatic approach**, using available data for the initial analysis and agreeing a phased plan for acquiring other information they require. Both West Lothian and Fife partnerships have strategic goals relating to the collection and use of information
- **identifying a lead partner** to drive the work forward and report progress to the partnership
- **providing dedicated staff resources** (possibly temporary) for the task, with appropriate skills
- **agreeing a publication and distribution strategy.**

The importance to partnerships of ensuring a sound evidence base for their strategic priorities cannot be over-emphasised. This will enable partnerships to demonstrate transparency in their decision-making, and progress in achieving their objectives.

Recommendation

Partnerships should agree a phased plan for acquiring the information they need to identify both community safety problems and the causes of those problems.

Consultation

Partnerships have made considerably more progress on consultation than on data analysis. Most partnerships have carried out some consultation with local communities – nearly half have consultation either as a strategic priority, or as a principle underpinning the work of the partnership. Methods of consultation include:

- surveys, public meetings and other mechanisms to gather information on priorities or issues of concern within communities
- distribution of draft strategies to community groups for comment
- involvement of community representatives in local decision-making processes.

Most partnerships recognise the need to consult explicitly with hard-to-reach groups, such as young people or people from minority ethnic communities, who are often under represented in general consultation exercises. These groups may be particularly vulnerable to threats and risks to their safety. The need to use multiple methods of consultation and involvement that are appropriate to the needs and circumstances of different communities, or parts of communities, was one of the key messages emerging from the evaluation of the pathfinder projects for community planning⁵.

There is encouraging evidence of some partnerships adopting a range of consultative techniques to address these challenges, and basing their strategic approaches on the results of this work. Exhibit 8 is one example of this.

⁵ ‘Community planning in Scotland: an evaluation of the pathfinder projects’, Scottish Executive and COSLA, 1999.

Exhibit 8: Consultation with hard-to-reach groups

An example of involving vulnerable communities in the work of a community safety partnership.

Fife Black/Minority Ethnic Community Safety Group

Fife Community Safety Partnership established this group to ensure that racial violence and harassment are effectively challenged and confronted. A focus group of black and minority ethnic residents has been established to advise the group on specific issues. The Fife Racial Equality Council is a key member of the group, and provides another important link with the community.

As a result of this consultative work, the partnership has agreed a set of objectives aimed at improving safety in black and minority ethnic communities. These objectives include:

- the development of a joint monitoring system for racist incidents, along with joint plans for responding to and preventing racial harassment and violence
- the provision of enhanced support, advice and information to people who have experienced racial violence and harassment
- the implementation of a joint agency campaign to promote public awareness of problems of racial harassment and violence in Fife, to promote greater understanding and tolerance within the community and to increase the reporting of racially motivated crime.

Questionnaire surveys and public meetings remain the most common forms of consultation used by partnerships to gather information on community priorities.

The quality of a selection of surveys reviewed as part of the study was highly variable. Concern was expressed during fieldwork visits that some major strategic decisions were being made on the basis of a minority of views obtained through an unbalanced consultative process.

The study found little evidence of any critical evaluation of the effectiveness of consultation or its reliability in accurately reflecting community concerns. Given the cost of consultation, partnerships should ensure that time is included in the planning process to enable effective evaluation. This would include:

- setting clear objectives for the consultation
- selecting an appropriate method of consultation
- defining the intended audience or group of participants
- setting out the resource requirements for the consultation
- evaluating the success and effectiveness of the process in meeting its objectives.

Recommendation

Partnerships should ensure the consultation they undertake is effectively planned and evaluated.

Community safety audits and consultation – overcoming the barriers

Relevant and reliable information is costly to acquire – the lack of resources was quoted as one of the main barriers to partnerships undertaking this combination of detailed community safety audits and consultation.

Partnerships can work towards minimising that barrier by making use of the following options.

Using information effectively. Partnerships should ensure that they get as much mileage as possible out of the data they have collected and analysed. For example, one partnership used information it had collected in support of a Challenge fund bid to focus discussion in a series of public meetings. Exhibit 9 is a further illustration of an effective use of information.

Exhibit 9: SAFE – Safe Angus for Everyone

An example of how one partnership used information effectively.

Angus Council commissioned a survey of all their secondary schools to assess the use of drugs and alcohol among young people. The survey was undertaken as part of a national biennial study of secondary school children across Scotland and England. Angus Council contributed to the costs of the national study, both to get local data and to be able to compare this with the national picture. *(Good practice point – linking in with a national study meant Angus benefited from a tried and tested methodology, provided Angus with benchmarking information to put the local situation in context, and was a cost-effective method of data collection.)*

Angus Community Safety Partnership then used the survey information, in combination with information on the cost of vandalism to council properties, to make a successful bid for Challenge funding for SAFE – Safe Angus for Everyone. The project has specific objectives for reducing alcohol and drug misuse, vandalism and anti-social behaviour among young people. *(Good practice point – using data to set clear objectives.)*

The Partnership is committed to undertaking a follow-up study to evaluate the impact of the SAFE project, and the council and Tayside police have already identified the monitoring information that they will collect. *(Good practice point – building in monitoring and evaluation from the beginning of the project.)* The findings of the study have led to a review of their substance misuse action plans. *(Good practice point – reviewing existing action plans on the basis of new information.)*

Using secondments. Temporary secondments and student placements can be of value in kick-starting the process of information gathering – the results of this work can be used to demonstrate the benefits of information to strategic planning and engender partnership commitment to further work. A discussion on the role of secondments is included in Section 4.

Buying into national surveys. The Scottish Executive has been looking at how national research can also be of benefit at a local level. For example, the Scottish Household Survey has recently been developed with boosted sample sizes big enough to be statistically valid at council level. Councils can buy into the survey for additional samples in local areas. The Executive is also currently reviewing how the Scottish Crime Survey is conducted.

Co-operation. Consultation with communities and service users is one of the principles underpinning Best Value, so many council departments and other public agencies are involved in this process. Although there is some evidence of co-operation on consultation exercises, both within councils, and between different partners (see Exhibit 10) there would seem to be scope for considerably more co-operation in this area.

Exhibit 10: Consulting together

There are benefits to partnerships if they co-operate on consultation.

Highland Council contributed to the resourcing of the Northern Constabulary Police Perception Survey, which included questions relating to perceptions of local crime and disorder problems, perceptions of local social problems, and worries about the possibility of crime. The results of the survey will be used as a base document for community safety audits currently being undertaken by local action teams.

Fife and Falkirk partnerships have both agreed to use the Scottish Crime Survey questions on fear of crime in similar surveys within their own authorities. This will enable both partnerships to measure their own progress and also to benchmark with each other.

The Highland Home Safety Liaison Group worked with staff in social work who visited people's homes regularly, such as home helps, to assist in collecting information for a survey on home safety. This meant that the limited available budget was used to greater effect by doubling the sample size and covering the cost of disseminating the results.

Involving local groups. The involvement of voluntary sector and community groups in the consultation process can bring significant benefits to the partnership. Voluntary agencies often have detailed knowledge of different communities. Research into effective methods of consultation with particular hard-to-reach groups has also been carried out by agencies such as the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

Deciding priorities and setting objectives

The majority of partnerships across Scotland have agreed strategic priorities, and most have developed strategic plans, but many of these plans are less than 12 months old.

'*Safer communities in Scotland*' recommends that partnerships should base their strategic priorities on the findings from their community safety audits and consultation. In practice, partnerships have developed an agreed set of strategic priorities before completing detailed community safety audits.

The agreement of strategic priorities has often been welcomed by partnerships as a key progress milestone. However, setting priorities without the information from a community safety audit may mean that priorities do not reflect the threats and barriers to safety that exist within local communities.

The strategic priorities that have been set vary from highly specific objectives to broad topic areas, and they include working principles as well as community safety outcomes. They can, however, be grouped into common themes, as shown in Exhibit 11. On average, partnerships have set themselves six strategic priorities.

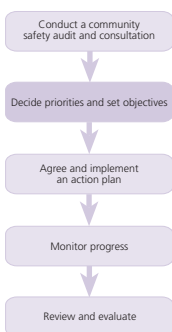
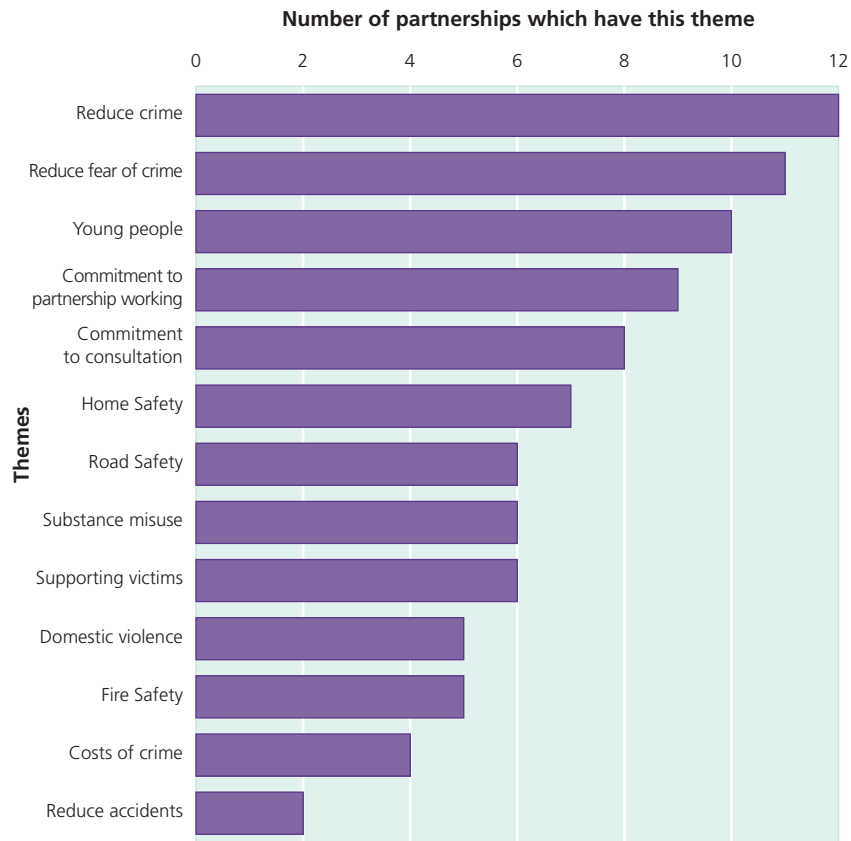


Exhibit 11: Community safety partnership themes

The common themes emerging from a review of the strategic priorities and objectives from 16 partnerships.



Source: Audit Scotland fieldwork

In setting their strategic priorities, partnerships have had to balance pressures from four different sources:

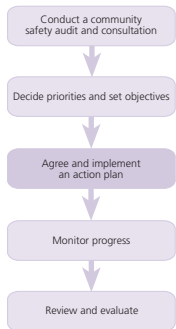
- nationally, from central government or national organisations
- regionally, from organisations, which may have a wider geographic boundary than the community safety partnership, such as police forces, fire brigades or health boards
- locally, from other council strategies, such as social inclusion
- locally, from consultation.

These different sources of priorities may conflict with each other, or cause tension among partner agencies.

Many strategic priorities are phrased in broad, general terms (eg, “to make *people’s lives safer*”), but these have not been, or have not yet been, translated into measurable objectives. Therefore, in many partnerships it will be difficult to assess performance.

Recommendation

Partnerships should ensure that they have sound evidence for their strategic priorities and that these priorities are translated into measurable objectives.



Agreeing and implementing an action plan

'Safer communities in Scotland' stresses the importance of developing a programme of work, through an action plan, that is tightly managed and regularly monitored, to achieve the partnership's strategic priorities. It recommends that action plans should specify how each priority will be delivered, and include:

- information on the problem to be addressed, and the baseline position
- actions that will make up each intervention package
- required inputs (resources) for each intervention package
- output and outcome targets, with suitable performance measures
- clear reporting procedures.

Only about a quarter of partnerships have produced action plans – and many of those reviewed did not always follow good practice. Few of the action plans included baseline information on the problem to be addressed. Whilst all the plans contained details of the actions to be undertaken, some did not include resource requirements or performance measures. There was also little evidence of systematic option appraisal – assessing whether a particular action was the most effective way to address an identified problem.

It is important that the partner agencies reflect agreed actions in their own service plans, and that resource commitments are clearly and consistently identified in both partnership and service action plans. In this way, the core services delivered by partner organisations can be modified to achieve improvements in community safety.

Exhibit 12 is an illustration of action planning, with good practice identified.

Exhibit 12: Extract from Fife Community Safety Action Plan

Community safety action plans should follow Scottish Executive guidance.

		<i>Good practice points</i>
Task	Implement a Fife-wide home security initiative that provides grants for homeowners and private tenants	
Lead role	Community Safety Co-ordinator; Local Offices Manager	<i>Clear responsibility for implementation</i>
Partners	Fife Constabulary/Fife Council	<i>Partner organisations identified</i>
Aims	To reduce crime and fear of crime – high volume property crimes, notably malicious damage and housebreaking	<i>Links to partnership's strategic aims and objectives</i>
Objectives	To reduce levels of housebreaking by promoting home security measures for victims of housebreaking, council tenants, people on low incomes and older people	
Actions	Establish pilot home security grants scheme for people on low incomes who are 70 years or over <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and administer scheme via local office network • Promote scheme to housebreaking victims by letter and via police community safety officers and security adviser 	<i>Task broken down into specified actions</i>
Funding/costs	Initial sum of £10,000 from Fife Council's corporate budget to fund pilot scheme	<i>Funding requirements and source specified</i>
Timescale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote scheme in local offices, through 'Fifer' and by word of mouth – by 30/06/99 • Administer and monitor take up – by 30/11/99 • Review future development of scheme – by 31/03/00 	<i>Clear timescales for completed action</i>
Evaluation of outcomes	Monitoring of take up of scheme Analysis of repeat victimisation data	<i>Monitoring impact as well as process</i>

Recommendation

In developing their action plans, partnerships should follow the good practice outlined in the Scottish Executive guidance, and ensure that relevant actions are built into each partners' own service plans.

The role of initiatives

Partnerships have been heavily involved in developing initiatives, which has consumed much of their time. This is valuable work because it is through initiatives that many community safety objectives will be achieved. However, the time and effort taken to plan and implement initiatives has, to some extent, distracted partnerships from developing a more strategic approach to community safety.

Many partnerships need to find a better balance between long-term strategic planning and short-term initiatives if they are to achieve their strategic priorities. Initiatives should be an outcome of the strategic planning process and designed to meet the partnership's strategic goals.

The benefits of working on initiatives have been identified as:

- giving an initial focus for the partnership
- creating momentum
- providing an opportunity to demonstrate action and success quickly
- engendering co-operative working between agencies at grass roots level
- involving voluntary or community groups in specific projects of benefit to the community.

Many initiatives are well-run, innovative and effective and demonstrate considerable commitment from partner agencies. Exhibit 13 illustrates two examples of successful initiatives, with the good practice points highlighted.

Although partnerships have been involved in a range of successful initiatives, there is a danger that if a partnership is entirely focused on initiatives with little strategic planning, then long-term problems and the causes of those problems will not be tackled. Initiatives should be developed in response to the strategic issues and priorities the partnership wants to address.

Recommendation

Partnerships should ensure that the initiatives they develop and implement are designed to achieve their strategic priorities.

Exhibit 13: Successful initiatives

Initiatives can be highly successful in tackling identified problems.

Dundee City Council 1999 Anti-vandalism campaign

In Dundee, vandalism on council property peaks during August, and in 1998 caused £458,000 worth of damage. Research has shown that the average age of vandals may be between 10 and 13 years. (*Good practice point – the initiative was based on research identifying the source of the problem.*) The council's Insurance and Risk Management Section designed a publicity campaign on buses with the following aims:

- to raise public awareness of the level of malicious damage, and target parents of young people, reminding them of their responsibilities – eye catching questions designed to make people stop and think for a minute as to the whereabouts of their children, particularly in the evening and at night time
- to highlight the scale of vandalism in monetary terms by equating the cost of vandalism to items the public could relate to, eg, selecting the equivalent number of computers that could be bought for schools
- to publicise the council's Risk Management Strategy which aims for a community-based approach to mitigate the drain on resources caused by vandalism
- to show the public that the council was working on this problem in partnership with the police and provide a means for people to report vandalism to the police.

Expenditure on the campaign amounted to £4,000, and it resulted in a 17% reduction in the costs of vandalism compared with the previous year, a saving of £76,000. (*Good practice point – the initiative was evaluated on a cost-benefit basis, with savings identified.*)

Moray Fare Travel Scheme

This scheme was launched as a result of consultation with the young people of Moray. They identified the cost of public transport as being a significant factor to them drinking alcohol and using drugs in their local environment. They stated that there are few leisure facilities outside Elgin – the young people preferred to spend £5 on alcohol than £10 on transport and entrance to leisure facilities in Elgin. (*Good practice point – the initiative was based on research identifying the cause of the problem.*)

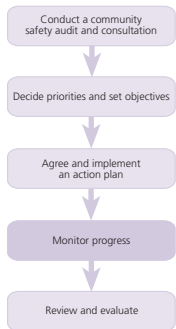
The community safety partnership agreed to try and address the issues raised and developed the Moray Fare Travel Scheme. The aims of the scheme are:

- to reduce the cost of public transport to young people
- to encourage young people to use leisure facilities
- to reduce the consumption of alcohol and drugs by young people
- to reduce the incidence of crime and disorder in local areas
- to encourage healthier lifestyles by young people.

The community safety partnership approached Stagecoach Bluebird to investigate whether they would provide discounted bus fares for young people. The company agreed to run a pilot scheme on one route between Keith and Elgin for a three month period. This route covered two secondary school areas. Additionally, the partnership approached local businesses and council facilities to participate in the scheme by providing discounted admissions and other concessions. (*Good practice point – support and sponsorship from private sector partners.*)

To monitor the scheme and make it accessible to secondary school pupils only, the Fare Travel Card was introduced. The cards were administered through the schools. After completion of the three month pilot period, all the participating businesses were more than satisfied with the success of the scheme. It is now being rolled out to all secondary schools in Moray. (*Good practice point – the initiative was piloted before being extended.*)

The scheme continues to be monitored, with each partner recording the use of their facilities by young people, and the police analysing crime trends. Further consultation is also planned to see how the scheme can be improved.



Monitoring progress

Monitoring should be done both for individual initiatives and for progress against strategic priorities. Exhibit 14 illustrates how two partnerships have incorporated monitoring and evaluation into their planning, in order to track progress and demonstrate achievement of their objectives.

Exhibit 14: Monitoring and evaluation in partnerships

Two examples of approaches taken to monitoring and evaluation.

Falkirk's Home Safety Partnership initiative was measured using a basket of indicators and techniques. The initiative covered 500 homes and provided a range of home safety measures including carbon monoxide alarms, smoke alarms, and window and door locks. The impact was evaluated using police statistics and a customer satisfaction survey, including questions on fear of crime.

Renfrewshire's Creating Safer Communities initiative includes detailed monitoring in each Safer Community area of a number of indicators for each objective. For example, the indicators for the objective of tackling anti-social behaviour include:

- number of anti-social cases
- number of empty houses and causes
- monthly terminations of tenancies
- number of homes offered and accepted for let
- recorded instances of fly tipping
- number of group work programmes and participants by age
- number of referrals to specialist social workers for domestic violence/drugs/alcohol/anti-social behaviour.

These are recorded monthly and progress is monitored by the local partnerships.

As discussed earlier, partnerships have tended to set strategic priorities before community safety audits have been conducted. This means that many partnerships will not have an agreed baseline from which to measure success and set improvement targets. The lack of baseline data will cause problems when partnerships want to assess the long-term effectiveness of their strategies.

Strategic performance indicators

Most partnerships have still to develop effective measures to track overall performance against their strategic community safety priorities. Some partnerships, for example, Fife, Angus, South Ayrshire and West Lothian have made good progress in this area.

The Commission has produced a general guide to strategic performance measurement using the balanced scorecard technique, *'The measures of success'*⁶. The balanced scorecard approach involves setting strategic performance indicators for what organisations are trying to achieve, and for the processes they will adopt to get there. As part of the study, meetings were held with community safety practitioners from various agencies to discuss the development of a balanced scorecard framework for measuring the performance of community safety partnerships.

Appendix 2 outlines this approach and sets out the indicators that have been discussed so far. A further bulletin on this work will be published in November 2000.

Recommendation

Partnerships should ensure they can demonstrate whether they are making progress by:

- *agreeing an approach to monitoring*
- *establishing baselines from which progress will be measured and targets set*
- *agreeing a set of strategic performance indicators reflecting their local priorities.*

Reviewing and evaluating

Reviewing is an important and sometimes neglected task which can contribute to better planning. The process of reviewing can bring benefits to partnerships through, for example:

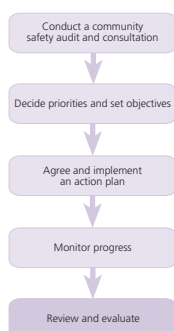
- building a shared sense of achievement
- assisting partners to focus attention on what worked and lessons learned
- generating commitment to future action plans.

A review should occur at the conclusion of each action plan to inform the next action plan. Likewise, a review should take place at the conclusion of the strategic planning cycle. Given their early stage of development, few partnerships have conducted systematic reviews.

Recommendation

Partnerships should conduct reviews of both action plans and strategies as a necessary part of the planning process.

Information from the evaluation of initiatives should feed into the review process. However, many initiatives have a relatively short life span, but assessing their impact would require long-term evaluation. Initiative funding tends to be made available for the planning and implementation phases of a project, but not for evaluation.



⁶ *'The measures of success'*. Accounts Commission for Scotland, 1998.

There is little evidence of any systematic approach to the evaluation of initiatives. Evaluations are most often conducted to secure additional funding for projects or to secure funding to extend projects to other communities or areas. Consequently, evaluations tend to be project specific, and cover only what was done during the life of the project, not what impact it had. This is a common problem in community safety. A study in the United States of America in 1998 reviewed more than 500 evaluations of crime prevention initiatives⁷. It found that:

“Many evaluations ... perhaps the majority - are process evaluations describing what was done, rather than impact evaluations assessing what effect the programme had on crime. While process evaluations can produce much valuable data on the implementation of programs and the logic of their strategies, they cannot offer evidence as to whether the programs work to prevent crime. Evaluations containing both process and impact measures provide the most information, but they are rarely funded or reported.”

Cost-benefit analysis should be included in any evaluation. However, the lack of good information on spending on community safety means little cost-benefit analysis can be undertaken in relation to individual initiatives. Partnerships, therefore, do not have the information required to make informed investment decisions.

Many partnerships are working on similar community safety initiatives and there may be scope for partnerships to pool resources to evaluate similar initiatives across Scotland.

Recommendation

Partnerships should adopt a systematic approach to evaluation, build in resources for evaluation when planning initiatives, and consider working with others to undertake joint evaluations of initiatives.

⁷ ‘Research in brief, preventing crime: what works, what doesn’t, what’s promising’ National Institute of Justice, 1998.

4 Partnership resources – investing together

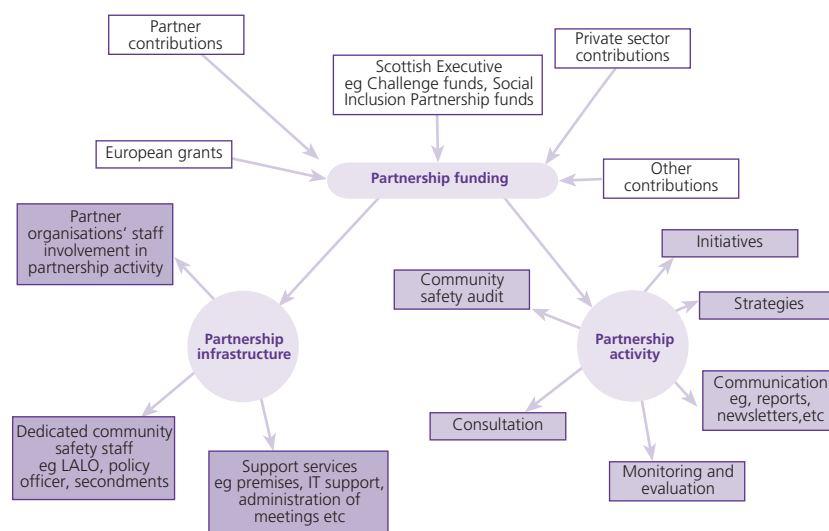
This section looks at how community safety partnerships plan, secure and use resources, and at the role of external funding.

Sources of funding

Exhibit 15 shows the range of potential sources of funding and other resources for community safety activities.

Exhibit 15: Funding community safety

The sources of funding for community safety partnerships and how resources are used.



Source: Audit Scotland fieldwork

Resource planning – covering funding, human resources and long-term investment – is not well-developed among partnerships. Few strategic plans have identified long-term financial and human resource requirements, and partnerships have not, in general, developed investment programmes.

The main sources of funding currently used by community safety partnerships are central government funds and partner organisations' core budgets.

External funding from central government

Funding from the Scottish Executive is the main external source of funding for most community safety partnerships. Scottish Executive funding relevant to community safety includes funding for social inclusion partnerships, domestic abuse initiatives, drug action teams and Challenge funding for CCTV and community safety.

Partnership members expressed some concern about relying so heavily on government funds for two main reasons:

- central government funding is offered to support national, rather than local, priorities. There is a concern that local priorities may become marginalised because partnerships wishing to access external funds have to demonstrate that their proposals address national priorities
- the funding may reward shorter-term initiatives rather than benefit a longer-term approach to community safety.

Partnerships felt that Challenge funding could be used to provide incentives for longer-term resource planning to support strategic priorities appropriate to their area.

Partnerships were also critical of the process of allocation of recent funds from the Scottish Executive, in particular, the competitive aspect of Challenge funding. The following difficulties were highlighted:

Time. Preparing bids ties up considerable amounts of officer time, possibly out of proportion to the amount of money available or received. Many partnerships felt that longer time-scales were required when bidding for national funds, to reflect the time that partnerships need to secure agreement on bids.

Data comparability. There is concern among partnerships that bids are based on non-comparable data because common definitions are not used.

Level playing field. Some smaller partnerships feel that larger authorities, with more resources available for preparing well-presented bids, have an unfair advantage.

Despite these criticisms, it is clear that the central government funding has often been the main impetus for detailed data collection by partnerships. This data has a value beyond the funding application and has subsequently been used by some partnerships to inform decision-making. The funding process encourages partnerships to define problems, appraise options and put together planned actions to achieve specified outcomes. Partnerships recognise the need to justify their bids, and provide details of how the public money will be spent.

Recommendation

The Commission recommends that the Scottish Executive review its funding of community safety initiatives to assess whether it can be adapted to provide incentives for longer-term resource planning to support partnerships' strategic priorities.

Funding from partner organisations

Most of the budgets that partnerships manage are concerned with funding for specific initiatives. Partner organisations are not yet able to quantify in any systematic way, the contribution made from their own core budgets towards community safety activities. However, some councils are investigating ways of doing this. For example, Renfrewshire has initiated a research project to assess the feasibility of developing financial systems which will identify costs relating to specific community safety and other activities, within defined localities.

Information on expenditure relating to community safety activity is important to enable partnerships to make informed investment decisions and undertake cost-benefit analyses of their work.

The risk management approach to community safety has been shown to be an effective way of identifying spending arising from criminal damage and implementing methods of reducing that cost. Exhibit 16 illustrates the benefits of this approach.

Exhibit 16: A risk management approach to community safety

Risk management in Dundee City Council.

Dundee City Council has applied risk management techniques to community safety problems for a number of years. This approach ensures that remedial action and resources are targeted to areas of most need. The process involves the identification and evaluation of those risks which threaten community safety, including control of costs associated with criminal activity. A central risk management budget provides the source for financing proactive prevention measures.

There is a direct incentive for departments to reduce costs resulting from crime because savings resulting from investment are refunded to them. This approach has assisted the Council reduce its costs relating to criminal damage by £1.3 million, since 1997. (See also Exhibit 13)

Some councils have put systems in place to assess the costs to them of criminal damage to property. However, at this stage, only a minority of councils are actively using the information at a management level to inform decision-making. There is little evidence of partnerships adopting a common approach across Scotland to costing crime, so opportunities for benchmarking are being lost.

Recommendation

Greater emphasis should be given by local authorities to developing robust information on the costs of crime and community safety activities.

Pooling resources

'*Safer communities in Scotland*' recommends that the main community safety partners should consider pooling resources to create a modest revenue budget for the partnership.

The guidance states that the partnership will need administrative support and a revenue budget for:

- publicising the work of the partnership
- carrying out the audit
- monitoring and evaluation
- 'pump-priming' implementation of the partnership's strategy.

The study found little evidence of partnership organisations pooling resources. In most cases, the council was the main funding agency for core partnership activity, apart from the funding for a Local Authority Liaison Officer (LALO) which came from the police force.

A number of partnerships had limited funds available for publicising the work of the partnership, including the publication of the strategy or promotional leaflets for particular initiatives. Some partnerships, but not all, had access to council funds for consultation purposes, but not for conducting detailed community safety audits. Some partnerships have developed innovative

approaches to leveraging in additional funding for initiatives, as shown in Exhibit 17. There is little evidence of partnerships making resources available for monitoring and evaluation.

Exhibit 17: An example of an additional funding source

A charitable trust for attracting additional funds has been established in Aberdeen.

The Aberdeen Safer Community Trust is a registered charity, established in 1998. The Patrons, Trustees and Board of Management are mainly drawn from commerce, media and the local authority.

The Trust gathers funds from the private sector by direct approach and by holding fund-raising events. Companies are encouraged to make Gift Aid donations, contribute through Deeds of Covenant or provide help in kind. Donors are given the opportunity to state where and on what their donation will be spent. All donations made are spent in the community. Core funding for administrative support is separate and currently funded through the Aberdeen Common Good Fund.

Funding is distributed by application. Communities are encouraged to plan and cost local answers to local community safety problems. The Trust will, if the application is approved, give partial or total funding, help in kind, or bring interested parties together to tackle the issue. To date, the Trust has awarded 28 grants and raised over £61,500 in cash and in kind for community safety projects.

The Trust is a full member of the community safety partnership and works within the community safety strategy, while retaining its own identity, independence and funding criteria. The Trust acts as a link between the partnership and the private sector, and can act quickly to secure funding for local projects.

Investment in people

The main dedicated staffing resource for community safety in Scotland comes from police forces through their provision of LALOs. Seven of the eight police forces fund a LALO in each of the councils in their police authority area. In Fife, the police force and local authority contribute to a jointly-funded post of community safety co-ordinator.

Some of the larger councils also have either a dedicated policy officer for community safety, or a policy officer who has community safety as a part of their remit.

Partnerships need different kinds of support:

- a manager to co-ordinate partnership activity and ensure implementation of action plans
- administrative help with taking minutes and arranging meetings
- expert advice on community safety issues and a knowledge of 'what works'.

Each type of support is needed in varying degrees during the development of a partnership. However, all are required at some stage, and partnerships need to look at different ways of securing that support either from their own organisational resources or from external sources. Sometimes the LALO provides all of the support outlined above, although that may not be the prime reason for the secondment. LALOs provide liaison on all common issues between police forces and local authorities, not just community safety. In practice, supporting community safety partnerships has become a large part of their work. The study found that LALOs can have a significant impact on the progress a partnership makes.

Recommendation

Partnerships should identify the different types of support that they need and who will provide it.

'*Safer communities in Scotland*' recommends that LALOs are seconded for a period of around three years. While this would undoubtedly help continuity within partnerships, some LALOs were concerned that being absent from their forces for such a length of time might affect their career prospects. This illustrates a common theme found in interviews with staff working in partnerships – that partnership working may not be recognised or valued by their employing organisations.

A number of partnerships are resourced through temporary secondments, not just between the police and local authorities, but also between different agencies, and between different departments within one organisation. Secondments are seen as a useful method of starting off projects and building trust and understanding between partner organisations. In the Highland community safety partnership, for example, voluntary sector representatives have been seconded to work with partnership officers on specific projects. This has provided a valued opportunity for the voluntary sector secondees to learn more about the different cultures of partner organisations and different ways of working.

However, although secondments are an important resource, there can be drawbacks if they become the only resources for community safety partnerships. High turnover of key personnel and a lack of continuity were cited in several cases as problems of short-term secondments.

The study identified a number of elements which should be in place for secondments, including LALOs, to be successful (Exhibit 18).

Exhibit 18: Key elements of successful secondments

Secondments need careful consideration to be effective.

The seconding and host organisations should:

- agree a clear remit and job description for the secondee, and share this with the relevant organisations
- review the job description and remit at the end of each secondment
- ensure that the secondee has the skills to do the work required
- agree clear reporting lines
- agree the duration of the secondment depending on the tasks required, and commit to keeping that agreement
- agree a handover period – even a limited one.

Source: Audit Scotland fieldwork

Recommendation

Partnerships should ensure that secondments are planned and managed effectively.

"...the same people working together over a period of time helps build trust and commitment..."
– quote from fieldwork

Conclusion

The study found that most partnerships are at an early stage in developing and implementing strategic priorities. The study also found that long-term resource planning is still to be developed. This includes funding, investment plans and the use of human resources.

Partnerships need to resource their action plans adequately to achieve change. This includes using initiative funding where appropriate and being innovative about accessing other sources of funds. It also includes a consideration of staffing needs – the skills, expertise and time they require to achieve their objectives. Without resource plans covering these factors, there is a danger that action plans will not be implemented fully, and partnerships will not achieve the improvements in community safety for which they are aiming.

Recommendation

Partnerships should develop clear, long-term resource plans to underpin their strategies. The plans should specify the level of human and financial resources required, and how the partnership intends to secure those resources.

Views on legislation

As part of the fieldwork, the study team visited two community safety partnerships in England, where the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 provides a statutory basis for community safety partnerships. During fieldwork, interviewees commented on the difference that legislation might make to the implementation of community safety in Scotland. No such legislation is currently planned for Scotland and these views are presented here solely to inform discussion on this topic.

The potential benefits of introducing a legislative base for community safety were cited as:

- providing an impetus for partnerships that are struggling to achieve their priorities
- reductions in funding for community safety partnerships may be less likely
- encouraging greater commitment from partners to community safety working
- clarifying accountability to central government and to the community.

Others felt that there was no need to introduce legislation. This was particularly the case where interviewees felt that their community safety partnerships were working well. Problems envisaged if legislation were introduced included:

- the risk that legislation might promote national priorities at the expense of local ones, so the framing of legislation would be critical and potentially difficult
- legislation without additional funding may put extra pressure on already stretched resources.

Similar discussions have taken place about the potential statutory basis for community planning⁸. This report has highlighted the importance of clearly aligning community safety within the community planning framework, and this would be relevant to proposals for legislation in either area.

⁸ 'Community planning in Scotland: an evaluation of the pathfinder projects'. The Scottish Executive and COSLA, 1999.

5 Study recommendations

Community safety partnerships – membership and challenges

- Partnerships should consider their membership and organisational structure with a view to:
 - assessing whether organisations need to be involved at a strategic or an implementation level
 - ensuring that the responsibility for formulating policy and for its implementation are clearly defined.
- Partner organisations should be clear where responsibility lies for co-ordinating all their related partnership activities.
- Partnerships should ensure that they have clear organisational and reporting links to the local authority's community planning framework.
- Partner organisations should ensure that their representatives have the skills and attributes necessary to fulfil their obligations to the partnership.
- Maintaining continuity of representation should be given a high priority by partner organisations.

Partnership activity – the building blocks for success

- Partnerships should agree a phased plan for acquiring the information they need to identify both community safety problems and the causes of those problems.
- Partnerships should ensure the consultation they undertake is effectively planned and evaluated.
- Partnerships should ensure that they have sound evidence for their strategic priorities and that these priorities are translated into measurable objectives.
- In developing their action plans, partnerships should follow the good practice outlined in the Scottish Executive guidance, and ensure that relevant actions are built into each partners' own service plans.
- Partnerships should ensure that the initiatives they develop and implement are designed to achieve their strategic priorities.
- Partnerships should ensure they can demonstrate whether they are making progress by:
 - agreeing an approach to monitoring
 - establishing baselines from which progress will be measured and targets set
 - agreeing a set of strategic performance indicators reflecting their local priorities.
- Partnerships should conduct reviews of both action plans and strategies as a necessary part of the planning process.
- Partnerships should adopt a systematic approach to evaluation, build in resources for evaluation when planning initiatives, and consider working with others to undertake joint evaluations of initiatives.

Partnership resources – investing together

- The Commission recommends that the Scottish Executive review its funding of community safety initiatives to assess whether it can be adapted to provide incentives for longer-term resource planning to support partnerships' strategic priorities.
- Greater emphasis should be given by local authorities to developing robust information on the costs of crime and community safety activities.
- Partnerships should identify the different types of support that they need and who will provide it.
- Partnerships should ensure that secondments are planned and managed effectively.
- Partnerships should develop clear, long-term resource plans to underpin their strategies. The plans should specify the level of human and financial resources required, and how the partnership intends to secure those resources.

Appendix 1: Contextual data for community safety in Scotland

This Appendix provides the sources of the information set out in Exhibit 2.

Accidents and injuries

Source: *'The NHS in Scotland, Scottish health statistics 1999'* Information and Statistics Division, The Scottish Executive, 2000.

Exhibit 1: Accidental deaths

Cause of accident by age group for the year ending 31 December 1999.

	0-14	15-64	65-over	All ages
All accidents	67	580	760	1407
Road traffic accidents	32	280	73	385
Poisoning	3	25	10	38
Falls	0	91	522	613
Drowning/submersion	3	12	1	16
Choking	10	40	21	71
Other	19	132	133	284

Exhibit 2: Accidents – emergency hospital admissions

Cause of accident by age group for the year ending 31 March 1999. It should be noted due to reporting procedures, these figures are provisional.

	0-14	15-64	65-over	All ages
All accidents	12,065	32,818	18,687	63,570
Road traffic accidents	1,050	3,536	651	5,237
Poisoning	1,196	1,876	220	3,292
Falls	5,685	10,668	14,740	31,093
Drowning/submersion	18	27	5	50
Choking	22	77	59	158
Other	4,094	16,634	3,012	23,740

Accident and Emergency attendances and costs, source: *'The NHS in Scotland, Scottish health service costs year ended 31 March 1999'*. Information and Statistics Division, The Scottish Executive, 2000.

Fire

Exhibit 3: Fire data

The number of recorded calls, fires and related casualties in Scotland, 1995-1997.

	1995	1996	1997
Total calls	130,863	114,066	108,417
Total fire calls (a)	67,033	56,394	50,467
Fires	20,610	19,527	19,019
Chimney fires	6,206	5,348	4,278
Secondary fires	40,217	31,519	27,170
Total false alarms (b)	51,332	48,891	48,627
Malicious	9,637	9,005	8,059
Good intent	26,092	16,027	15,500
Apparatus fault	15,603	23,859	25,068
Special services (c)	12,498	8,781	9,323
Fatalities	92	102	87
Non-fatal casualties (d)	1,350	1,649	1,664

- (a) The term *Chimney Fire* refers to outbreaks restricted within chimneys or flue pipes. *Secondary Fires* are those outbreaks that occur out of doors in grassland, refuse containers, derelict buildings or other outdoor features. The remaining term, *Fires*, includes all outbreaks not covered by the other two categories.
- (b) The decrease in 'Good intent' and the increase in 'Apparatus fault' calls was mainly due to a change in the method of collecting statistical information. Part of the increase in apparatus fault calls can be attributed to the increase in fire protection and fire warning systems.
- (c) The Fire Services Act 1947 allows a fire authority to employ the fire brigade maintained by them on duties other than fire-fighting. These are called special services and include, for example rescuing persons trapped in road accidents and dealing with chemical spillages.
- (d) A non-fatal casualty is a person who requires medical treatment beyond first aid given at the scene of the fire or who was taken to hospital, or advised to see a doctor.

Source: The Scottish Office, The Scottish Abstract of Statistics No 26, HM Inspectorate of Fire Services, 1998.

Other fire data sourced from – *'Scottish Household Survey – A publication of the Government Statistical Service Bulletin No 3'*, The Scottish Executive, 2000.

Children and young people

Source: *'Children, young people and offending in Scotland, Crime and Criminal Justice Research Findings No. 21'*, The Scottish Office, 1998.

Anti-social behaviour

Source: *'Scottish Household Survey – A Publication of the Government Statistical Service Bulletin No 3'*, The Scottish Executive, 2000.

Domestic violence

Source: *'Scottish crime survey 1996'*, The Scottish Executive, 1999.

Crime

Source: *'A safer Scotland: tackling crime and its causes'*, The Scottish Office, 1999.

Exhibit 4: Recorded violent crimes in selected categories 1998/99

The total number of crimes recorded in Scotland in 1998/99 in a selected number of violent crime categories.

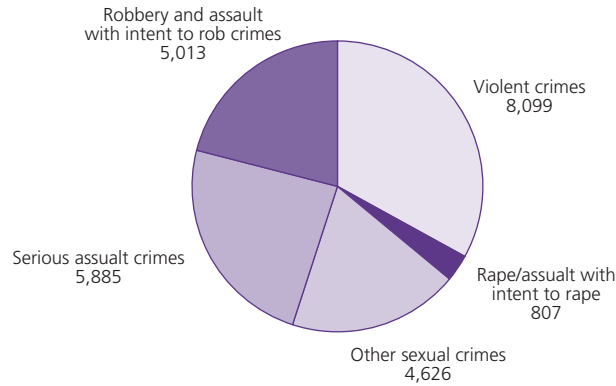
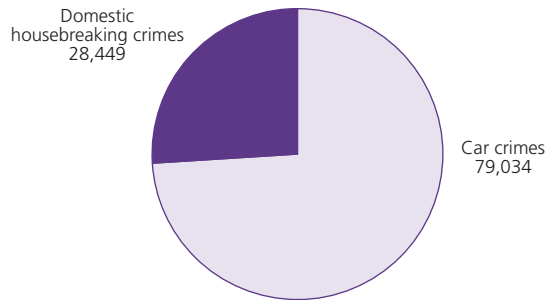


Exhibit 5: Recorded property crimes in selected categories 1998/99

The total number of crimes recorded in Scotland in 1998/99 in a selected number of property crime categories.



Source: *'Comparing the performance of Scottish councils, fire and police, 1998/99'*, Accounts Commission for Scotland, 2000.

Costs of crime

Source: *'A Safer place – property risk management in schools'*, Accounts Commission, 1997 and *'Counting the cost: crime against business in Scotland, Crime and Criminal Justice Research Findings No. 35'*. The Scottish Executive, 1999.

Appendix 2: A proposed framework for performance management in community safety

"It is essential that ... regular management information is available to allow the corporate partnership group to monitor progress."

Safer communities in Scotland

Section 3 discusses the importance of developing performance measures for partnerships. This Appendix proposes a framework for developing these measures, and is intended as a starting point for discussion. The Accounts Commission plans to facilitate this work over the summer, and to publish a management bulletin in the autumn on performance measures applicable to community safety.

Performance measures are required for two major reasons. The first is to enable the partnership to check the progress of its strategies, plans and initiatives. This will assist the partnership in deciding whether its activities are delivering what was expected or whether the partnership needs to change them, or indeed, alter its strategic approach. This means that performance measures need to be linked directly to both the partnership's overall strategic priorities and to the individual actions and initiatives being undertaken.

The second reason the partnership needs a robust set of performance measures is to meet the information needs of various stakeholders who have an interest in the partnership's overall performance. These needs will vary both between stakeholder groups and over time, to reflect changing concerns. In meeting these performance information needs partnerships should ensure that existing data sources and collection methods are used or adapted wherever possible.

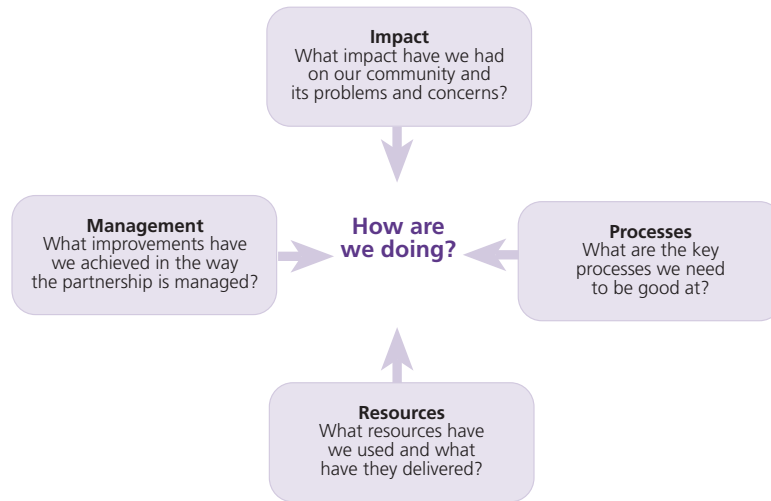
The Commission has already published details of the balanced scorecard approach to performance measurement⁹. This approach can be adapted to provide a framework for developing a core set of community safety performance indicators. Partnerships will be able to draw on these measures, as appropriate, to reflect their own priorities. Agreed definitions will also aid benchmarking.

The scorecard provides four interrelated perspectives to provide a comprehensive view of partnership performance. These are illustrated in Exhibit 6.

⁹ 'The measures of success'. Accounts Commission for Scotland, 1998.

Exhibit 6: Scorecard perspectives

The balanced scorecard approach has four perspectives.



Source: Audit Scotland

Impact deals with the effects the partnership has had on the community and its concerns. These can be linked directly to the strategic priorities set by the partnership: for example improving road safety, reducing crime, reducing domestic abuse, reducing anti-social behaviour etc.

Processes are concerned with the efficiency and effectiveness of how things are done to achieve the impact the partnership wants.

Resources looks at the resources devoted to partnership working and the benefits achieved as a result.

Management and improvement is concerned with how well the partnership is managed and the improvements that are required.

Together, these four perspectives should give a balanced measure of overall performance. Areas that need to be measured can be identified for each perspective, along with suggested performance indicators. In the study, practitioners felt there were potential benefits in developing a common community safety scorecard.

Following meetings with a number of community safety practitioners an initial scorecard was developed and is shown in Exhibit 7. This illustrates how such a framework might work in practice. Further work, and consultation, on this scorecard will take place through the summer of 2000. This will focus on defining the performance measures to be used and identifying, where possible, existing data sources for these measures. Data on many of the measures included in Exhibit 7 are already collected by partnerships and partner organisations.

It is recognised that not all aspects of the scorecard will be applicable to every partnership, since strategic priorities will vary according to community needs. Nevertheless, it is expected that a core set of measures are likely to be relevant to the majority of partnerships. A further bulletin on the outcome of this work will be published in November 2000.

Exhibit 7: A balanced scorecard for community safety

An illustration of how a balanced scorecard might be developed for community safety.

Impact	
What impact have we had on:	Potential performance indicators
Personal safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • violent crimes against the person • domestic abuse • dwelling fires • injury related deaths and hospital admissions • racist incidents • fear of crime
Safety of property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • housebreaking • vehicle crime • business related crime
Safety in the neighbourhood and the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vandalism • dog fouling • street lighting failure • community satisfaction with the local environment • water safety incidents • housing mediation
Safety while travelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • road accident deaths and injuries • speeding detection • public transport safety • use of public transport • community satisfaction with transport
Offending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repeat offenders • young offenders • diversion programmes • supervised programmes • school exclusions • police recorded incidents • malicious emergency calls
Substance misuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be developed

Partnership management and improvement	
How well do we:	Potential performance indicators
Involve all key partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • range of partners involved • attendance at meetings • partnership agreements • agreement of overall aims
Agree overall priorities and plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agreement on joint strategy and plans
Ensure partners' plans link to the partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community safety priorities reflected in service plans • links with community plans and partnership action plans
Adopt best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benchmarking • best practice initiatives • review • monitoring and evaluation

Processes	
How well do we:	Potential performance indicators
Understand community concerns and needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • timeliness of community safety audit • coverage of audit • frequency of update of audit • consultation events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – number – attendance
Involve the community in partnership decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • representation on partnership • community satisfaction with the process
Tell the community what we're doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community awareness of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – priorities – initiatives
Tell the community how we're doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • performance reporting, newsletters • community awareness of achievements

Resources	
What resources have been:	Potential performance indicators
Committed to the partnership strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dedicated spending: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – on resourcing the partnership – on implementing action plans • secondees and personnel time allocated
Realised as a result of partnership achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cost/expenditure reductions/savings achieved as a result of community safety initiatives

Source: Audit Scotland fieldwork

Appendix 3: Membership of the study advisory group

Dr Bob Docherty, Assistant Firemaster, Strathclyde Fire Brigade

Janice Meikle Hewitt, Community Safety Policy Advisor, COSLA

Colin Mair, Director, Scottish Local Authority Management Centre

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ISBN 1 903433 03 7