

Tackling the Underlying Causes of Crime

A Partnership Approach

A Consultation Paper

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A Consultation Paper

National Crime Council
October, 2002



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Preface

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THE NATIONAL CRIME COUNCIL

The National Crime Council was established as an independent body that would provide a forum for the development, expression and contribution of a wide range of views on anti-crime strategies and serve as an important aid to policy formulation on crime issues.

The key roles of the National Crime Council are:

- a) to focus on crime prevention, with particular emphasis on the underlying causes of crime and the development of partnerships and practical approaches which will be effective at community level;
- b) to focus directly on raising public knowledge and awareness of crime;
- c) to examine the 'fear of crime';
- d) to identify research priorities which could be commissioned by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform; and
- e) to undertake in-house research.

In keeping with this mandate the National Crime Council have a number of projects ongoing and completed.

INTERAGENCY APPROACH TO CRIME PREVENTION

The National Crime Council was mandated to explore and research the broad area of crime prevention. This paper is the result of a lengthy consultation process undertaken by the Crime Prevention Subgroup of the National Crime Council, combined with an examination of the related literature. It is envisaged that a final version of this document will be developed to incorporate the submissions from this last stage of the consultation process.

PUBLIC ORDER PROJECT

A comprehensive research project has been commissioned which will seek to establish the level of Public Order Offences in Ireland, the likely contributory factors including (but not exclusively) alcohol consumption and a comparative analysis of the problem with countries of similar size and population to the Republic of Ireland. This research is being undertaken by the Institute of Criminology, Faculty of Law, University College Dublin and the results are due later in 2002, with recommendations from the National Crime Council.

NATIONAL STUDY ON DOMESTIC ABUSE

An Advisory Group has been appointed by the National Crime Council to oversee the development of a National Study on Domestic Abuse. This study will be non-gender specific and will aim to provide a truer picture of the prevalence and nature of domestic abuse in Ireland.

“CRIME IN IRELAND” REPORT

In November, 2001, the National Crime Council launched the report “Crime in Ireland”, which provided an analysis of the official crime statistics from 1950 to 1998. This study was carried out by the Institute of Criminology, Faculty of Law, University College Dublin with a set of recommendations from the National Crime Council. The recommendations cover participation in crime surveys, the setting up of an expert group to look at how crime statistics are collated and an assessment of the needs of the key stakeholders in the criminal justice system and the wider research community. On 26 July, 2002 the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Mr. Michael McDowell, T.D., announced the implementation of two of the recommendations in the report; the establishment of an expert group to review the collation and presentation of information relating to crime; and the development of a biennial national crime victimisation survey, commencing in 2004.

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL CRIME COUNCIL

Mr. Padraic White, Chairperson of the National Crime Council;

Crime Prevention Subgroup

Mr. Michael Reilly, Judge of the District Court; Chairperson of the Crime Prevention Subgroup;

Mr. Jack Marrinan, Former General Secretary of the GRA; Deputy Chairperson of the Crime Prevention Subgroup;

Mr. Peter Fitzgerald, Deputy Commissioner, An Garda Síochána¹;

Mrs. Rosemary Tierney;

Reverend Gerard Godley, Director, Kerry Diocesan Youth Service;

Mr. Seán Hegarty, President, Muintir Na Tíre;

Ms. Deirdre Kenneally;

Mr. Philip Maguire, Assistant Dublin City Manager, Dublin City Council; and

Mr. Fergus McCabe, Member of the National Drugs Strategy Team.

¹ Alternate member: *Mr. Fachtna Murphy*, Assistant Commissioner, An Garda Síochána.

Public Education and Awareness Subgroup

Mr. John Hynes, Group Chief Executive Officer, An Post; Chairperson of the Public Education and Awareness Subgroup;

Ms. Lillian McGovern, Chief Executive Officer, Victim Support; Deputy Chairperson of the Public Education and Awareness Subgroup;

Mr. Ken O’Leary, Assistant Secretary, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform²;

Dr. Dermot Walsh, Professor of Law, University of Limerick;

Ms. Mary Ellen Ring, Barrister at Law; and

Mr. Nelius Moriarty.

STAFF OF THE NATIONAL CRIME COUNCIL

Director: *Ms. Mary Burke*

Researchers: *Ms. Nicola Hughes*, Research Officer

Ms. Maura Finnegan, Assistant Research Officer

Administrator: *Ms. Harriet McGarry*

Researcher on this project: *Ms. Maura Finnegan*

² Alternate member: *Ms. Michelle Shannon*, Principal Officer, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

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Acknowledgements

The development of this Consultation Paper is the culmination of eighteen months of work and co-operation by many individuals, organisations and Departments. I would like to thank the many people in the public, voluntary and community sectors and indeed the local residents in the communities we visited, who assisted the work of the Subgroup and facilitated the research with submissions, information and statistics. All of the information was invaluable to the Subgroup in drawing up its Consultation Paper. It is not possible to mention all of the people involved here – each one of you can take credit for the assistance you gave us – but I want to pay a special tribute to the late Sr. Joan Bowles. I knew Sr. Joan for many years, but for some of my colleagues from the Subgroup, the first and sadly, the only opportunity they had to meet and hear about Sr. Joan’s vast contribution to the welfare of the young people of Limerick was at our consultation session in Limerick in March, 2002. I sincerely hope that this Consultation Paper will be the start of a process that will lead to enhanced co-operation between agencies and to the delivery of services that would make Sr. Joan proud.

It was the task of the Subgroup to shape the overall Consultation Paper, while respecting the points of view on particular aspects expressed by the many individuals and organisations who met us. I would like to thank the members of the Subgroup for their dedication and commitment to our work, contributing their knowledge, experience and ideas to the Consultation Paper, and thus making the task of chairing the Subgroup an easy one. I also wish to acknowledge the co-operation of the wider National Crime Council in finalising and publishing this Consultation Paper.

I would like to compliment our Researcher, Ms. Maura Finnegan without whose attention to detail, resourcefulness and forbearance this Paper would not have been possible.

Information on the NCC and a copy of this Consultation Paper are available on the National Crime Council’s website www.crimecouncil.ie

Michael Reilly
Chairperson of the Crime Prevention Subgroup

Section One

Introduction

Section One

Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND

One of the key roles of the National Crime Council is:

to focus on crime prevention, with particular emphasis on the underlying causes of crime and the development of partnerships and practical approaches which will be effective at community level.

The Crime Prevention Subgroup of the National Crime Council undertook a comprehensive consultation process to explore this area of work. Two phases of consultations took place, firstly, with a range of Government Departments and Agencies¹ and secondly, a number of community based hearings² were held. The community hearings allowed those working and living in communities to make presentations and contributions on issues around crime, crime prevention and anti-social behaviour.

Outcomes from these consultations, together with literature and research in the area of crime prevention, criminal justice policy and policy initiatives to tackle social exclusion have led to this Consultation Paper. In this paper the National Crime Council presents a summary of their consultations and research in the area of crime prevention and sets out provisional recommendations to the Government, with particular emphasis on the underlying causes of crime and the development of partnerships and practical approaches that will be effective at community level. The focus of the Paper is on certain types of crimes and anti-social behaviour. The community hearings highlighted the crimes that are most frequent and damaging at a local level, including drug offences, assault, burglary and larceny. These are the crimes which this paper deals with and which the proposed partnership approach to crime prevention seeks to tackle. Other types of crime, specifically white collar crime and organised crime, are outside the remit of this paper.

The National Crime Council will ensure that this paper is widely circulated and invites all interested parties to make submissions based on this Consultation Paper and the provisional recommendations contained herein. Each Section ends with some key questions which may help to focus the content of submissions. It is envisaged that a final document will be prepared taking on board recommendations and comments from the submissions that we receive and it will chart the way forward in the area of the partnership approach to crime prevention in Ireland.

¹ A list of those with whom we consulted is outlined in Appendix One, p.92.

² A list of those who made presentations at the community hearings is outlined in Appendix Two, p.96.

1.2 AIM OF THIS CONSULTATION PAPER

It is hoped that this paper will generate discussion around the interagency approach to service provision in local communities, so that an improved structure can be developed that will promote and develop an integrated approach to tackling the causes of crime, crime prevention and anti-social behaviour at a local level. Any developments in this area should also aim to improve the 'quality of life' of local residents and enhance community safety.

1.3 CRIME IN IRELAND

The following two paragraphs provide a brief overview of recent trends in crime in Ireland as a general background to the crime problem which any crime prevention initiatives in Ireland should seek to address.

The level of recorded crime in Ireland has increased substantially since 1950, showing a 212 per cent increase to 1998. Crime statistics are divided into two categories – indictable and non-indictable offences³. Indictable offences are generally (but not always) the most serious offences. Indictable offences decreased by four per cent between the years 1988 and 1998⁴. There were notable exceptions to this overall decrease in indictable crime rates. Substantial increases have been recorded in the levels of Lethal Violence (murder and manslaughter), Sexual Offences and Misuse of Drugs Offences (Young et al, 2001).

While the official statistics showed decreases in the number of crimes recorded (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 2002d), there was a general feeling among the public that the level of crime is increasing. This was substantiated with the publication of headline crime figures for 2001 in July, 2002, indicating significant increases in all categories of headline crime.

1.4 ALCOHOL, ILLICIT DRUGS AND CRIME

Alcohol consumption is part of the daily cultural and social life of Irish society. In the last decade the level of alcohol consumption has increased dramatically. Between 1989 and 1999 alcohol consumption per capita in Ireland increased by 41 per cent, with the most significant increase occurring since 1995 (Commission on Liquor Licensing, 2002). The Health and Behaviour of School-Aged Children study reported substantial levels of alcohol consumption among young people, including; one in five 12-14 year old boys are current drinkers; in the 15-16 age group, half of the girls and two-thirds of the boys are current drinkers, with one third of this age group reporting binge drinking (Friel et al, 1999).

³ The Annual Report of An Garda Síochána 2000 has replaced these terms with the terms 'headline' and 'non-headline' offences. The Courts system is still using the terms indictable and non-indictable.

⁴ Recent changes in the way in which crimes are recorded means that it is not possible to include the crime statistics for 1999 and 2000.

While reported crime rates in Ireland decreased from 1995 to 1999, the level of Public Order Offences (street crimes) increased substantially (Young et al, 2001). These offences are largely committed late at night and the Garda Commissioner has asserted that many of these offences are alcohol related (Friel et al, 1999). The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform in a recent speech in the Dáil (19 June, 2002) outlined how:

“drunken episodes can escalate into serious public order disturbances and late night street violence which can result in serious injury or death” (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 2002a).

The National Crime Council expects that their forthcoming research into Public Order Offences in Ireland will shed further light on the nature of the relationship between street crimes and alcohol consumption in Ireland.

The relationship between drug use and criminal activity has also proved a complex area of research (see Murphy: 2002: p. 209-213), but there is no doubt that they are linked. A study by the Garda Research Unit in 1997, estimated that 66 per cent of all crime in Dublin and over 80 per cent of burglaries and larcenies from the person and from unattended vehicles were drug-related (as cited in Connolly, 2001).

The inter-related nature of illicit drug use, alcohol abuse and criminal activity highlights that any measures that aim to reduce the levels of illicit drug use and alcohol abuse is likely to lead to a reduction in criminal activity.

1.5 CRIME AND DISADVANTAGE

Whilst much of this paper focuses on what are broadly termed ‘disadvantaged’ communities and their residents, it is not our view that all crime is committed by those from so called ‘disadvantaged’ backgrounds. Equally we do not subscribe to the view that all people from areas of ‘disadvantage’ are themselves ‘deprived’. There are many offences committed in Ireland by those who come from more affluent backgrounds (see McCullagh, 1996; re: White Collar Crime). This point was noted by the then Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform in May, 2002 with regard to Public Order Offences:

“The sad reality is that the young people who become involved in this form of anti-social behaviour come from all backgrounds and that, for many of them, it is a case of having too much money and too little sense” (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 2002b).

Some commentators claim that there are intrinsic socio-economic biases in the criminal justice system:

“The composition of the prison population is defined by the decisions made by gardaí, the Director of Public Prosecutions, judges and others. Each stage where a decision is made acts as a filter and it may be that these filters are selective, so that persons with particular characteristics are more likely to pass through. What seems clear is that not all offenders are equally likely to enter the system or, if they do, to receive equal treatment” (O’Donnell, 1997).

This issue in itself requires specific exploration and is beyond the remit of this paper.

1.6 THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

This paper is to form the basis for discussion and thus the National Crime Council wishes to emphasise that the recommendations outlined are provisional only. This paper will be circulated widely and it is hoped that it will initiate a discussion around the key themes contained herein. Everybody has a view on crime and crime prevention and we invite you to share your views with us.

The National Crime Council values the opinions of everyone who has thus far taken time to speak with us and we commit ourselves to paying due attention to all of the submissions we receive in response to this Consultation Paper.

The National Crime Council invites written submissions to this Paper, but it is also our intention to hold a seminar in February, 2003, where individuals can give oral submissions. If you would like to receive prior notification of this seminar, please contact us with your details.

It is proposed that a final document will be produced containing final recommendations in Spring, 2003.

This document is available online at www.crimecouncil.ie/publications3.html

Submissions can be made

In writing to:

Crime Prevention Project

National Crime Council

4/5 Harcourt Road

Dublin 2

By e-mail to: crimecouncil@eircom.net

By no later than 5.00 p.m. on Friday, 13th December, 2002

Section Two
Government Initiatives that Impact on Crime

Section Two

Government Initiatives that Impact on Crime

This Section of the paper outlines the main Government policies and initiatives that impact on crime prevention and related areas in Ireland, whilst also elaborating on Government Policy and specific Government initiatives that were raised during our consultation process.

The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform has commissioned the development of a compendium of crime prevention initiatives which when published will provide a comprehensive overview of all ongoing initiatives, programmes and policies that have a crime prevention effect. For the purpose of this paper, Appendix Three (p. 100) gives a brief overview of individual crime prevention initiatives in Ireland, while Appendix Four (p. 104) provides a brief overview of initiatives developed in related areas of policy – family support, education, youth services and area based initiatives.

2.1 GOVERNMENT POLICY AND LONG-TERM PLANNING

A recent discussion paper asserts that *“longer-term policy thinking in the public sector is patchy”* (Boyle et al, 2002: p. ix). The role of long-term policy making with specific regard to crime prevention was raised by the National Crime Forum:

“It is not a question of choosing between quick-acting and long-term measures; both are needed. Having listened to and debated the many ideas put before us, however, we are satisfied that, despite the obvious attraction of concentrating on short-term measures which would have high visibility and early pay-back, the longer-term measures will have a more decisive impact on crime levels. In fact, without steps to tackle the problem at its roots, palliative and containment measures will not succeed. In that sense, the longer-term measures, despite their longer payback period, represent a better use of the taxpayers’ money and also provide essential support for the success of short-term measures” (National Crime Forum, 1998: p. 35).

It was highlighted at the community and agency hearings that, too often we find that crime policies are developed quickly, without a research basis and long term planning is put on the long finger. These points are substantiated by O’Donnell (1999):

“Criminal justice policy making in Ireland has been seriously retarded by the lack of an adequate knowledge base... The method of operation of the criminal justice system has been determined more by immediate demands and concerns than by a sense of strategic vision. Intuition and expediency have too often taken the place of evidence and principle” (p. 184).

Submissions to the National Crime Council reiterate this point calling for a range of policy initiatives in the short, medium and long term to address the problems of crime and anti-social behaviour. A comprehensive strategy must dovetail with the work of all Government Departments and agencies and must be independently evaluated and reviewed.

In recent years the Government has gone some way to tackling the deficit of criminal justice research in Ireland, for example, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform now have an annual research budget (funding for 2002 was €429,000), to fund specific research and the evaluation of projects, within the various arms of the criminal justice system. The National Crime Council was also set up by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform with a remit to conduct research which would contribute to policy formulation. Criminal justice research is also progressed at the Centre for Criminal and Legal Studies, University of Limerick and the Institute of Criminology, Faculty of Law, University College Dublin, which are both centres of expertise in criminological research, providing valuable research and comment on various aspects of the criminal justice system. Finally, the Law Reform Commission continues their work in reviewing the law and making recommendations for law reform.

Despite these developments there is still a dearth of available and up-to-date statistics on the criminal justice system. Other areas within the social policy arena also produce limited statistics. In the report on Family Formation in Ireland (2001), the authors, Fahey and Russell, highlighted that the limitations of the data hindered the analysis of the subject matter, outlining that:

“In some cases the problem is that relevant data is not collected, while in other instances the data are collected but remain unprocessed, unpublished or inaccessible to researchers for such long periods that their value for current policy concerns is reduced” (p. xii).

Detailed data on the education system is also limited, for example, the most recent data on early school leavers dates back to 1999 (see NESF, 2002). This data is collected by the ESRI in the form of the School Leavers Survey, which records details from a representative sample of each year's school leaving cohort, approximately twelve months after they have left the second-level system (O'Shea and Williams, 2001). It is unsatisfactory that the Department of Education and Science do not hold complete databases on all student cohorts, monitoring movements in and out of the system. It is the view of the National Crime Council that steps must be taken by all Government Departments and agencies to develop up-to-date, accessible and usable statistics that can aid national policy formulation and research.

2.2 THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN, 2000 – 2006

In the National Development Plan, 2000 – 2006, the Section dealing with crime prevention acknowledges the complexity of the underlying causes of crime:

“Research into the causal factors of crime conclusively demonstrate that offenders, both male and female, generally come from the most disadvantaged groups in society and, typically, that they are unemployed, unqualified, addicted and likely to re-offend. The label

of having been in prison becomes a further layer of disadvantage in the community, as employers are less likely to employ someone who has been to prison. Offenders, therefore, experience multiple disadvantages which accumulate leading to economic and social exclusion and to an extreme form of marginalisation from the labour market” (Department of the Taoiseach, 2000: p. 194).

The specific solutions to crime as provided in the plan are fourfold:

- a) Work, education and training within the prison system;
- b) Work of the Probation and Welfare Service, particularly the establishment of development centres in high risk communities;
- c) Provision within the community of work and skills training programmes for offenders, to enhance the potential for reintegration; and
- d) Provision of services to families ‘at risk’, in particular, services to women and children whose lives are disrupted by crime.

The National Development Plan also allocated substantial funding for the implementation of a range of social inclusion measures, which if implemented fully are likely to have a positive effect on crime prevention efforts. These measures include:

- a) Childcare;
- b) Equality;
- c) Community development/family support;
- d) Youth Services (€20.39 million to Garda Youth Diversion Projects);
- e) Services to the unemployed;
- f) Education and training;
- g) Affordable housing; and
- h) Enhanced access to improved health services.

Whilst not having the stated aim of crime prevention, when implemented, the combined effect of these measures are likely to have a spin off in this regard. It is widely recognised that those factors which predispose a young person to being ‘at risk’ of future criminality, are the same factors which predispose a child or young person to being labelled as ‘at risk’ of future teenage parenting, early school leaving or anti-social behaviour. Thus, it is recognised that intervention programmes in any of these specific areas, will benefit all (Graham, 1998).

2.3 THE NATIONAL CHILDREN'S STRATEGY

The National Children's Strategy (2000) is a ten year plan which outlines fourteen National Goals in relation to support services to meet the basic needs of children, recognising that these objectives are interrelated and reinforcing of each other. The Strategy asserts the need to re-orientate supports and services so that:

- they provide a strong community-based response;
- there is a renewed emphasis on prevention and early intervention; and
- the supports and services are fully integrated and more easily accessed.

The Strategy reiterated the need for additional supports for children educationally, socially and economically, while highlighting again the need for integration of local service provision for children and families (Department of Health and Children, 2000). There is now a greater focus on conducting research into the lives of Irish children, a children's research programme has been introduced, together with the first National Longitudinal Study of Children in Ireland. A design brief for this study has been developed and will be ready for tender in the near future. The National Children's Office is tasked with monitoring the progression of the recommendations in the Strategy.

2.4 THE CHILDREN ACT, 2001

The Children Act, 2001, introduced a statutory obligation for an interagency response to children 'at risk', from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, the Department of Health and Children and the Department of Education and Science. The Act emphasises the important role of early intervention and diversion from the criminal justice system. The National Crime Council notes that the Act is very progressive and when fully implemented will make a huge difference to the way that 'at risk' children and young people are dealt with.

The National Children's Office is responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of the Act between these three key Departments and they are currently developing a provisional timeframe for the full implementation of the Act. A commencement order was signed in May, 2002, implementing a number of Sections of the Act, including:

- Diversion Programme (Part 4);
- Treatment of Child Suspects in Garda Síochána Stations (Part 6 – excluding Section 59 and Section 61(1)(b) as it relates to the Health Board);
- Children Court (Part 7);
- Proceedings in Children Court (parts of Part 8);

- Powers of Courts in Relation to Child Offenders (Part 9 – only Sections 95, 97, and some of 98; Fines, Costs etc. Sections 108 to 110; Parental Orders, Sections 113 and 114; Restriction on Movement Orders, Sections 133 to 135, and parts of Sections 136, 138 to 140);
- Protection of Children (Part 12); and
- Miscellaneous (parts of Part 13).

It is expected that a number of other Sections of the Act will be commenced later in 2002, including Parts 2, 3 and 11 and as much of Part 10 as is possible. It will take some years to develop the services and facilities that are required to implement the Act in full. Provisionally it is expected that it will take 5/6 years to complete the capital building projects which are required for complete implementation of the Act. Whilst the National Crime Council recognises that Departments need time to develop structures to implement the provisions of the Act, it also recommends that the Government provide the necessary funding for the development of these structures, as otherwise the vision of a reformed juvenile justice system, so needed today, may only become a reality in the distant future.

2.5 THE YOUTH WORK ACT, 2001

The Youth Work Act, 2001 was designed to give due recognition to the formulation and delivery of youth work programmes at a local level. The Vocational Educational Committees (VEC) will be responsible for the delivery of youth work programmes locally. Youth Work Committees (made up of representatives from Statutory and Voluntary agencies and community based youth work organisations) in each VEC region will be responsible for the production of a three year youth development plan for each area.

The Act also places greater importance on the role of evaluation in youth work programmes, with the introduction of the post of Youth Work Assessor. It is imperative that youth work projects are independently evaluated, so as to allow continued development of effective practice in this area.

2.6 RAPID (REVITALISING AREAS BY PLANNING INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT) AND CLÁR (CEANTAIR LAGA ARD-RIACHTANAIS – PROGRAMME FOR REVITALISING RURAL AREAS)

The RAPID programmes are aimed at improving the quality of life and the opportunities available to residents of the most disadvantaged communities in Irish cities and towns. RAPID (Strand I) was launched in February, 2001 and is targeted at the 25 most deprived urban areas in the State. Two types of service improvement are envisaged:

- a) The improvement in integration and community-focus of existing services, in order to better meet service user needs; and
- b) The targeting of new and additional services and facilities into RAPID communities, to meet identified needs.

Each local RAPID (Strand I) area have produced a locally based Area Implementation Plan which defines the objectives for the local programme.

A number of the commentators at the community and agency hearings highlighted that the RAPID (Strand 1) programme has not yet met the expectations of either the local communities or local agencies. It was evident to the National Crime Council that whilst there was much enthusiasm and active participation in preparing action plans under the RAPID (Strand I) initiative and there is a commitment to prioritise National Development Plan funding to these areas, substantial new funding to the targeted areas is not being provided and plans must be funded by relevant agencies through a reallocation of existing resources.

A more worrying issue highlighted to the National Crime Council is that in an area where the Integrated Services Process was piloted, some of the integrated structures that had developed are no longer functioning as part of RAPID (Strand I). This highlights the need for ongoing independent evaluation of the effect of existing programmes/schemes before a new initiative is brought forward and a continuation plan from the pilot phase to the mainstreamed project, to ensure a seamless transition from one phase to the next.

The second strand of the RAPID initiative – The Provincial Towns Strand – was launched in February, 2002, focusing on ten large and ten small towns throughout the country. Like Strand I, a local assessment of needs will be carried out and the RAPID areas will be prioritised for investment and development under the National Development Plan, in line with priorities set out in the Area Implementation Plan. It is hoped that the initiatives will encourage greater levels of integration between State agencies, so that agencies will work together and pool resources for the benefit of the more disadvantaged areas, in response to identified needs.

Both of the RAPID initiatives allow for a substantial community input into the development of the Area Implementation Plans. Each programme has an Area Implementation Team which is made up of the State agency personnel, the local partnership company, the local drugs task force, community representatives, local councillors and other key stakeholders. This Team will oversee the implementation of the Area Plan at a local level.

The National RAPID office is currently promoting the development of locally based plans specific to crime prevention and community safety for both strands of the RAPID programme. Waterford City RAPID are making progress in this regard with the establishment of the Safe Environment Task Group.

A National Monitoring Committee is overseeing the development and implementation of both RAPID programmes nationally, monitoring progress and ensuring programme efficiency. The RAPID initiatives are in the early stages of development and if the level of service integration anticipated is met, a substantial improvement will be evident at a local level. The current Programme for Government highlights the importance of RAPID and promises that:

“each relevant Government Department will allocate specific staff whose principal duty will be to ensure that the Department is effectively engaged with the RAPID communities along the lines of the final report of the Integrated Services Process” (Department of the Taoiseach, 2002).

The CLÁR (Programme for Re-vitalising Rural Areas) initiative is the sister scheme of RAPID for rural areas and it was launched in October, 2001. The focus of this initiative is to tackle the problem of depopulation, decline and lack of services in rural areas. Sixteen areas were identified to be included in CLÁR. CLÁR will operate using existing structures and work closely with State agencies to complement the range of initiatives and programmes already in place. Again one of the key aspects of CLÁR is to re-prioritise National Development Plan funding for the targeted areas, while a budget of €25.4 million has also been allocated to CLÁR for 2002 – 2003.

2.7 AREA PARTNERSHIP COMPANIES

In the early 1990s, the development of the Area Partnership Companies pioneered the partnership approach to local development in Ireland. There are thirty-eight (20 Urban and 18 Rural) Partnership Companies nationally. Each partnership board consists of representatives from Government Departments and agencies, voluntary bodies, non-governmental organisations, the business sector and community representatives. The main focus of the Partnership Companies is to develop programmes targeted at countering disadvantage and social exclusion. To meet this aim they have developed a vast range of locally based programmes to tackle social exclusion and factors that give rise to and maintain social deprivation, poverty and unemployment. As they work within a specified catchment area the positive effects of their programmes are felt at a community and/or neighbourhood level. The ongoing work of the Area Partnership Companies across a range of areas in specific regions of multiple disadvantage is of relevance to the broad area of crime prevention.

2.8 LOCAL DRUGS TASK FORCES

The Local Drugs Task Forces (LDTFs) were established in fourteen communities in Dublin, Cork and Bray where a significant heroin problem is evident. The role of the LDTFs is to prepare local action plans which include a range of measures in relation to drug treatment, drug education, the prevention of drug use and curbing the local supply of drugs. They also play a role in the co-ordination of services in their local areas, allowing a significant input from local communities and local organisations on the planning and delivery of these services (Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation, 2001). The LDTFs are part of a co-ordinated effort to tackle the drugs problem nationally – the National Drugs Strategy. This Strategy is managed by the National Drugs Strategy Team, is overseen by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and progress is reported to the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion.

2.9 COUNTY/CITY DEVELOPMENT BOARDS

The County/City Development Boards were established under the Local Government Act, 2001 (Section 129). The Boards are located in each Local Authority region and they have been tasked with the development and implementation of agreed strategies for the economic, social and cultural development of each county or city. All of the key local agencies are represented on the Boards as well as the social partners and representatives from the community and voluntary sector. The aim of the Board is to combine the strategies and plans of all of the agencies, to develop a shared vision of the future development in each county or city. These strategies were due at the beginning of 2002, and will chart the integrated development of the Local Authority area for the next ten years. One of the aspects of these strategies is to review quality of life issues in the local area and some of the plans have also tackled the issue of community safety.

2.10 RELATED GOVERNMENT POLICY

A number of Government Departments and agencies have developed specific policies which have an impact on crime prevention, in the area of:

- a) Educational Disadvantage;
- b) Family Support Services; and
- c) Youth Services.

These specific areas will be expanded on in later Sections of the paper.

PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Government Policy in the area of crime prevention must involve a range of policy initiatives in the short, medium and long-term to address the complexity of the factors that give rise to crime and anti-social behaviour (p. 8).
2. A comprehensive crime prevention strategy must dovetail with the work of all Government Departments and agencies and must be independently evaluated and reviewed (p. 8).
3. It is the view of the National Crime Council that steps must be taken by all Government Departments and agencies to develop up-to-date, accessible and usable statistics that can aid national policy formulation and research (p. 9).
4. The important role of early intervention and diversion from the criminal justice system, as provided in the Children Act, 2001, should be adopted in all public policy and legislation (p. 11/12).
5. The National Crime Council recommends that the Government provide the necessary funding for the development of the required structures, to complete the implementation of the Children Act, 2001 (p. 12).
6. There is a need for ongoing independent evaluation of existing initiatives before a new initiative is brought forward and a continuation plan from the pilot phase to the mainstreamed project must be developed, to ensure a seamless transition from one phase to the next (p. 13).

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

1. Is Government thinking too short term when developing crime policy?
2. Should the Government's crime and justice policy be more proactive?
3. Should mandatory independent evaluation accompany all State funding?
4. Who, Why and How to target funding – what principles should be adopted?

Section Three
Crime Prevention in Ireland

Section Three

Crime Prevention in Ireland

3.1 DEFINING CRIME PREVENTION

Crime prevention can mean different things to different individuals and agencies. Crime prevention in the National Crime Council's view, must encompass measures to reduce crime by:

- a) reducing the opportunities to commit crime;
- b) promoting social inclusion and reducing the socio-economic, educational, societal and environmental factors that can leave children and young people 'at risk' of engaging in anti-social behaviour and criminal activities;
- c) reducing recidivism through the re-integration of young and adult offenders into the community in a planned and supportive way, involving training and education, skills development and personal support; and by
- d) providing appropriate interventions through an interagency/partnership approach where knowledge, expertise and 'best practice' are shared to the maximum.

It is the view of the National Crime Council and of many of those with whom we consulted that crime prevention should not only be the responsibility of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and its related agencies. The role of tackling crime and crime prevention in Ireland has traditionally been seen as the business of the Department of Justice⁵ and the various arms of the criminal justice system:

"all departments have a responsibility for policies and programmes which can help to combat crime, but [that] all except the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform will tend to put crime matters on the long finger under pressure from issues more central to their remit" (National Crime Forum, 1998: p. 171).

The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform has an influential role in the development of individual crime prevention policies and initiatives in conjunction with the various criminal justice agencies, including An Garda Síochána, the Probation and Welfare Service and the Irish Prison Service. It was clear from our consultations that a number of Government Departments, as well as the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform can do more to contribute to crime prevention measures.

A clear, mutually accepted definition of crime prevention should be drawn up across all Government Departments and agencies that have a clear and significant role to play in this area. As a first step, Government Departments and agencies should be obliged to 'crime proof'⁶ all new policy, leading to a more inclusive meaning of the term 'crime prevention' and

⁵ Now the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform

⁶ The term 'crime proof' advocates that all proposals for changes in policy should be assessed for their potential positive or negative impact on crime. For example, greater levels of street lighting can be a feasible, inexpensive and effective method of reducing crime (Farrington and Welsh, 2002). This is referred to as 'crime impact analysis' by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (1998).

an acceptance that preventing crime or reducing its effects on society is not the sole responsibility of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and its related agencies. Crime proofing should also be applied to organised crime and white collar crime.

It is generally accepted that crime prevention programmes and initiatives fall into three broad categories (Pease, 1996). These are:

- a) Primary Prevention, (situational/opportunistic crime prevention) which aims to reduce the opportunity to commit crime without reference to the criminal;
- b) Secondary Prevention, (social crime prevention) which aims to prevent those who are vulnerable to or 'at risk', from embarking on a criminal career; and
- c) Tertiary Prevention, which deals with the treatment of known offenders and aims to prevent recidivism.

A successful crime prevention strategy should involve aspects of these three key areas. Current crime prevention programmes in Ireland are spread over these three areas, but are not co-ordinated in a coherent or integrated manner, in that certain agencies are responsible for certain aspects of the crime prevention agenda. A number of ongoing crime prevention initiatives are outlined below and are categorised by the type of crime prevention function which is progressed. See Appendix Three (p.100) for further information on these initiatives.

Primary Crime Prevention

- The work of the National Crime Prevention Office, An Garda Síochána;
- Community Alert; and
- Neighbourhood Watch.

Secondary Crime Prevention

- The Garda Youth Diversion Projects; and
- The work of the Probation and Welfare Service with young people 'at risk' of offending.

Tertiary Crime Prevention

- Work of the Probation and Welfare Service with offenders both in custody and in the community; and
- Work of the Irish Prison Service in terms of rehabilitation and training of prisoners.

There are an abundance of projects in many spheres – education, training and employment, recreational development, personal development, family support, parenting, health

promotion and community development – which may all have benefits in terms of future crime prevention. This applies especially to work with ‘at risk’ families, children and young people. Although these initiatives may not have the stated aims of crime prevention there is likely to be a spin-off in this regard. Indeed, in other jurisdictions, programmes in early education (The Perry Pre-school Programme) and parenting skills have been developed with the specific aim of future crime prevention.

It seems to the National Crime Council that there is some unease generally about labelling a project as having a ‘crime prevention’ focus. Some contributors, at both the community hearings and agency consultations, spoke of the stigma that a ‘crime prevention’ focus places on the participants and the area and the unwillingness of some to participate lest they be labelled as troublemakers. This is regrettable and must be tackled in an upfront way by the Government, setting wide parameters on what ‘crime prevention’ is truly intended to encompass.

3.2 CRIME PREVENTION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND LAW REFORM

The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform has in recent years emphasised the need for greater interdepartmental involvement in the development and delivery of crime prevention initiatives, from situational crime prevention, to preventing recidivism, to social crime prevention and highlighting a life span model in that crime prevention can be targeted at the very young and at the recidivist adult offender.

The importance of the interagency approach to crime prevention has been recognised within the Department of Justice⁷ from the early 1990s. In 1992, an Interdepartmental Group was established to investigate escalating levels of public disorder and anti-social behaviour in an area of West Dublin. The findings of the committee⁸ emphasised that criminality and anti-social behaviour result as a consequence of social and economic deprivation. It concluded that a broadly-based response to crime and disorder was required, placing as much emphasis on socio-economic regeneration and social inclusion measures as on law and order sanctions (Government of Ireland, 1992).

Considerable developments emanated from the findings of this report, particularly the development of the Garda Youth Diversion Projects. The recommendations in the ‘Ronanstown Report’ were again reiterated in the more recent discussion paper “Tackling Crime” in 1997, emphasising the need to engage local community involvement in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies, in the development of a co-ordinated strategy to prevent crime. This discussion paper outlined that:

⁷ Now the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

⁸ The findings of the Interdepartmental Group were published in a report entitled “Urban Crime and Disorder” which became known as the “Ronanstown Report”.

“There is a perception that the lack of cohesion between various State and voluntary agencies gives rise to duplication, considerable waste and a failure, very often, to identify those most at risk of drifting into trouble. While this lack of cohesion may not actually cause disadvantage, it can certainly add to the difficulties caused by disadvantage and seriously delay remedial action. It is therefore well worth while looking at the issue of inter-agency cohesion and examining how improved cohesion might contribute towards crime reduction” (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 1997: p. 54, Section 7.16).

The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform’s Strategy Statement (1998 – 2000), highlighted the importance of early intervention to prevent future criminality and to divert children and young people from the criminal justice system. Again the need for inter-departmental co-operation was emphasised:

“It is now widely agreed that a strategic approach to crime concerned with prevention as well as dealing with its consequences needs to be broadly based and needs to take a long term view. It would involve participation by the community generally and more particularly, an active commitment by policy planners in the areas of employment, income maintenance, housing, health and education” (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform: 1998, p. 86: Section 8.1).

In the Department’s most recent Strategy Statement (2001 – 2004), Objective 1.1 outlines that the Department intends to:

“Progress a comprehensive and measured policy for responding to crime, in the context of a well-informed and broadly based public discussion on crime issues... Continue to support measures aimed at reducing or preventing crime, particularly at local level” (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 2002c: p. 18).

3.3 THE CRIME PREVENTION ROLE OF AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

An Garda Síochána play a pivotal role in law enforcement and crime prevention in our society. In the five year strategic plan for policing in Ireland (2000 to 2004), the mission of the Gardaí is to *“achieve the highest attainable level of personal protection, community commitment and state security”* (Garda Síochána, 2000: p. 7). The Gardaí deliver on this mission through a number of specific initiatives as well as through their routine policing duties, such as neighbourhood patrols. A number of the specific Garda crime prevention initiatives are outlined below.

The National Crime Prevention Office of An Garda Síochána are *“responsible for researching and promoting best crime prevention and reduction practices for the public and An Garda Síochána”* (Garda Síochána, 2001: p. 24). The work of the office focuses on situational crime prevention, including:

- a) Reduction in crime through environmental design;
- b) Providing security audits to business premises;
- c) The extension of town centre C.C.T.V. systems; and the
- d) Provision of crime prevention literature to targeted groups and the general public.

The Community Relations Section of An Garda Síochána work closely with both Neighbourhood Watch and Community Alert throughout the country, which are both locally based community safety schemes, also within the remit of situational crime prevention (see Appendix Three).

The Gardaí also play a role in a number of social crime prevention measures, in the form of youth crime prevention programmes. The National Juvenile Office currently run the Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme and the Garda Youth Diversion Project. The Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme⁹ was established in 1963 and has developed on the premise that young offenders and society in general benefit more through having their criminal behaviour dealt with by way of caution rather than prosecution. This programme has recently (1 May, 2002) been put on a statutory basis, as part of the Children Act, 2001. Further details about this programme are contained in Appendix Three.

The Garda Youth Diversion Projects¹⁰ (currently 64 nationally), are designed to engage young people 'at risk'. These projects are multi-agency and community based, and aim to divert young people from becoming involved in criminal/anti-social behaviour. The programmes aim to engage young people in a range of suitable activities to facilitate personal development and encourage civic responsibility (see also Appendix Three).

An evaluation of fourteen of the original Garda Youth Diversion Projects reported positive findings. Generally the projects had a positive effect on the young people involved, including that they provided alternative leisure activities, they allowed for the development of positive, supportive and trusting relations with adults and finally the young people knew they had to stay within the boundaries of the law to remain in the project (Bowden and Higgins, 2000).

The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform commissioned a piece of research into the profile of the young people attending the Garda Youth Diversion Projects. The research highlights that young people who participate in the projects are a homogeneous group, exhibiting the same characteristics and associated social problems (CSER, 2001). The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform in conjunction with the Garda Community Relations Section, is currently developing a set of guidelines that would apply to all of the projects nationally.

⁹ Also known as the JLO Scheme.

¹⁰ Also known as the Garda Special Projects.

3.4 CRIME PREVENTION AND THE PROBATION AND WELFARE SERVICE

The mission of the Probation and Welfare Service is to foster public safety and promote the common good by advancing the recognition and use of community based sanctions, thereby reducing the level of re-offending. The Service is involved in:

- a) providing pre-sanction reports on offenders for the courts;
- b) the supervision of convicted offenders on community based sanctions;
- c) direct intervention with young offenders and their families;
- d) facilitating offenders to confront their offending behaviour, to take responsibility for their past actions and ultimately to reduce their potential for re-offending;
- e) encouraging and facilitating the development and operation of a range of community facilities including workshops and hostels;
- f) developing structured interventions which target high-risk offenders or those involved in specific types of offending behaviour;
- g) helping offenders to develop greater order in their lives and making appropriate plans for resettlement on their release from custody;
- h) liaison with other agencies as well as community groups and organisations to provide enhanced opportunities for the social inclusion of offenders; and
- i) assisting those in custody through individual and group work to address personal and family difficulties.

The Probation and Welfare Service promotes and supports the establishment and operation of a number of local facilities (including hostels and workshops), projects and programmes, which underpin the work of the Service with offenders and those 'at risk' of offending. A number of programmes have been established to assist those young people in certain areas who may be at high risk of offending or reoffending. A range of training workshops, hostels and resource centres have been put in place in a number of areas. The Probation and Welfare Service encourages local communities to provide facilities to meet the needs of those on supervision orders. This promotes the social inclusion of offenders who may have been marginalised as a result of their offending and it improves opportunities for re-integration into their communities.

The table below outlines the number of offenders under the supervision of the Probation and Welfare Service at the end of January, 1999.

Table 1 The Number of Offenders under Probation and Welfare Supervision at the end of January, 1999. (Information obtained from Probation and Welfare Service, July, 2002)¹¹

Type of Supervision	Total	Under 18 Years
Probation Order	1,912	594
Community Service Order	1,216	122
Supervision during deferment penalty	1,192	318
Supervised Temporary Release	62	-
Total Supervision Orders	4,382	1,034
Pre-sanction Reports in progress	1,153	346
Community Service Reports in progress	325	39
Total Reports Outstanding	1,478	385
Total under Service Supervision	5,860	1,419

In recent years, the Probation and Welfare Service has seen an increase in the number of young people who are referred to them. Often, however, by the time these young people come to the attention of the Probation and Welfare Service, their offending behaviour has become entrenched and it is very difficult to redress. This highlights the need for Probation and Welfare Officers to be involved with young people at an earlier stage, using their expertise to prevent further decline towards offending behaviour.

At the moment the Probation and Welfare Service have no statutory responsibility in this area. The Probation and Welfare Service is reactive only to the Courts and is not proactive, in that young and adult offenders are referred to them, rather than the Service seeking out and targeting those 'at risk'. The National Crime Council recommends that extra funding is allocated to the Probation and Welfare Service to allow it to expand its remit to young people who are 'at risk' of offending, thus enhancing the opportunity for early intervention.

In conjunction with their direct role with offenders, the Probation and Welfare Service are also involved in a number of initiatives that aim to increase co-ordination of services to young people and their families. These include the County Childcare Boards, Local Partnerships, the Local Drugs Task Force and other more locally based initiatives. The Garda Síochána are also represented on many of these Boards.

¹¹ The 2000 Probation and Welfare Service statistics will be available in autumn, 2002.

In recent years, there has been a move towards the establishment of independent agencies with statutory responsibilities, for example, the Courts Service. The Probation and Welfare Service has no such existence in law as a corporate entity and lacks legislative recognition as a distinct agency within the criminal justice system. In line with recommendation 11 of the Expert Group on the Probation and Welfare Service, the National Crime Council recommends the development of a statutory Probation and Welfare Service (Government of Ireland, 1999).

3.5 THE IRISH PRISON SERVICE AND THE CONNECT PROJECT

The prison population in Ireland on June 6, 2002 was 3,554 (278 on temporary release). A recent bulletin outlined that in the year 2000, the prison population stood at 76 prisoners per 100,000 of the general population, which is somewhat less than England & Wales and Portugal (124 per 100,000), Scotland (115 per 100,000) and Spain (114 per 100,000) (Barclay and Tavares, 2002).

Education in the Prison Service is provided in partnership with a range of educational agencies, including the VEC, Public Library Services, colleges and the Arts Council. As well as providing academic courses and vocational training, the Prison Education Units have become involved in addressing offending behaviour and/or the personal problems of prisoners through pre-release courses, post-release courses, health education, addiction awareness, anger management and parenting (Irish Prison Service, 2001). Between the years 1999 and 2001, the annual expenditure in the Prison Service on education has increased by 32 per cent (from €816,000 to €1,079,000), while annual expenditure on training has increased by 349 per cent (from €700,000 to €3,144,000) (Irish Prison Service, 2001).

The CONNECT project is a recent development in training in the Irish Prison Service. It is a collaborative project between the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the National Training and Development Institute. It is an individually tailored approach to rehabilitation through vocational preparation and training. The project started as a pilot project in Mountjoy Prison, the Dochas Centre (Women's Prison) and the Training Unit, and it is currently being mainstreamed to all prison facilities in the State, through funding allocated under the National Development Plan, 2000 – 2006 (Lawlor and McDonald, 2001). The long-term aims of the project are to increase the employability of offenders through the introduction of various measures that address their needs and ultimately to aid the re-integration of offenders back to the community and prevent recidivism.

The first evaluation report of the CONNECT project outlined the outcomes of 36 prisoners who took part in the project in Mountjoy prison. These outcomes are outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Outcomes for the released Mountjoy IPP (Individual Programme Planning) participants (Lawlor and McDonald, 2001: p. 76).

Activity	Number
Employment	18
Community Based Drug Therapy Programme	3
Probation and Welfare Project	1
Education	1
Deceased	1
Whereabouts unknown	12
Total	36

All of the participants who were employed were paid the same rate as other employees doing the same work and no incentives were offered to employers for taking them on. The National Crime Council acknowledges that ongoing evaluation is central to the CONNECT project and we recognise that long-term follow-up of the participants is required to adequately claim the success of the project.

3.6 ESTATE MANAGEMENT: THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The Local Authorities also have a role to play in preventing crime on their housing estates, where effective estate management programmes can help to reduce the opportunity to loiter, congregate and become involved in anti-social behaviour. In recent years Dublin City Council and other Local Authorities have done much to encourage the development of residents groups, with the active involvement of residents. Much of the work of the Local Authorities in the area of estate management is to prevent anti-social behaviour which has a negative effect on the quality of life of local residents.

PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It was clear from our consultations that a number of Government Departments, as well as the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform can do more to contribute to crime prevention measures, especially in terms of greater co-ordination of their work both within their own agencies and with others (p. 18).
2. A clear, mutually accepted definition of crime prevention should be drawn up across all Government Departments and agencies that have a clear and significant role to play in this area (p. 18).

3. Government Departments and agencies should be obliged to 'crime proof' all new policies, ensuring that they are assessed for their potential positive or negative impact on crime (p. 18).
4. The National Crime Council recommends that extra funding is allocated to the Probation and Welfare Service to allow it to expand its remit to young people who are 'at risk' of offending, thus enhancing the opportunity for early intervention (p. 24).
5. The National Crime Council recommends the development of a statutory Probation and Welfare Service (p. 25).

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

1. Would a clear accepted definition of 'crime prevention' help to improve the crime prevention response, placing certain responsibilities on appropriate agencies?
2. Is it necessary to develop an integrated crime prevention policy?
3. Is 'crime proofing' of policy initiatives feasible and would it be beneficial?
4. Should the Probation and Welfare Service have specific roles with young children who are 'at risk'?

Section Four Underlying Causes of Crime

Section Four

Underlying Causes of Crime

4.1 IDENTIFYING RISK

Whilst it is not possible to identify factors which we can say directly cause crime, a number of risk factors have been identified, which make children and young people more vulnerable to future offending. Much of what we know about risk factors was initially reported in a number of longitudinal studies including the Cambridge Study of Delinquent Development, the Newcastle One Thousand Family Study and the National Survey of Health and Development (The 1946 Cohort) (Farrington, 1996b; Utting et al, 1993). To date there has been no longitudinal study of this type conducted in Ireland, however the forthcoming National Longitudinal Study of Children presents an opportunity to explore anti-social and offending behaviour in a prospective manner. The National Crime Council regards these as important issues that should be investigated in this study. The fundamental basis for identifying risk factors is that children and young people are influenced throughout their lives by a range of individuals and situations, and especially as they grow up, by factors that can lead them towards or away from criminal activity (CSER, 2001). If we are able to identify risk factors, and consequently target those who exhibit these factors, it may be possible to intervene and prevent the onset or continuation of a criminal career.

The risk factors outlined below have been reported as those that can lead to involvement in criminal activity. The National Crime Council acknowledges that these are not necessarily the attributes of so called 'white collar criminals', or indeed all of those who partake in public order offences and organised crime, but are more likely to define those who commit crimes in the areas of assault, burglary and larceny.

The National Crime Council is not suggesting that all people who exhibit these attributes or all young people who come from a background as outlined below will offend in the future. However, research has shown these attributes to be common to young and adult offenders and when they occur together can make children and young people more prone to becoming involved in criminal activity and similarly prone to early school leaving, substance misuse, anti-social behaviour and teenage parenting (Graham, 1998). Many of these factors tend to be interactive and it is a combination of these risk factors occurring together which causes the risk. The greater the exposure to multiple risk factors, the higher the level of risk. The most consistently reported of these risk factors are listed below.

4.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY FACTORS

- Community disorganisation and physical deterioration;
- High levels of mobility and lack of attachments to the community;
- Majority of local authority or rented housing;

- High proportion of single parent families;
- Higher than average percentages of young people in the population; and
- Poor levels of service provision in the local area.

4.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION AS MEASURED BY:

- Low family income/consistent poverty;
- Parents are long-term unemployed;
- Poor housing;
- Large family; and
- Single parent family.

4.4 FAMILY BACKGROUND/PARENTING

- Poor parenting skills – erratic or harsh discipline;
- Lack of parental control, supervision and monitoring;
- Poor or disruptive attachments with the child;
- Parental conflict;
- Family breakdown/family dysfunction; and
- Criminal, anti-social and/or alcoholic parent/s.

4.5 INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

- Children who are hyperactive and impulsive;
- Lower than average IQ;
- Mental and/or physical health problems; and
- Low self esteem.

4.6 ACADEMIC AND SCHOOL FACTORS

- Poor academic performance in primary school;
- Disruptive and aggressive behaviour, including bullying;
- Lack of concentration and motivation;

- Poor attendance;
- School disorganisation and lack of discipline; and
- Early school leaving.

This list of risk factors was compiled from information gained through the consultation process undertaken by the National Crime Council and is supported in much of the literature in this area. (Farrington, 1996a; Farrington, 1996b; Feldman, 1993; Utting 1996 and Utting et al, 1993).

PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATION

1. The National Crime Council regards anti-social and criminal behaviour as important issues that should be investigated in the forthcoming National Longitudinal Study of Children (p. 30).

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

1. Do we need more Irish based research to profile current offenders and identify the underlying causes of crime?
2. Is the response to crime too 'quick fix' ignoring the underlying causes of crime?

Section Five
Local Crime Prevention –
The Partnership Approach

Section Five

Local Crime Prevention – The Partnership Approach

5.1 RATIONALE BEHIND THE PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO CRIME PREVENTION

Crime is a complex phenomenon in terms of its causes and effects, thus successful responses to crime are beyond the competency of any single agency. The current response to crime is fragmented, insofar as one Department or agency deals with certain crimes, with certain antecedents of criminal behaviour (as outlined in Section Four), with certain aspects of the criminal process and with the effects and outcomes of crimes. Various agencies and Sections within agencies are carrying out different aspects of the crime prevention portfolio, without an overarching crime prevention strategy to knit together the different aspects of the crime prevention agenda. A partnership model allows for the development of a more holistic approach to crime and crime prevention, in which expertise, knowledge and resources can be shared. The importance of a co-ordinated strategy was highlighted at the community hearings, where it was noted that:

“Individual solutions to individual problems will not bring about the fundamental system changes required to build a better society”.

The State’s response to crime in Ireland is concentrated on ways of dealing with those who commit offences, rather than tackling the underlying causes of crime. One presenter at the community hearings outlined that:

“The State is spending huge amounts of money on the Gardaí, the Courts Service and the Prison Service, instead of making an investment at the other end of the system”.

The community based approach to crime prevention is based on the fact that crime is concentrated in specific locations and disproportionately affects specific Sections of the community. Furthermore different crimes affect different areas at different times.

5.2 A CASE FOR A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO CRIME PREVENTION IN IRELAND

The National Crime Council heard from many individuals and agencies who expressed views as to why we should develop more interactive ways of working at a local level. These have been synthesised below, outlining the potential benefits for the local communities and for the agencies and organisations involved.

A locally based partnership approach to crime prevention would:

- provide a co-ordinated and comprehensive approach to crime prevention at a local level;
- focus on the needs of ‘at risk’ families, children and young people, including the needs of the families and children of prisoners and ex-prisoners;

- provide a service which is accessible to the community and is user friendly and will help agencies to become a more effective interface with communities;
- identify the specific needs of the local community and gaps in service provision, based on research, statistics and consultation;
- identify and prevent further duplication of service provision;
- require the development of a locally based crime prevention plan, introducing a shared vision among the agencies;
- allow for greater co-ordination and accountability at a local level;
- clarify the various roles and responsibilities of each Government agency and Department in this area;
- allow agencies to tap into the wider pool of expertise which is available within each agency and Department;
- help agencies to become more effective in their delivery of service and more efficient in their use of resources; and
- provide a co-ordinated lobby group who could influence policy decision makers.

5.3 THE FUNDAMENTALS OF PARTNERSHIP WORKING IN THE AREA OF CRIME PREVENTION

- a) An agreed crime prevention strategy must be developed between Government Departments, Government agencies, voluntary organisations, community organisations and community representatives. This will ensure the development of a common approach based on agreed principles. The development of any locally based strategy requires a significant input from the community in both the development and the implementation phase. An agreed strategy would clearly outline each agency and organisation's roles and responsibilities for the delivery of the strategy.
- b) A comprehensive crime prevention strategy should encompass the various types of crime prevention, including situational crime prevention, social crime prevention and work with known offenders.
- c) Early intervention should be a fundamental principal and a key target of all crime prevention strategies. Those who work closely with families and young children (e.g. health workers, family support workers and teachers) are able to identify those who are prone to significant problems from a very young age. This knowledge should be shared and acted upon to develop preventative interventions with these families and children.

If targeted interventions are made at a very young age, they are more likely to be successful and have a longer lasting effect.

- d) To ensure success, partnerships in the area of crime prevention, must have strong political backing and substantial resource investment. There must be a high level of support and commitment from management within the various agencies involved. Officers nominated to represent these agencies must come from senior management and be able to make commitments (in terms of resources) to the partnerships, whilst also having knowledge and insight into the workload of the locally based officers.
- e) As noted earlier (p. 8) long-term planning in the public sector is 'patchy'. This will present challenges to any partnership that requires long-term commitments from Government Departments and agencies. The National Crime Council recognises that effective crime prevention strategies will require the development of short, medium and long-term goals and will require the full commitment of all agencies to realise these goals. Crime prevention partnerships should work towards providing long-term solutions to crime problems, and agencies must be able to make commitments in the long-term.

- f) It is the belief of the National Crime Council that with the proliferation of local partnership structures, agencies will have to change to meet the demands of interagency working. As one contributor at the Community Hearings noted:

"The nature and structure of statutory agencies and Government Departments mitigates against the development of successful interagency approaches. These Government agencies need to change so as to become an effective interface with communities".

- g) It was put to the National Crime Council on a number of occasions during our consultations that agencies and individual personnel have a territorial view of their role, in terms of the physical location in which they work and in terms of the parameters of their workload. It was highlighted that this blinkered view of one's professional role will hinder the partnership process and it fosters competition between agencies who are often working with the same target audience. This point was succinctly made at one of the community hearings:

"There is an environment of competition and criticism among agencies and this combined with a lack of co-ordination means there is no coherent structure between agencies".

Partnership working requires openness, consultation and sharing of information between agencies.

- h) Public services will always demand more resources, but agencies must not focus solely on this issue. Lack of funding is an easy response to demands for a better service. Agencies need to rationalise their services, to complement one another and become more effective.
- i) It was apparent to the National Crime Council during the course of our consultations that many service providers are delivering similar services to or co-ordinating services for the same clientele at a local level. The picture is one of duplication, with various layers of activity ongoing more often than not in the same local area. Of course, variety of service is essential in particular areas, such as youth services, but greater co-ordination is also required. It is the view of the National Crime Council that rationalising services in these areas would not incur any loss of service to the community.
- j) Partnership working in the area of crime prevention requires legislative underpinning, which draws on the experience of the local agencies and the community. A statutory obligation to commit to and work effectively in partnership will ensure the development and implementation of local crime prevention strategies based on agreed principles.
- k) Locally based strategies should be based on up-to-date data, to ensure that an accurate assessment of local needs can be made, thus requiring the availability of locally based information from all Government Departments and agencies. Independent evaluation (both process and outcome) should play an integral role in all crime prevention partnerships.

5.4 PARTNERSHIP APPROACHES TO CRIME PREVENTION IN IRELAND: PROPOSED MODELS

“The current allocation of responsibilities between Departments and arrangements for inter-Departmental co-ordination are unlikely to yield the degree of joint planning and implementation which seems to be required to make a serious and lasting impression on crime. Some new framework will be required, drawing together the various strands of public policy-making and also incorporating a wider community view (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 1998: p. 86)”.

This illustrates that the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform recognises the need for the development of a new framework that would co-ordinate crime prevention policies nationally and at a local level. Taking into consideration the views expressed during the consultation phase the National Crime Council proposes a model for the development of crime prevention partnerships in Ireland. The remit of these partnerships is to focus on

tackling local crime problems and the underlying causes of crime, while working closely to support current initiatives, as well as developing new initiatives. While emphasising that this is a proposal, we invite submissions from interested parties to outline their views on how such partnerships should develop, what form they should take and where they would fit in relation to other local partnership structures.

This model encompasses the fundamentals of crime prevention partnership working as outlined in 5.3 above. It proposes the development of a partnership with a national co-ordinating remit and a number of locally based partnerships (initially on a pilot basis) for specific areas of high crime, offender and victimisation rates.

The National Co-ordinating Crime Prevention Partnership will:

- a) have a partnership structure that will consist of senior managers from Government Departments and agencies, voluntary organisations and community organisations;
- b) co-ordinate the development of crime prevention policies nationally and across all Government Departments and agencies; and will
- c) draw-up guidelines for the development of local crime prevention partnerships and oversee their development.

The Local Crime Prevention Partnership will:

- a) have clear terms of reference;
- b) have a partnership structure that consists of representatives from key Government Departments (where appropriate), Government agencies, representatives from the community and voluntary sector and local residents;
- c) provide solutions to local problems, by developing locally based strategies that will link in with ongoing initiatives; and will
- d) place an emphasis on research, statistics and independent evaluation.

It would appear to the National Crime Council that there are two clear developmental pathways for crime prevention partnerships in Ireland:

A New Partnership Structure

The first is the development of a new partnership structure, bringing together all of the key Government Departments, agencies and organisations at a national and local level. Separate funding would be allocated to these partnerships who would have their own staff and would be completely independent of other partnership structures, but would work closely with them, especially at a local level.

Utilise a Current Partnership Structure

The second pathway is to combine the crime prevention agenda with the remit of a current partnership structure that is based at a local level. Representatives from many Government Departments and agencies and voluntary organisations are already partaking both locally and nationally in a range of partnership structures, including:

- Area Partnership Boards;
- RAPID/CLÁR Committees;
- Local Drugs Task Forces; and
- County/City Development Boards.

As the basic partnership structure is already established and accepted locally, the organisation would have to add a specific sub-committee with the task of tackling crime at a local level. It is recognised that such an approach would require additional staffing and resources, to ensure that the crime prevention agenda received priority attention within the partnership.

It is clear to the National Crime Council that the crime prevention agenda would sit more comfortably with some of the partnership arrangements outlined above than with others. Some of these partnerships are already tackling community safety and quality of life issues, whilst others are promoting social inclusion. The National Crime Council wishes to emphasise that this is a provisional proposal and we are keen to hear views on this proposal, particularly from those working within the partnership bodies outlined.

PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Successful responses to crime are beyond the competency of any single agency. A partnership model allows for the development of a more holistic approach to crime and crime prevention, in which expertise, knowledge and resources can be shared (p. 34).
2. An agreed crime prevention strategy must be developed between Government Departments, Government agencies, Voluntary organisations, community organisations and community representatives. This will ensure the development of a common approach based on agreed principles (p. 35).
3. Crime prevention strategies should emphasise the importance of early intervention (p. 35).
4. To ensure success, partnerships in the area of crime prevention, must have strong political backing and substantial resource investment. There must be a high level of support and commitment from management within the various agencies involved (p. 36).

5. Effective crime prevention strategies will require the development of short, medium and long-term goals and will require the full commitment of all agencies to realise these goals. Crime prevention partnerships should work towards providing long-term solutions to crime problems, and agencies must be able to make commitments in the long-term (p. 36).
6. With the proliferation of local partnership structures, agencies will have to change to meet the demands of interagency working (p. 36).
7. Public services will always demand more resources, but agencies must not focus solely on this issue. Lack of funding is an easy response to demands for a better service. Agencies need to rationalise their services, to complement one another and become more effective (p. 37).
8. Partnership working in the area of crime prevention requires legislative underpinning (p. 37).
9. Locally based strategies should be based on up-to-date data, to ensure that an accurate assessment of local needs can be made. Independent evaluation (both process and outcome) should play an integral role in all crime prevention partnerships (p. 37).
10. The National Crime Council proposes the development of crime prevention partnerships in Ireland. The remit of these partnerships should be to focus on tackling local crime problems and the underlying causes of crime, while working closely to support current initiatives, as well as developing new initiatives (p. 37-39).

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

1. Do we need to develop crime prevention partnerships to tackle crime problems and the underlying causes of crime in Ireland?

If so...

2. Will legislative underpinning help to ensure the success of crime prevention partnerships?
3. Do we need a specific structure to deal with crime prevention or can the crime prevention agenda be added to the remit of a current partnership structure?
4. What Departments, agencies and organisations should be involved in crime prevention partnerships locally and nationally?

Section Six
Community/Neighbourhood Influence
on Crime

Section Six

Community/Neighbourhood Influence on Crime

6.1 LOCALISED CRIME PROBLEMS

The “Broken Windows” theory of crime in the community outlines how a community can become infiltrated and eventually dominated by crime. This theory outlines how ‘incivilities’ (drinking in public, prostitution and other anti-social behaviours) become part of the fabric of the community. This increase in ‘incivilities’ leads to a decrease in the sense of community and a reduction in the ability of residents to control order in their neighbourhood. The decrease in informal community controls in turn leads to an increase in criminal activity. Residents become more fearful of crime in the area which further decreases their commitment to the community. Hence they become less willing to act against the anti-social activities which are becoming more widespread in their community (Hope and Hough, 1988).

The commitment of residents within the community decreases to the spatial area of their home and no longer to the wider community and an increase in crime is tolerated in the area. Areas which become tolerant of certain anti-social behaviours attract those who wish to partake in such behaviours as they are less likely to be detected. Selective out migration is high in these areas, and because of the reputation they have gained, only certain people will want to move in (Skogan, 1988).

Despite our economic success over recent years, the benefits have not been felt in all communities and the type of community environment chronicled above exists in Ireland today. Crime emerges from and is more likely to be perpetrated in these communities. Residents who made submissions at the National Crime Council’s community hearings, outlined how high levels of crime or anti-social behaviour in their local communities lead to a reduced sense of safety, especially among the more vulnerable members of the community. The effects of crime and anti-social behaviour can instil fear of further crime, a sense of isolation and a lack of confidence in the criminal justice system.

6.2 THE AVAILABILITY OF STATISTICS AT A LOCAL LEVEL

The National Crime Council in its “Crime in Ireland” report recommended that a regular national crime victimisation survey should be undertaken (Young et al, 2001) and the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform announced in July, 2002 that he had received formal approval to sanction the development of such a survey. Our consultations have reinforced our belief in the importance of such a national crime victimisation survey and we would also highlight the value of locally based crime victimisation surveys, which would shed more light on the distribution of victimisation rates at a local level.

Furthermore it is imperative that Government Departments and agencies make available data at a local level, based on the same area boundaries, to allow for more accurate

planning of services and initiatives. During our consultations it was suggested that with the continued development of information technology systems in Government bodies, it should be possible to tag all data by District Electoral Division (DED). Government Departments and agencies would develop an agreed structure for the release of this data by combining a number of DEDs that roughly correspond to neighbourhood/community areas. This issue is also raised in the Dublin City Economic, Social and Cultural Strategy 2002 to 2012. (Dublin City Development Board, 2002: p. 52).

6.3 LOCAL ACCEPTABILITY OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

It was expressed to the National Crime Council on a number of occasions during the consultation process that certain criminal activities and anti-social behaviours are deemed acceptable within certain communities, when there is a beneficial spin-off for the community at large or individuals within the community, for example, racketeering. One submission went as far as to say that:

“there is a sub-culture with radically different norms and values to our more middle-class ones”.

6.4 AGENCY PRIORITIES AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Government agencies and the local community may have somewhat different definitions of criminal conduct. In the community hearings the point was raised a number of times that the Garda priorities for local policing do not always dovetail with what the community would see as the policing priorities of a particular area. This highlights the need for greater co-operation and communication between the Gardaí and the community at a local level (Section Seven on the Criminal Justice System expands on this issue). The Community Policing Forums in the North and South Inner City areas of Dublin have made inroads in this regard, and have helped to strengthen relations between the Gardaí and the local community.

Similarly, the priorities of other State agencies are often different to what residents believe to be the needs of the community. Policies that are developed centrally are often somewhat different when implemented on the ground. Centrally based policies lack flexibility and fail to account for the individual needs of different communities. To some extent the RAPID and CLÁR programmes are trying to rectify this issue in the communities in which they have a presence. Local Area Implementation Plans have been developed in consultation with the local community, to address the needs of the community.

The importance of ensuring that, where practicable, local and national policy goals and expectations are compatible is crucial to the acceptance, participation in and ultimate

success of any initiative. The National Crime Council acknowledges that there is a much greater willingness on the part of Government agencies to take on board the views of local interest groups but in our consultations the view was expressed that too often the same people – stakeholders in the community – are consulted. A balance must be achieved in any consultation process giving due regard to the widest range of community views.

The structure of centrally based Government Departments and agencies often mitigates against working at a local level. At the agency hearings, this issue was highlighted to the National Crime Council, in that officials from centrally based organisations often find it difficult to “fit into” the new localised structures, when their remit is for a much larger region. The regional offices being set up by the Department of Education and Science is one example of introducing greater flexibility into a traditionally centralised organisation.

6.5 LABELLING COMMUNITIES

Certain areas and neighbourhoods have a concentration of families and individuals who are experiencing multiple problems, including financial, social, educational and psychological problems. Policies that have tried to address these problems on a community basis, have used terms such as ‘deprived’ or ‘disadvantaged’ to describe these areas. Whilst this label brings resources to the area (e.g. CLÁR, Area Partnership Company or Local Drugs Task Force), it also brings with it the negative connotation which the label implies. These programmes can raise awareness of the particular issues of an area, but the stigmatisation that results can lead to further alienation and prejudice from the wider community. As one contributor at the community hearings emphasised:

“I live in a ‘deprived’ area on a small income, but I am not deprived and I resent being labelled”.

Similarly, when targeting young people, the language we use in community based policy should be inclusive, without any negative connotations. This issue also arises with regard to resources targeted at tackling educational disadvantage. Schools which have been designated as ‘disadvantaged’ are particularly stigmatised as the school will gain a reputation that may deter parents from sending their children there. Obviously at a policy level certain language is needed to differentiate exactly where or who is being targeted, however, at a community level during the implementation of policy, the language used should be sensitive to any negative implications that may arise.

6.6 COMMUNITY BASED PARTNERSHIPS IN IRELAND

A number of locally based initiatives (see Section Two) have been developed in recent years to tackle certain issues at a local community level. The Area Partnerships Companies and the Local Drugs Task Forces being good examples of this. The recent RAPID and CLÁR programmes also fall within this category but both are still at the early stages of development.

PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The National Crime Council highlights the value of undertaking locally based crime victimisation surveys, which would shed more light on the distribution of victimisation rates at a local level (p. 42).
2. There is a need for Government Departments and agencies to make available data at a local level, based on the same area boundaries, to allow for more accurate planning of services and initiatives (p. 42/43).
3. Policies that are developed centrally need to be flexible so as to allow them to be tailored to the specific needs of each local area (p. 43/44).
4. At a policy level certain language is needed to differentiate exactly where or who is being targeted, however, at a community level during the implementation of policy the language used should be sensitive to any negative implications that may arise (p. 44).

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

1. Is there an acceptance in some communities of certain types of anti-social and criminal behaviour?
2. Is there a gap between national policy goals and regional/local expectation? If so, how can this gap be bridged?
3. What language should we use to describe communities that have high levels of crime, anti-social behaviour, poverty and deprivation? Can our language be more inclusive?
4. Who or what marginalises a community?

Section Seven
The Criminal Justice System

Section Seven

The Criminal Justice System

7.1 ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

During our consultation process it was evident that there is a perception that the decision making processes in the various arms of the criminal justice system are somehow ‘shielded from public scrutiny’. Whilst efforts have been made in recent years to provide more information on the way the institutions of State operate (e.g. the publication of strategy statements and annual reports and freedom of information legislation¹²), the general view tends to support the need for more and better quality information on how decisions are actually made within the criminal justice system.

It is the view of the National Crime Council that a determined effort must be made across all agencies of the criminal justice system to operate in a more open, transparent and accountable manner. The agencies that make up the criminal justice system in Ireland must provide accurate, up-to-date information and statistics on their activities and conduct regular independent reviews of their procedures, to ensure that they are at all times functioning in a planned and informed manner.

7.2 AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

“Policing should be seen as community focused and accountable. Elsewhere in Europe, in particular under the Good Friday Agreement, transparency and accountability in policing is growing. There is an urgent need to ensure that structures, which allow local accountability, are introduced. This does not imply that all aspects of crime should be accountable locally” (Dublin City Development Board, 2002: p. 64).

The work of An Garda Síochána is central to the crime prevention agenda. Many examples were given to the National Crime Council of the good and progressive work of the Gardaí (see Section Three). However, the view was also expressed that in areas with high levels of crime and victimisation and high levels of socio-economic deprivation, the community find that they are somewhat detached from the Gardaí. This opinion is reinforced by O’Mahony (2002):

“In certain especially disadvantaged areas, there are mutually hostile and suspicious attitudes between the police and large sectors of the population” (p. 427).

While community Gardaí are assigned to particular neighbourhoods, they are often moved on, thus hindering the possibility of the development of long-term relations between the local Gardaí and the local community. A number of contributors highlighted the effects that this can have at local level, leading to:

- a) a lack of communication between the Gardaí and the community;

¹² The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform had the second highest number of requests under the Freedom of Information Act in both 2001 and 2000 (Office of the Information Commissioner, 2002).

- b) a disparity between what the Gardaí believe are the policing priorities of a particular community and what the community believe the policing priorities should be; and
- c) a lack of understanding between the positions of the Gardaí and the community.

Many of the contributions received from both the community and agency hearings have emphasised the need for a more community orientated style of policing:

“Community policing should not mean that one community police officer serves one area. It should be an integrated approach to policing”; while a second commentator noted that:

“Surveys in the UK show that the community prefer a more community style policing approach. This is also the ‘gut feeling’ of the Gardaí, but they haven’t managed to get that far yet”.

The term ‘community policing’ can mean different things to different people depending on where they are coming from. An indication of what was meant by ‘community policing’ during our consultation process was given when a number of contributors cited the model of ‘community policing’ outlined in the Report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland as one which An Garda Síochána should seek to emulate. The report outlines a philosophy of ‘community policing’ rather than accurately defining it:

“the police working in partnership with the community; the community thereby participating in its own policing; and the two working together; mobilising resources to solve problems affecting public safety over the longer term...” (Independent Commission on Policing, 1999: p. 40).

The importance of engaging the community is emphasised in a recent UK policing white paper “Policing a new Century: A Blueprint for Reform” (Home Office, 2001):

“We must engage local agencies and the local community in helping reduce crime and disorder and making neighbourhoods safer... We are looking at ways to improve the participation of voluntary and community groups and make best use of their local knowledge. The role of the voluntary sector is too often overlooked in discussions of policing and crime reduction” (p.33; Section 2.30)¹³.

The Commissioner of An Garda Síochána recently acknowledged the importance of community involvement in the work of the police service:

“The community itself must be seen as an equal part of the equation. Without the participation and the support of the community any police service will falter... Public support must not be taken for granted. An Garda Síochána must continue to work ever more closely with members of the community in helping to build a society in which we can all take pride and that will hopefully form a model that others will wish to follow” (Byrne, 2002: p. 440/441).

¹³ This white paper laid the foundations for the recently enacted Police Act, 2002 (UK).

The Community Policing Forums that have been set up in the Dublin North and South Inner City areas have increased the level of interaction between the Gardaí and the community and have made for a positive working relationship. A review of the Community Policing Forum in the North Inner City outlined that 70 per cent of those surveyed believed that the service provided by the Gardaí had improved as a result of the work of the Forum (Connolly, 2002 unpublished).

More generally, the Gardaí participate in a number of partnerships which are developing regional or local policies, including the County/City Development Boards and the RAPID committees. There is a nationwide network of liaison officers to service the needs of local communities and the Gardaí conduct Public Attitude Surveys and have local customer service panels, all of which provide information to them on the needs and attitudes of the community. The Gardaí must build upon these ongoing structures. Models being developed here, such as the Community Policing Forums and in neighbouring jurisdictions (e.g. Northern Ireland and England and Wales) could provide useful guidelines.

A number of contributors at the community hearings raised the issue of response times to incidents reported to the Gardaí. Specifically, local residents highlighted that An Garda Síochána respond more efficiently to calls from the business community. Whilst it was acknowledged that the response time can vary from situation to situation, often due to factors outside the control of the Gardaí, the community representatives wished to see all calls for assistance given the same priority as calls from the business community. In recent years the demands being placed on the Gardaí are increasing, with an average seven per cent increase in the number of incidents being reported annually (Garda Síochána, 2001). The current Garda Policing Plan 2002 outlines that ongoing research (Public Attitude Survey, 2002) *“will identify the emerging response needs as prioritised by the public and An Garda Síochána will be guided by this”* (Garda Síochána, 2002: p.11), thus response issues as raised by the community in the Public Attitude Survey, 2002 will subsequently be addressed by An Garda Síochána.

Whilst the National Crime Council are aware that Juvenile Liaison Officers are trained to work specifically with young people, a number of contributors at the community hearings expressed the view that there is a need for greater levels of training for all Gardaí, in the development of skills to deal with young people especially in confrontational situations. This would allow all Gardaí to have greater insights into and a greater understanding of young people. The view was also expressed that Garda attitudes towards young people are sometimes negative and unwarranted. The National Crime Council are aware that the Gardaí have introduced a conflict resolution course to Phase III training at the Garda Training College and to core in-service courses throughout the country.

7.3 THE JUDICIARY

A number of contributors who spoke at the community hearings specifically about the prosecution of drug dealers, expressed their dissatisfaction with the inconsistency in the sentences imposed for drug dealing offences. While they acknowledged the efforts of the Gardaí in bringing cases to prosecution, in some cases it was felt that the sentence imposed by the courts did not act as a deterrent to others or adequately reflect the effect drug dealing has at a local level. As a contributor at one of the community hearings asserted:

“In this community, people are now working together with the Gardaí... to target drug dealers and they see much of their good work fall down at the Court stage”.

Some Sections of the community have a low level of confidence in the Judiciary and the view was expressed that a mechanism needs to be found by which members of the Judiciary can gain a deeper understanding of the effect particular types of criminal activity, such as drug dealing, can have on an area.

7.4 IRISH PRISON SERVICE

There was a general view from many of the submissions to the National Crime Council that incarceration does not work, beyond preventing offenders from committing crimes whilst they are detained. Prison does not deal adequately with the offending behaviour nor does it adequately address the problems which prisoners experience. These problems include *“drug and alcohol addiction, ruptured family ties, deficits in education and training and poor mental and physical health”* (O’Donnell, 2002: p. 87).

There is also a need for a greater level of skills training in prison, so as to equip prisoners with the resources necessary to gain stable employment upon release. The CONNECT project which was originally developed in Mountjoy Prison, the Training Unit and the Dochas Centre, can be viewed as a significant positive move in this regard. This project is currently being expanded to other areas of the Prison System. The National Crime Council recognises the importance of developing links between the ‘closed prison environment’ and the wider community and urges the Irish Prison Service to further develop and expand their work in this area.

The successful re-integration of prisoners is central to preventing recidivism. The priority recommendations of the National Economic and Social Forum (2001) report on the re-integration of prisoners include:

- a) An increase in the use of non-custodial options;
- b) An increased emphasis on re-integration throughout the prison system;

- c) The introduction of Positive Sentence Management, involving all stakeholders;
- d) The development of more planned and integrated after-care for prisoners on release;
- e) An end to discrimination on the basis of a criminal record, bar exceptional circumstances; and
- f) An increase in data gathering, monitoring and independent evaluation to better inform policy development (NESF, 2001).

The report supports a three pronged approach to re-integration focusing on the development of a national policy, the development of services and facilities to aid re-integration at individual prisons and a focus on the individual prisoner and positive sentence management (O'Donnell, 2002). The National Crime Council are aware that the Irish Prison Service are setting up a Working Group on Positive Sentence Management in autumn, 2002.

At time of writing the Irish Prison Service and the Probation and Welfare Service are finalising the details of a service level agreement, which will lead to providing a more seamless rehabilitation process for offenders. However, there is still no statutory responsibility on either agency to provide aftercare to offenders, following release. In the National Crime Council's view there is a real need to provide the necessary support structures for ex-prisoners to aid their re-integration.

7.5 CHILDREN DETENTION CENTRES

The view was expressed to the National Crime Council that there is a continued need for the provision of education and skills training for young offenders who are detained, on remand or on community sanction. Prior to their convictions, young offenders have often had problems in school in terms of behaviour and as a result often find that they are not accepted into ordinary schools. This policy encourages early school leaving by those who are already at high risk of doing so. Alternative education must be provided for these young people, to ensure their right to education under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Article 28: Education, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The child has the right to education; the State has a duty to make primary education compulsory and free to all and to take measures to develop different forms of secondary education and to make this accessible to all children (Department of Health and Children, 2000).

It is the belief of the National Crime Council that to uphold these rights, where possible, young detainees should be given the same access to education (in terms of hours and diversity of curriculum) as young people who attend regular schools. In addition, these young offenders require intensive personal support to ensure heightened educational achievements. Corresponding educational facilities should be provided in the community.

A final issue was raised with regard to children detention centres, in that some young offenders who are on short-term temporary release from the centres “wreak untold havoc” in the community. The increase in anti-social and disruptive behaviour is noticeable when certain young offenders are released for short periods (e.g. weekends or holidays). It was expressed that these young people require greater levels of supervision while on short-term temporary release and that it may be possible for the staff in the Children Detention Centres to liaise with appropriate locally based organisations to provide this supervision.

7.6 NON-CUSTODIAL SANCTIONS

The lack of adequate facilities and spaces in Children Detention Centres has been highlighted persistently in the Courts and by the media in recent months. This issue together with the assertion that detention doesn’t work, adds strength to the argument that alternative non-custodial sanctions must be developed for young offenders. Part 9 of the Children Act, 2001 outlines a number of community based sanctions that will be available to the Courts when sentencing Children (aged 12 – 18). There are 61 Sections within this Part of the Act, only nine of which were commenced in May, 2002. The National Crime Council highlights the importance of the complete commencement of Part 9 of the Children Act, 2001 and recommends that the necessary funding and resources (particularly for the Probation and Welfare Service and the Department of Education and Science) are provided to ensure the commencement of the remaining Sections as quickly as possible.

It was encouraging to note that in our consultations where the debate focused on the ‘punishment’, the overriding view was that the offender – juvenile or adult – should receive the necessary supports to divert from a life of crime. Whilst a custodial sentence has its place in the criminal justice system, so too do a range of alternatives to imprisonment. The Final Report of the Expert Group on the Probation and Welfare Service noted that:

“despite the widespread official and public endorsement of non-custodial sanctions, in practice the bulk of additional funding for both preventing and responding to crime has been allocated to the Gardaí, the prisons and places of detention” (Government of Ireland, 1999: p. 23).

The National Crime Council supports the expansion of non-custodial sentences for adult offenders, emphasising the need for a rehabilitative focus to all such sanctions. In this regard the National Crime Council endorses the recommendations put forward in the Final Report of the Expert Group on the Probation and Welfare Service (1999).

PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A determined effort must be made across all agencies of the criminal justice system to operate in a more open, transparent and accountable manner (p. 48).
2. The agencies that make up the criminal justice system in Ireland must provide accurate, up-to-date statistics on their activities and conduct regular independent reviews of their procedures, to ensure they are at all times functioning in a planned and informed manner (p. 48).
3. The Gardaí must build upon the ongoing community policing structures. Models being developed here, such as the Community Policing Forums and in neighbouring jurisdictions (e.g. Northern Ireland and England and Wales) could provide useful guidelines (p. 50).
4. A mechanism needs to be found by which members of the Judiciary can gain a deeper understanding of the effect particular types of criminal activity, such as drug dealing, can have on an area (p. 51).
5. The National Crime Council recognises the importance of developing links between the 'closed prison environment' and the wider community and urges the Irish Prison Service to further develop and expand their work in this area (p. 51).
6. There is a real need to provide support structures for ex-prisoners to help aid their re-integration (p. 52).
7. The National Crime Council highlights the importance of the complete commencement of Part 9 of the Children Act, 2001 and recommends that the necessary funding and resources (particularly for the Probation and Welfare Service and the Department of Education and Science) are provided to ensure the commencement of the remaining Sections as quickly as possible (p. 53).
8. The National Crime Council supports the expansion of non-custodial sanctions, emphasising the need for a rehabilitative focus to all such sanctions (p. 53).

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

1. How can the criminal justice system become more transparent and accountable?
2. What should a community policing approach involve and is community policing relevant in the Irish context?
3. What should the focus of the criminal justice system be – punishment or rehabilitation?

Section Eight
Youth Services and Youth Needs

Section Eight

Youth Services and Youth Needs

8.1 YOUTH WORK

The Youth Work Act, 2001 defines youth work as:

“a planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young persons through voluntary participation and which is complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training, and provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations.”

There is a huge variety of youth services provided by a range of organisations, including national and local youth work organisations. The Department of Education and Science are responsible for the provision of funding to youth services through the Youth Affairs Section of the Department. Provisions in the Youth Work Act, 2001 will allow for greater co-ordination of youth activities.

It was highlighted to the National Crime Council that diversity in the type of youth activities and youth providers is important, as different activities appeal to different young people. The distinctiveness of the different youth services is more important than having one single umbrella group managing youth provision.

The role of youth work in preventing youth offending was highlighted during our community hearings:

“Young offenders have no stake, ownership or citizenship and this is inter-generational. We need to break the cycle by giving young people a stake in communities that want them”.

It was further suggested that specific street based youth work can engage these young people and instill this sense of belonging as well as providing a diversion from anti-social behaviour and substance misuse.

8.2 TARGETING YOUNG PEOPLE IN NEED

The young people who are in greatest need of support, advice and recreational outlets are often the most difficult to engage and the most difficult to work with. As a result the most vulnerable and the most difficult young people often fall through the system. It is essential that we learn about successful youth projects, to ensure that a body of knowledge highlighting ‘best practice’ can be developed. Innovative projects and innovative ways of engaging young people must be explored and funding for youth services must make provision for process evaluation that will allow for a continual review of the individual programmes. It was highlighted to the National Crime Council that the lack of available locally based research and statistics can hinder the planning and effect of youth work efforts:

“There is a lack of research on actual local needs. Services are being provided without a needs analysis being carried out. What plans that do exist are being developed in isolation and there is an overall lack of resources for evaluation” (Youth Worker at one of the Community Hearings).

8.3 FUNDING AND RESOURCES

Funding in the areas of youth and community work is often provided on an annual basis or for a fixed two or three year timeframe covering the period of a pilot project. This hinders the scope of projects and the motivation of youth programmes to develop long-term strategies. Adequate funding for successful youth work projects must be committed in the long term with multi-annual funding available for services that are shown to be effective.

Contributors from the youth sector at the community hearings highlighted that it is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit and retain staff to work in the youth sector and the short term work contracts are yet another disincentive to potential youth workers. The Government must be proactive in promoting the benefits of youth work and funding for programmes must be flexible to allow for the establishment of incentives to make this type of work more attractive. With the decline in the levels of volunteerism locally and increasing staff shortages, the youth work sector is currently facing a challenging few years.

8.4 LANGUAGE DESCRIBING YOUNG PEOPLE

The terms we use to describe young people who require substantial support and advice tend to have negative connotations attached to them, such as ‘disadvantaged’ or ‘marginalised’. Public policy documents use these terms widely, while community based initiatives and youth programmes that target these young people are more sensitive to using this type of language, as it labels the young people who participate in them. This issue was raised in a number of submissions to the National Crime Council.

Reference has been made earlier to the risks inherent in using terms that might adversely reflect on the positive intent of an otherwise worthy initiative. In our view, the language we use in policy documents and in how people in positions of authority or influence address young people, needs to be more inclusive or we risk further alienating those we most want to help and support.

8.5 RURAL YOUTH NEEDS

The issues which cause problems for young people in the rural setting are often somewhat different from those of urban youth. In particular issues of isolation, loneliness and a dearth of accessible facilities can exacerbate the problems which young people face generally.

Submissions to the National Crime Council highlighted that the needs of rural young people must be recognised and acknowledged by funding bodies.

Many towns and villages are too small to be eligible for funding to provide a range of services and young people must travel to larger more urbanised settings to access facilities and services. The lack of public transport in rural areas adds to the problems of access. A strategy for rural youth work produced by the Kerry Diocesan Youth Service in association with the Irish Youth Foundation highlights the pressing need for the development of a rural youth work policy, claiming that:

“one of the factors contributing to the lack of current policy in the area is the remoteness of policy makers from the reality of rural youth work” (O’Dwyer, 2001: p.11).

The report outlines that services must be brought to communities and there is a need for *“more intensive, quality youth service based locally and accessible to the community” (p. 7).*

8.6 GAPS IN SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The lack of affordable and/or accessible facilities for young people in local communities was highlighted in almost all of the consultations which we undertook. Whilst recent funding commitments have been allocated to address this issue, those working at a local level asserted that local facilities were not being utilised to their full potential. This was raised with particular regard to school facilities (often the best or only facilities for young people in some communities) which are not generally available when the school is closed. Thus, during holiday periods when young people are most in need of recreation, these facilities are not available.

There is a need for more intensive street level outreach work with ‘at risk’ young people, as a pre-cursor to engagement in wider youth services and activities. Extra effort is required to engage young people ‘at risk’ as:

“research has demonstrated that those young people who are most at risk of early school leaving, drug use and crime, are least likely to participate in youth service activities” (as cited in Quinn, 2002: p. 693).

Whilst many youth groups and organisations promote this kind of work, it is often difficult to employ staff to work the unsocial hours required.

Yet another important issue that was raised at many of the community consultations is that services for young people in the areas of drug and alcohol treatment are severely limited and under-funded, highlighting the real need for services in the area of alcohol abuse, while drug treatment for young people is virtually non-existent. The National Crime Council

supports the view that these issues need to be addressed. The Regional Drugs Task Forces will be developing local and regional policies to cover the areas of alcohol and drug services and facilities. This should provide a greater insight into local needs and develop appropriate strategies to address the issues raised.

During our consultations, it was highlighted to us that youth homelessness is a real and increasing problem in our more urbanised towns and cities. There is an urgent need to provide emergency accommodation and affordable accommodation specifically for young people. State services do not function outside 'official' hours, which can cause huge problems in crisis situations. At one of our community hearings it was noted that:

"These young people live chaotic lives and they do not fit into the nine to five structure of the public service".

The State is obliged to provide for young people up until the age of 18 years. It was pointed out to us that there is little or no support for this particular group of vulnerable young people once they reach the age of majority. The State must work towards providing a continuum of provision despite age.

PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is essential that we learn about successful youth projects, to ensure that a body of knowledge highlighting 'best practice' can be developed. Innovative projects and innovative ways of engaging young people must be explored and funding for youth services must make provision for process evaluation that will allow for a continual review of the individual programmes (p. 56).
2. Adequate funding for successful youth work projects must be committed in the long term with multi-annual funding available for services that are shown to be effective. (p. 57).
3. The needs of rural young people must be recognised and acknowledged by funding bodies (p. 57/58).
4. The National Crime Council supports the view that there is a need to develop accessible drug and alcohol treatment facilities and services (p. 58/59).
5. The State is obliged to provide for young people up until the age of 18 years. Once they reach the age of majority there is little or no support available. The State must work towards providing a continuum of provision despite age (p. 59).

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

1. Should independent evaluation be a requirement of all youth work initiatives?
2. Do we require more research into youth needs in Ireland?
3. Does rural youth work require a somewhat different focus than urban youth work?
4. Is multi-annual funding for youth services required?
5. How can we address the lack of services for young people in the areas of drug and alcohol treatment and homelessness?

Section Nine
Family Support in Ireland

Section Nine

Family Support in Ireland

The role and status of the family is central to the life of the child, to their future development and future opportunities. When born into a family where poverty dominates and unemployment is intergenerational, the life opportunities of the child are severely hindered. The National Crime Council believes that support for families in need has an integral role to play in the area of social crime prevention. An overview of the submissions we heard in this area are outlined in this Section and are supported where appropriate with research evidence. (A brief overview of ongoing initiatives in this area is provided in Appendix Four, p. 104).

9.1 VULNERABLE FAMILIES

The risk factors outlined in Section Four highlighted the vulnerable position that young people can be placed in as a result of the parenting they receive and as a result of their family background. International research has highlighted consistently a number of family related variables that correlate with young offending (see 4.4, p. 31). Children who experience a family dominated by a number of the factors outlined in Section Four are placed in a vulnerable position in terms of their future life opportunities. Furthermore, through the process of role modelling, these children are likely in later years to form families that are dominated by their personal experiences. The intergenerational nature of family disadvantage and dysfunction is a cycle that is difficult to break. In urban areas of disadvantage, there is often a concentration of families for whom life is a daily struggle.

The traditional family structures in Ireland have undergone major changes in the past two decades. Most significantly there has been a huge increase in the number of lone parent families. 'Lone parents' is a generic term encompassing non-marital childbearing, marital breakdown and widowed parents. It is the increase in non-marital births which has led to the greatest increase in this category, births outside of marriage in the year 2000 accounted for 32 per cent of all births that year (Fahey and Russell, 2001).

Lone parent families in Ireland are among the most vulnerable in our society. The characteristics of lone parents highlight their disadvantaged standing in comparison to the population at large. Both unmarried and separated lone mothers have considerably lower levels of educational attainment and are more likely to come from semi-skilled and unskilled social class backgrounds. Lone parents and particularly unmarried lone parents are over-represented in Local Authority housing. Lone parents who entered parenthood at a very young age were found to have low educational attainment, experience greater levels of unemployment and come from disadvantaged backgrounds. These parents were more likely to feel socially isolated and to suffer from psychological distress. (Fahey and Russell, 2001) The risk of poverty for lone parents is almost three times that for childless couples and one and a half times that for couples with children (McKeown and Sweeney, 2001). It is clear

that lone parents require substantial social and family supports as well as the financial contributions they receive.

During our consultations, the vulnerable position of families from marginalised groups in Irish society was also highlighted, for example, Travellers, Asylum Seekers, Refugees and other Non-Nationals. The importance of identifying the specific needs of these family groups was outlined to prevent the further alienation of marginalised children and young people from mainstream society.

9.2 PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

It is interesting to note that in some of the recent high profile incidents involving young offenders, many were quick to blame parents for their lack of responsibility and their inability to control their children. A number of submissions received by the National Crime Council highlighted that it is important to realise that many of these parents had themselves unstable upbringings. Children and young people are being raised by parents who have drink, drug and debt problems. They are unable to cope with their own lives and looking after and controlling their children is yet another area in which they have found it difficult to manage. We are not suggesting that these parents do not care for their children, it is quite the opposite. They are often very concerned but do not have the skills and resources to deal with the troublesome or challenging behaviour of their children.

These parents need support and advice, most especially these parents require skills training. Parenting programmes have been successful internationally and are most likely to prove effective with children under 10, showing a 75 per cent success rate with children under 9, and only a 25 per cent success rate with adolescents (Utting et al, 1993).

9.3 FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

There are a number of ongoing initiatives in Ireland which provide skills training to parents. The Community Mothers Programmes developed by the Health Boards are home visiting programmes for new mothers, with an evaluation of the Eastern Health Board Community Mothers Programme showing sustained success over a seven year period (Johnson et al 2000).

The Family Affairs Unit in the Department of Social and Family Affairs are currently developing a national parenting skills programme, which when implemented should help to equip current and future parents with basic parenting skills. The implementation of such a programme at a local level could have the potential to make a huge difference to the lives of parents and children.

The submissions to the National Crime Council highlighted a number of deficiencies in family support services. Many agencies already have a presence at a local level and work with parents, including; the local health board; local social welfare office; community organisations; partnership companies etc. Different agencies, Departments and service providers often work independently of each other. This can lead to:

- a) a duplication of service, in that different agencies are providing the same service to the same individuals and families;
- b) a lack of co-ordination allows gaps in specific services to develop; and
- c) the inefficient use of resources – sharing knowledge and sharing resources could lead to interventions having a greater impact.

The National Crime Council believes that whilst the development of family resource centres by the Department of Social and Family Affairs may go some way to improving local co-ordination in the communities in which they are placed, there is a need for innovative thinking and a radical change in the way organisations operate in the area of family services. Issues around confidentiality need to be revisited, information should be shared between Government agencies, if this information could enhance service delivery to vulnerable children and families. Furthermore, there should be greater levels of co-ordination between agencies to ensure that families are not being asked to provide the same information on numerous occasions by different agencies.

The National Crime Council also emphasises the importance of identifying problems as early as possible, this requires greater levels of interaction between local health workers, schools, parents, family members and children. The provision of childcare, parental support groups, parenting and pre-parent training are some ways in which parents and children can interact with service providers from when children are very young. The continued development of such initiatives is essential.

PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is clear to the National Crime Council that lone parents require substantial social and family supports as well as the financial contributions they receive (p. 62/63).
2. Government Departments and agencies must identify and meet the needs of a diverse range of families, including Travellers, Refugees and Asylum Seekers, to prevent the further alienation of marginalised children and young people from mainstream society (p. 63).
3. Parental training programmes are required to provide parents with the skills to manage the challenging and disruptive behaviour of their children (p. 63).
4. There is a need for innovative thinking and a radical change in the way organisations operate in the area of family services (p. 64).
5. The National Crime Council emphasises the importance of identifying problems as early as possible, this requires greater levels of interaction between local health workers, schools, parents, family members and children (p. 64).

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

1. Is the State providing adequately for vulnerable families?
2. Is there a breakdown in parental responsibility in Ireland today?
3. Who should have the lead role in providing family support services?
4. Do State agencies need to improve the co-ordination of their services at a local level? If so, how can this be achieved?
5. What can be done to address the lack of family support services outside of 'official hours'?

Section Ten
Education and Early Intervention

Section Ten

Education and Early Intervention

10.1 EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE

The importance of educational attainment in the creation of life opportunities is well established. The National Anti-Poverty Strategy Review (2001) recognises the key role educational disadvantage plays in maintaining cycles of disadvantage:

“underachievement at school results in social difficulties that can lead to a life of uncertainty, marginalisation, and dependence on the structures of social assistance. Lack of qualifications can combine with unemployment, dependence on social welfare, accommodation difficulties and health problems, and create a situation where various aspects of disadvantage become mutually reinforcing” (NAPS, 2001).

Children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to leave school early and less likely to progress to third level education than their more affluent counterparts. In 1999, the average level of investment in education for each pupil in primary school was €3,229, each pupil in secondary school was €4,628 and for each third level student was €10,025. Ireland’s level of investment in education is far below the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) average (OECD averages respectively, €4,635; €6,228 and €10,662), with the greatest deficits apparent at primary and secondary levels (Harvey, 2001: p. 21).

The Irish education system has not been able to provide equality of opportunity for all children and young people and *“children who are poor constitute the majority of those who do not fully benefit from the education system”* (NAPS, 2001: p.29). For many of these pupils primary school or the early years of secondary school is the closest they will get to a third level education. Therefore, in financial terms, the level of investment in the education of a child from a more disadvantaged background is likely to be substantially less than for a child from a more affluent background. This inequity needs to be addressed, with greater resources provided for early education, primary level and post primary level, with particular emphasis on a co-ordinated, targeted response in areas of disadvantage.

10.2 LINKING EDUCATION AND CRIME

Studies that have profiled young and adult offenders, including longitudinal studies (in the UK and the US) have found that those who offend are more likely to have low educational attainment. In Ireland, no such longitudinal evidence exists, however, some information has been published on the background characteristics of our prison population.

O’Mahony (1997) found that in a sample of the prisoners (N=108) in Mountjoy Prison in 1996, 80 per cent (86 prisoners) of the prisoners had left school before the age of 16 years, with only 7.4 per cent (eight prisoners) staying at school beyond the age of 16 years. None

of the prisoners in the sample had attended third level education. One third of the prisoners had never attended school higher than primary school or special school level, and only one quarter of the prisoners had ever taken a public examination, some of whom had completed their examinations in prison. In addition to these findings, the study also reported that 63 per cent of the sample claimed that they had truanted regularly from school.

More recent research conducted in Wheatfield Place of Detention in West Dublin, outlines that the levels of educational attainment in a sample of prisoners. In the study, 2.4 per cent never attended school, 36.3 per cent attended first year in second level (typically for a few weeks), 12.9 per cent attended second year in second level (typically not completed). Only 16.1 per cent sat the Junior Certificate, with 4.8 per cent having sat the Leaving Certificate (Education & Living, The Irish Times, 21 May, 2002).

It is clear from these findings that offenders at the hard end of the criminal justice system tend to have extremely low levels of educational attainment, which may not have contributed to their offending behaviour, but will have helped prevent them from engaging the life opportunities that are available in Irish society. The National Crime Council recommends that substantial baseline research be carried out to develop further insights into the characteristics of offenders in Ireland. This research should involve both retrospective studies with known offenders and longitudinal prospective studies with children and young people.

10.3 TACKLING EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE

A number of initiatives have been ongoing since the early 1990s to tackle the problems of educational disadvantage. A comprehensive outline of these initiatives is contained in Appendix Four, p. 104, including:

- a) Home/School Liaison Scheme;
- b) Breaking the Cycle;
- c) Giving Children an Even Break by Tackling Disadvantage;
- d) School Completion Initiative – combining the Stay in School Retention Initiative and 8-15 Year Old Early School Leaving;
- e) Youthreach; and the
- f) Early Start Programme.

The most recent of these initiatives “Giving Children an Even Break by Tackling Disadvantage”, involves the appointment of an Educational Disadvantage Committee, a Forum to address Educational Disadvantage and a Director of Programmes. This new structure is trying to bring greater co-ordination to tackling disadvantage at primary level. As

Ms. Ann Louise Gilligan, Director of the Educational Disadvantage Centre commented at the National Forum On Primary Education in July 2002:

“With all the best will in the world, education disadvantage cannot be tackled with a fragmented collection of centralised projects, no matter how innovative or successful they are in isolation” (Irish Examiner, 02 July, 2002).

A number of specific issues were raised during the course of our consultations, including:

- a) The negative effect that labelling a school as ‘disadvantaged’ has on the pupils in the school, the staff and the reputation of the school in the wider community;
- b) The absolute need to extend the reduced pupil : teacher ratio to all classes in a school that has been designated as ‘disadvantaged’. The current system allows this only from junior infants to second class; and
- c) Issues around staffing – it is becoming increasingly difficult to get teachers to work in schools that are located in the most deprived areas of our cities and towns. This can have a huge effect on pupils, who are been taught by inexperienced and unqualified teachers. In recent press statements the INTO have highlighted that one in twenty positions in Irish primary schools are filled by personnel who are not qualified primary teachers (INTO, 2002). There is also the issue of staff turnover that leads to a disruption in the class momentum.

The Department of Education and Science must consider introducing incentives which would encourage teachers to remain in schools that they have designated as ‘disadvantaged’. Whilst financial bonuses may be appropriate, other methods should also be considered. It is also clear that a drive to recruit and train new people to the teaching profession must be undertaken.

10.4 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Studies internationally have shown that the earlier we can engage a child’s interest in education, the more likely the child is to succeed in this regard, and can even play a role (much later in life) in terms of crime prevention (Utting et al, 1993). The Department of Education and Science has established a pre-school programme which is operational in “designated areas of disadvantage” – Early Start (see Appendix Four).

The White Paper on Early Childhood Education (Department of Education and Science, 1999) sets out the Government policy on education for young children. This Paper reiterates the need for children to begin their education as early as possible and that services should combine both care and education. The White Paper also highlights that Early Childhood

education is of particular benefit to children from disadvantaged backgrounds (Department of Education and Science, 1999). The current Programme for Government outlines the Government's commitments in this area:

"To ensure that early-education services deliver the maximum benefit for all children, we will introduce a national early-education, training, support and certification system and expand State funded early education places. Priority will be given to a new national system of funded early-education for children with intellectual disabilities and children in areas of concentrated disadvantage" (Department of the Taoiseach, 2002).

10.5 EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING

Figures on early school leaving (based on the academic year 1999/2000), show that there is a retention rate of 82 per cent, but there is now a consistent three per cent of school going young people who leave school without any qualifications. Boys were slightly more likely to leave with no qualifications than girls. In general, those who left with no qualifications were more likely to come from an unskilled manual background than a higher professional, lower professional and salaried employees background. (NESF, 2002).

Another recent report has highlighted that those who leave school with no qualifications or having completed only the Junior Certificate were substantially disadvantaged in comparison to their counterparts who completed their Leaving Certificate. Furthermore, in relative terms, those who left school early did not gain from the recent economic boom to the same degree as those who completed the Leaving Certificate. (O'Shea and Williams, 2001) Early school leaving limits ones ability to avail of these life chances and can lead to social exclusion and marginalisation.

Whilst the NESF report highlighted that in absolute terms there has been little change in the percentage of young people who left school early between 1996 and 1999, many of the current initiatives are targeting very young children and thus the positive effects of this work will not be evident for a number of years. The National Crime Council is aware of the new School Completion Initiative that begins in a number of schools in the academic year 2002/2003 (see Appendix Four) and recommends that the Department of Education and Science also develop interventions aimed at specific groups, such as the Travelling community and rural young people, as well as expanding the current provisions.

A number of the contributors during the consultation process highlighted that the Department of Education and Science needs to introduce a more flexible learning and teaching environment for those young people who are 'at risk' of leaving school early. This flexible education should involve a varied curriculum including vocational education, social

and personal development and skills training as well as the more traditional academic aspects. It would also be of huge benefit if these programmes were linked with more community based projects, which could further challenge young people in academic and non academic ways.

The National Crime Council supports these views, recognising that the current system alienates rather than engages young people with challenging behaviours and disrupted lives. These young people often require support and healing in their personal life before they can partake in the routine of the education system. Innovative projects with a sound community basis would allow for personal work with young people in the community setting, to run in parallel with a flexible educational syllabus.

The establishment of the National Educational Welfare Board (as provided in the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000) will bring greater focus to the complex issue of early school leaving. Submissions to the National Crime Council reinforced that it is essential that independent school attendance officers are appointed to oversee the record of school non-attendance, particularly in areas where the problem of early school leaving is concentrated. It is hoped that the appointment of Education Welfare Officers will provide a more appropriate service which can deliver a same day response to absenteeism.

10.6 ACCESS TO THIRD LEVEL EDUCATION

Participation in third level education nationally is 36 per cent, only 14 per cent of the children of unskilled manual workers attend college, compared to 89 per cent of children of professionals. Furthermore those from the lower socio-economic groups are more likely to enter the Institutes of Technologies than the University Sector. The rates of access to higher education in the postal code areas of Dublin city ranges from 4.8 per cent in the Inner City (Dublin 1) to 56 per cent in the more affluent suburbs (Dublin 14) (Harvey, 2001: p. 17).

All Universities in the State have developed access programmes that provide college places to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Institutes of Technology have more recently followed suit. Whilst such initiatives are welcomed, the fundamental problems that lead to low participation rates at third level by those from certain backgrounds begin in the early school career. These problems need to be tackled at a much earlier stage in the educational career of the young person.

10.7 THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICE

The *National Educational Psychological Service* (NEPS) was set up by the Department of Education & Science in 1999, to co-ordinate the re-organisation and expansion of the psychological services to schools in the State. NEPS staff work throughout the country in ten regions (based on the Health Board divisions).

In schools with high levels of disruptive and difficult pupils and pupils with specific learning needs, the intervention of and advice of an Educational Psychologist is required to ensure that the appropriate resources are put in place to meet the needs of these children. Currently, many schools find it extremely difficult to get children and young people assessed. In many cases outside funding is being sourced to fund private assessments. In our opinion this is unacceptable.

The Service must take into account the acute needs of certain areas. At the moment each school is allocated two assessments per one hundred pupils regardless of whether the school is based in a multiply deprived area or an affluent suburb. An example outlined below, is one area of acute need – North Inner City of Dublin.

McCarran conducted a study among all of the primary school pupils in the North East Inner City area (N = 1,302) to identify those with behavioural problems. The Rutter Behavioural Checklist was administered to all of the pupils and it was found that 371 pupils were identified within the clinical range, thus exhibiting significant behaviour problems. The more detailed Teachers Report of the Child Behaviour Checklist was completed for these 371 pupils and it was found that 163 children were identified as having serious emotional and behavioural problems (Integrated Services Process, 2001). These findings highlight the acute needs of the schools in this area, which contain a high concentration of children with behavioural and emotional problems.

Areas of multiple disadvantage require intensive supports in the area of child psychological services. The need for early intervention with children who are having difficulties depends on the early identification of problems. The National Crime Council recommends that NEPS prioritise the needs of such areas, when deciding on the allocation of Educational Psychologists to schools.

10.8 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE AND INTER-AGENCY WORKING

The Department of Education and Science has traditionally been a highly centralised body, with their only local representation manifested in teachers and school principals. As a result locally based inter-agency bodies have always had difficulty engaging with the Department in a meaningful way at a local level.

The Department of Education and Science have launched plans to establish eight regional offices throughout the country, based on the health board regions. The regional offices will;

- a) act as a first point of contact for schools, agencies, voluntary organisations and communities with the Department;
- b) gather and disseminate information;
- c) support locally based initiatives to combat disadvantage and provide for special needs;
- d) represent the Department on local structures, including the Local Drugs Task Forces; and
- e) co-ordinate education related services locally (Department of Education and Science, 2002b).

These offices will take over much of the operational work of the Department, who will shift their focus from *“day-to-day operational matters to the strategic concerns of policy development, forward planning and evaluation”* (Department of Education and Science, 2002b). The regional offices will also act as a focal point for educational services such as the National Educational Psychological Services, the Education Welfare Service, the new Special Education Council and existing offices of the Department’s Inspectorate (Department of Education and Science, 2001b).

The National Crime Council hopes that the new regional offices will provide a mechanism which will make educational services more accessible to the community. A priority of these offices should be to gather accurate statistics from schools that can be made available at a local level and can feed into local research and project planning. The Department must put in place a regional service which is available to engage in a meaningful way, and which has the ability to make commitments at a local level and deliver on these commitments.

PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In financial terms the level of investment in the education of a child from a more disadvantaged background is likely to be substantially less than for a child from a more affluent background. This inequity needs to be addressed, with greater resources provided for early education, primary level and post primary level, with particular emphasis on a co-ordinated, targeted response in areas of disadvantage (p. 68).

2. The National Crime Council recommends that substantial baseline research be carried out to develop further insights into the characteristics of offenders in Ireland. This research should involve both retrospective studies with known offenders and longitudinal prospective studies with children and young people (p. 69).
3. There is an absolute need to extend the reduced pupil: teacher ratio to all classes in a school that has been designated as 'disadvantaged' (p. 70).
4. The Department of Education and Science should consider introducing incentives that would encourage teachers to remain in schools that have been "designated disadvantaged" (p. 70)
5. The Department of Education and Science needs to introduce and support a more flexible learning and teaching environment for those young people who are 'at risk' of leaving school early (p. 71/72).
6. The current education system alienates rather than engages young people with challenging behaviours and disrupted lives. These young people often require support and healing in their personal life before they can partake in the routine of the education system (p. 72).
7. The National Educational Psychological Service must rethink the allocation of resources to designated disadvantaged schools, where there is often high levels of acute need. Greater levels of resources are required in these areas (p. 73).
8. The new Regional Education Office Structure must provide a mechanism that makes educational services more accessible to the community at large. These offices should have the ability to make commitments at a local level and deliver on these commitments (p. 74).
9. A priority of these Regional Offices should be to gather accurate statistics from schools that can be made available at a local level and can feed into local research and project planning (p. 74).

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

1. How can the State provide an equitable education system?
2. Should there be a State backed compulsory pre-school education system?
3. What role has research played in determining Government policy on education?
4. What can the Department of Education and Science do to attract teachers to work in the more difficult schools and to make a long term commitment to these schools?
5. Are schools and teachers being asked to solve problems that are not of their own making?

Provisional Recommendations

Provisional Recommendations

SECTION TWO GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES THAT IMPACT ON CRIME

1. Government Policy in the area of crime prevention must involve a range of policy initiatives in the short, medium and long-term to address the complexity of the factors that give rise to crime and anti-social behaviour (p. 8).
2. A comprehensive crime prevention strategy must dovetail with the work of all Government Departments and agencies and must be independently evaluated and reviewed (p. 8).
3. It is the view of the National Crime Council that steps must be taken by all Government Departments and agencies to develop up-to-date, accessible and usable statistics that can aid national policy formulation and research (p. 9).
4. The important role of early intervention and diversion from the criminal justice system, as provided in the Children Act, 2001, should be adopted in all public policy and legislation (p. 11/12).
5. The National Crime Council recommends that the Government provide the necessary funding for the development of the required structures, to complete the implementation of the Children Act, 2001 (p. 12).
6. There is a need for ongoing independent evaluation of existing initiatives before a new initiative is brought forward and a continuation plan from the pilot phase to the mainstreamed project must be developed, to ensure a seamless transition from one phase to the next (p. 13).

SECTION THREE CRIME PREVENTION IN IRELAND

7. It was clear from our consultations that a number of Government Departments, as well as the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform can do more to contribute to crime prevention measures, especially in terms of greater co-ordination of their work both within their own agencies and with others (p. 18).
8. A clear, mutually accepted definition of crime prevention should be drawn up across all Government Departments and agencies that have a clear and significant role to play in this area (p. 18).
9. Government Departments and agencies should be obliged to 'crime proof' all new policies, ensuring they are assessed for their potential positive or negative impact on crime (p. 18).

10. The National Crime Council recommends that extra funding is allocated to the Probation and Welfare Service to allow it to expand its remit to young people who are 'at risk' of offending, thus enhancing the opportunity for early intervention (p. 24).
11. The National Crime Council recommends the development of a statutory Probation and Welfare Service (p. 25).

SECTION FOUR UNDERLYING CAUSES OF CRIME

12. The National Crime Council regards anti-social and criminal behaviour as important issues that should be investigated in the forthcoming National Longitudinal Study of Children (p. 30).

SECTION FIVE LOCAL CRIME PREVENTION – THE PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

13. Successful responses to crime are beyond the competency of any single agency. A partnership model allows for the development of a more holistic approach to crime and crime prevention, in which expertise, knowledge and resources can be shared (p. 34).
14. An agreed crime prevention strategy must be developed between Government Departments, Government agencies, Voluntary organisations, Community organisations and community representatives. This will ensure the development of a common approach based on agreed principles (p. 35).
15. Crime prevention strategies should emphasise the importance of early intervention (p. 35).
16. To ensure success, partnerships in the area of crime prevention, must have strong political backing and substantial resource investment. There must be a high level of support and commitment from management within the various agencies involved (p. 36).
17. Effective crime prevention strategies will require the development of short, medium and long-term goals and will require the full commitment of all agencies to realise these goals. Crime prevention partnerships should work towards providing long-term solutions to crime problems, and agencies must be able to make commitments in the long-term (p. 36).
18. With the proliferation of local partnership structures, agencies will have to change to meet the demands of interagency working (p. 36).
19. Public services will always demand more resources, but agencies must not focus solely on this issue. Lack of funding is an easy response to demands for a better service. Agencies need to rationalise their services, to complement one another and become more effective (p. 37).

20. Partnership working in the area of crime prevention requires legislative underpinning (p. 37).
21. Locally based strategies should be based on up-to-date data, to ensure that an accurate assessment of local needs can be made. Independent evaluation (both process and outcome) should play an integral role in all crime prevention partnerships (p. 37).
22. The National Crime Council proposes the development of crime prevention partnerships in Ireland. The remit of these partnerships should be to focus on tackling local crime problems and the underlying causes of crime, while working closely to support current initiatives, as well as developing new initiatives (p. 37-39).

SECTION SIX COMMUNITY/NEIGHBOURHOOD INFLUENCE OF CRIME

23. The National Crime Council highlights the value of undertaking locally based crime victimisation surveys, which would shed more light on the distribution of victimisation rates at a local level (p. 42).
24. There is a need for Government Departments and agencies to make available data at a local level, based on the same area boundaries, to allow for more accurate planning of services and initiatives (p. 42/43).
25. Policies that are developed centrally need to be flexible so as to allow them to be tailored to the specific needs of each local area (p. 43/44).
26. At a policy level certain language is needed to differentiate exactly where or who is being targeted, however, at a community level during the implementation of policy the language used should be sensitive to any negative implications that may arise (p. 44).

SECTION SEVEN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

27. A determined effort must be made across all agencies of the criminal justice system to operate in a more open, transparent and accountable manner (p. 48).
28. The agencies that make up the criminal justice system in Ireland must provide accurate, up-to-date statistics on their activities and conduct regular independent reviews of their procedures, to ensure they are at all times functioning in a planned and informed manner (p. 48).
29. The Gardaí must build upon the ongoing community policing structures. Models being developed here, such as the Community Policing Forums and in neighbouring jurisdictions (e.g. Northern Ireland and England and Wales) could provide useful guidelines (p. 50).

30. A mechanism needs to be found by which members of the Judiciary can gain a deeper understanding of the effect particular types of criminal activity, such as drug dealing, can have on an area (p. 51).
31. The National Crime Council recognises the importance of developing links between the 'closed prison environment' and the wider community and urges the Irish Prison Service to further develop and expand their work in this area (p. 51).
32. There is a real need to provide support structures for ex-prisoners to help aid their re-integration (p. 52).
33. The National Crime Council highlights the importance of the complete commencement of Part 9 of the Children Act, 2001 and recommends that the necessary funding and resources (particularly for the Probation and Welfare Service and the Department of Education and Science) are provided to ensure the commencement of the remaining Sections as quickly as possible (p. 53).
34. The National Crime Council supports the expansion of non-custodial sanctions, emphasising the need for a rehabilitative focus to all such sanctions (p. 53).

SECTION EIGHT YOUTH SERVICES AND YOUTH NEEDS

35. It is essential that we learn about successful youth projects, to ensure that a body of knowledge highlighting 'best practice' can be developed. Innovative projects and innovative ways of engaging young people must be explored and funding for youth services must make provision for process evaluation that will allow for a continual review of the individual programmes (p. 56).
36. Adequate funding for successful youth work projects must be committed in the long term with multi-annual funding available for services that are shown to be effective. (p. 57).
37. The needs of rural young people must be recognised and acknowledged by funding bodies (p. 57/58).
38. The National Crime Council supports the view that there is a need to develop accessible drug and alcohol treatment facilities (p. 58/59).
39. The State is obliged to provide for young people up until the age of 18 years. Once they reach the age of majority there is little or no support available. The State must work towards providing a continuum of provision despite age (p. 59).

SECTION NINE FAMILY SUPPORT IN IRELAND

40. It is clear to the National Crime Council that lone parents require substantial social and family supports as well as the financial contributions they receive (p. 62/63).
41. Government Departments and agencies must identify and meet the needs of a diverse range of families, including Travellers, Refugees and Asylum Seekers, to prevent the further alienation of marginalised children and young people from mainstream society (p. 63).
42. Parental training programmes are required to provide parents with the skills to manage the challenging and disruptive behaviour of their children (p. 63).
43. There is a need for innovative thinking and a radical change in the way organisations operate in the area of family services (p. 64).
44. The National Crime Council emphasises the importance of identifying problems as early as possible, this requires greater levels of interaction between local health workers, schools, parents, family members and children (p. 64).

SECTION TEN EDUCATION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

45. In financial terms the level of investment in the education of a child from a more disadvantaged background is likely to be substantially less than for a child from a more affluent background. This inequity needs to be addressed, with greater resources provided for early education, primary level and post primary level, with particular emphasis on a co-ordinated, targeted response in areas of disadvantage (p. 68).
46. The National Crime Council recommends that substantial baseline research be carried out to develop further insights into the characteristics of offenders in Ireland. This research should involve both retrospective studies with known offenders and longitudinal prospective studies with children and young people (p. 69).
47. There is an absolute need to extend the reduced pupil : teacher ratio to all classes in a school that has been designated as 'disadvantaged' (p. 70).
48. The Department of Education and Science should consider introducing incentives that would encourage teachers to remain in schools that have been "designated disadvantaged" (p. 70)
49. The Department of Education and Science needs to introduce a more flexible learning and teaching environment for those young people who are 'at risk' of leaving school early (p. 71/72).

50. The current education system alienates rather than engages young people with challenging behaviours and disrupted lives. These young people often require support and healing in their personal life before they can partake in the routine of the education system (p. 72).
51. The National Educational Psychological Service must rethink the allocation of resources to designated disadvantaged schools, where there is often high levels of acute need. Greater levels of resources are required in these areas (p. 73).
52. The new Regional Education Office Structure must provide a mechanism that makes educational services more accessible to the community at large. These offices should have the ability to make commitments at a local level and deliver on these commitments (p. 74).
53. A priority of these Regional Offices should be to gather accurate statistics from schools that can be made available at a local level and can feed into local research and project planning (p. 74).

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Appendix One
Government Departments and
Agencies Consulted

Appendix One

Government Departments and Agencies Consulted

Department of Health and Children

Mr. David Smith

Department of Education and Science

Mr. Eddie Ward

Mr. Tony O'Donovan

Ms. Claire Ryan

Ms. Maire Ni Fhlaitheaitaigh

Ms. Maura Grant

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform

Mr. Paul Murray

Ms. Margaret O'Connor, Childcare Unit

Ms. Michelle Shannon, Crime Division

Mr. David Walker, Crime Division

Mr. Michael O'Neill, Prisons Division

Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs

Ms. Catherine Hazlett, Family Affairs Unit

Mr. Albert O'Donoghue, Family Affairs Unit

Ms. Mary Lloyd, Family Mediation Service

Ms. Tina Stallard

Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation

Ms. Kathleen Stack, Local Development Unit

Department of the Environment and Local Government

Mr. John Cullen, Assistant Secretary

The Irish Prison Service

Mr. Sean Alyward, Director

Mr. Jim Mitchell, Press Officer

Mr. Ned Whelan, Governor of Wheatfield Place of Detention

Ms. Pam Lorenz, Fort Mitchell Education Unit

An Garda Síochána

Chief Superintendent Pat Cregg, Community Relations Section

Inspector Michael Jackson, National Juvenile Office

Inspector Pat McCabe, Community Relations Section

The Probation and Welfare Service

Mr. Martin Tansey, Principal Probation and Welfare Officer (now retired)

Mr. David O'Donovan, Assistant Principal Probation and Welfare Officer

Mr. Vivien Geiran, Assistant Principal Probation and Welfare Officer

National Children's Office

Ms. Frances Spillane, Director

Mr. Michael Kelly, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
Representative in the National Children's Office

Dublin City Council

Mr. Brendan Kenny, Assistant City Manager

Ms. Mairéad Johnston, Housing and Community Development Section

Mr. Peter Finnegan, Director of Community and Enterprise Unit

Area Development Management

Mr. Tony Crooks, Chief Executive Officer

Appendix Two
Local Agencies and Community/Voluntary
Organisations Consulted

Appendix Two

Local Agencies and Community/Voluntary Organisations Consulted

LIMERICK COMMUNITY HEARING

Probation and Welfare Service

Mr. Terry Boyle, Assistant Principal Probation and Welfare Officer

Mr. Sean Moriarty, Senior Probation and Welfare Officer

Ms. Marie Richardson, Probation and Welfare Officer

Ms. Elaine Slattery, Céim agus Céim, Moyross Probation Project

Mr. Larry deCléir, Southhill Outreach Ltd.

Nenagh Reparation Project

Mr. Donal Hurley

Limerick Youth Service

Sr. Joan Bowles, (died tragically in July, 2002)

Ms. Catherine Kelly

The PAUL Partnership

Ms. Claire Walsh, Community Development Link Worker

Limerick RAPID

Ms. Noeline Ryan, on behalf of three RAPID Co-ordinators

Limerick City Development Board

Mr. Pat Dowling, Director of Community and Enterprise Unit

Limerick Chamber of Commerce

Mr. David O'Mahony, President

DUBLIN COMMUNITY HEARING

Inner City Organisations Network (ICON)

Mr. Philip Boyd, Manager

Community Policing Forum (CPF)

Ms. Marie Metcalfe, Co-ordinator

Mr. Johnny Connolly, Criminologist and advisor to CPF

Neighbourhood Youth Project/RIPON

Mr. John Lahart, Co-ordinator

North Inner City Local Drugs Task Force

Mr. Mel MacGiobúin

Dublin Inner City Partnership

Mr. David Connolly, Manager

TULLAMORE COMMUNITY HEARING

An Garda Síochána

Superintendent Peter Wheeler

Mr. James Hennessy, Slí Eile Garda Special Project

Mr. Kevin Farrell, Edenderry Justice Project

Probation and Welfare Service

Mr. David Murray, Senior Probation and Welfare Officer

Offaly County Development Board

Ms. Fiona McCauley

Health Promotion Service of Midland Health Board

Mr. Bill Ebbitt

Ms. Suzanna Knight

Approximately 100 individuals also attended the community hearings and made oral submissions to the National Crime Council. Careful consideration was given to these submissions.

Appendix Three
Crime Prevention Initiatives in Ireland

Appendix Three

Crime Prevention Initiatives in Ireland

SITUATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION

An Garda Síochána (DJELR):

Routine policing

The routine policing operations of the Gardaí has a crime prevention function, for example, Garda patrols may act as a deterrent. Some specific duties have been developed to prevent specific types of crime, for example, Operation Oiche and Operation Encounter which target Public Order Offences.

CCTV

CCTV is being used in town and city centres as an aid to policing.

Watch Schemes

A number of watch schemes have been implemented by An Garda Síochána, such as Business Watch, Coastal Watch, Campus Watch and Hospital Watch.

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

Crime Prevention Design Advisors are located in each Garda Region. They liaise with local authorities, planners and architects on issues relating to crime prevention through environmental design.

Crime Prevention Advice

The National Crime Prevention Office of An Garda Síochána disseminate crime prevention information to the public using a variety of mediums.

Others:

Neighbourhood Watch

The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme was launched in 1985 and functions by enlisting the voluntary help of urban communities in assisting the Garda Síochána to deter, prevent and detect criminal activity in residential settings, particularly burglary, larceny and other forms of crime against property. Neighbourhood Watch is organised by the Community Relations Section of An Garda Síochána and currently includes approximately 2,300 individual schemes with a national average of 158 households per scheme, i.e., more than 360,000 urban households nationally.

Community Alert by Muintir na Tíre

Community Alert is a rural community-based initiative which seeks to improve the quality of life and security of vulnerable people, especially the elderly. The scheme is managed by Muintir Na Tíre, a voluntary self-help body active in rural areas, and is funded by the Government. The network currently comprises of more than 1,100 committees incorporating approximately 250,000 households.

Community Wardens (The Department of Environment and Local Government)

This is a new pilot initiative whereby a number of community wardens have been appointed in specific Local Authority areas, with a variety of functions including the role of the former traffic warden and litter warden.

Estate Management (Local Authorities)

Effective estate management structures reduce anti-social behaviour. Local Authorities have become proactive in encouraging the development of residential committees to help in the management of local estates and the prevention of anti-social behaviour.

SOCIAL CRIME PREVENTION*The Garda Youth Diversion Projects*

The Garda Youth Diversion Projects are multi-disciplinary locally based projects involving An Garda Síochána, the Probation and Welfare Service and local representatives, which aim to:

- prevent crime through community and multi-agency co-operation and to improve the quality of life within the community;
- divert young people from becoming involved in crime/anti-social behaviour; and to
- provide suitable activities to facilitate personal development and encourage civic responsibility, and work towards improving the long term employability prospects of the participants.

There are currently 64 projects nationally.

Probation and Welfare Projects for 'at risk' young people

The Probation and Welfare Service run a number of projects nationally which are targeted at young people who are 'at risk'. The aim of the projects is to prevent these young people from becoming involved in crime.

Copping On Education and Awareness Initiative

Copping On is a jointly funded initiative funded by the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. The focus of the organisation is on the implementation of a national crime awareness programme with early school leavers and young people "at risk".

Numerous Community Based Initiatives Nationally

For example, Corpus Christi Youth Development Group in Limerick City, whose aim is to prevent crime through community and multi-agency co-operation and to improve the quality of life within the community.

REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS/PREVENT RECIDIVISM

Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme

Garda Juvenile Diversion Programmes are run by the Juvenile Liaison Officers (JLO) in each Garda Division and are centrally administered from the National Juvenile Liaison Office. A young person who offends may be included in the diversion programme, if he/she:

- a) consents to being cautioned and, where appropriate, to be supervised by a juvenile liaison officer;
- b) accepts responsibility for his/her criminal behaviour; and
- c) is over the age of criminal responsibility and under the age of 18.

Probation and Welfare Service

The Probation and Welfare Service run projects for offenders in the community and for specific types of offenders who are in detention, including young offenders, sex offenders and violent offenders.

CONNECT – Irish Prison Service

The CONNECT Project is ongoing in a number of Irish prisons. It is essentially a training programme tailored to the needs of the prison and the individual prisoner. The main function is to aid the re-integration of prisoners back into the community.

Appendix Four
Related Areas of Social Policy – Educational
Initiatives, Youth Services, Family Policy and Area
Based Initiatives

Appendix Four

Related Areas of Social Policy – Educational Initiatives, Youth Services, Family Policy and Area Based Initiatives

EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

The Home School Community Liaison Scheme (estd. 1990)

This programme has been developed in designated disadvantaged schools, and it aims to develop partnership and collaboration between parents and teachers which will help to further the child's learning (see Department of Education, 1997 and Ryan, 1995).

The Early Start Programme (estd. 1994)

The Early Start Programme was piloted by the Department of Education and Science in the academic year 1994-1995, targeting three and four year olds in six centres of "greatest disadvantage". This was subsequently extended to 40 primary schools, who were given resources to develop pre-school provision, each centre is staffed by two primary school teachers and two childcare workers (Department of Education and Science, Information Leaflets; Educational Research Centre, 1998).

High/Scope Ireland

This is an organisation that was set up to promote and co-ordinate the development of early school education using the High/Scope Pre-school Programme.

Breaking the Cycle (estd. 1996)

The Department introduced the Breaking the Cycle programme, in which a number of areas received "disadvantage status", based on a number of indicators. Thirty-three urban schools and 25 clusters of rural schools benefited from this scheme. As a result the pupil: teacher ratio was reduced to 15:1 in junior classes from junior infants to second class (Department of Education and Science, Information Leaflets).

Giving Children an Even Break (estd. 2001)

This programme was launched to replace the Breaking the Cycle programme. The new initiative seeks to identify children and young people 'at risk' within the school system and allocates funding and resources to schools to spend in ways which will benefit those in need. The new strategy involves the appointment of an Educational Disadvantage Committee, a Forum to address Educational Disadvantage and a Director of Programmes. This programme allows schools to apply for extra funding to support children and young people who are most at risk of not reaching their potential in education (Department of Education and Science, 2001a).

National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)

NEPS was set up by the Department of Education & Science in 1999, to co-ordinate the reorganisation and expansion of the psychological services to schools in the State. NEPS staff work throughout the country in ten regions (based on the Health Board divisions).

Substance Misuse Programmes

The "Walk Tall" Substance Misuse Prevention Programme for primary schools aims to give young children the confidence, skills and knowledge to make healthy choices, while seeking to avert or delay experimentation with drugs. The programme has established links with An Garda Síochána, the Local Drugs Task Forces, parents groups, health boards and education centres.

The substance abuse programme for secondary schools is entitled "On my Own Two Feet" and was introduced in 1995. Its aims are similar to that of the "Walk Tall" programme. From September, 2000, this programme was integrated into the Social, Personal and Health Education Programme (SPHE) in second level schools, which is part of the school curriculum for all junior cycle students.

Youthreach

Youthreach is a community based programme for young people, aged 15-18 years who leave school early. Youthreach was established in 1988 and there are currently almost 200 youthreach centres throughout the country.

8 – 15 Early School Leaving Initiative (estd. 1998)

This is a locally based initiative to prevent early school leaving. A local consortium is responsible for developing and managing this well resourced and planned intervention. There are seventeen of these initiatives and all are based in disadvantaged communities.

Stay in School Retention Initiative

This initiative was launched by the Department of Education and Science in June 1999 with 58 target schools, with a further 59 schools included in May, 2000. The aim of the programme is to raise the level of retention and completion of the senior cycle in the target second level schools

School Completion Programme (estd. 2002)

The School Completion Programme will begin in selected schools in the academic year 2002/2003. The programme aims to have a positive impact on levels of pupil retention in primary and second level schools and on the numbers of students who successfully complete the senior cycle. The Programme will encompass the 8-15 Early School Leaving Initiative and the Stay in School Retention Initiative and a key component of the Department's strategy is to discriminate positively in favour of children and young people who are 'at risk' of or who are experiencing educational disadvantage (Department of Education and Science, 2002a).

YOUTH INITIATIVES

Neighbourhood Youth Projects

The Task Force on Child Care Services, set up in 1974, to prepare a new Children Bill and modernise the law in relation to children, recommended that Neighbourhood Youth Projects (NYPs) be established to work with children, within the community, who posed a risk to their own well-being. The NYPs are imbued with a preventative ethos, offering a service to parents of 'difficult' children, using close adult/child relationships in a variety of activities to foster the well-being of the child. Children are referred from social services, schools and self referrals. These projects are funded by the Health Boards.

Young People's Services and Facilities Fund

The Young People's Services and Facilities Fund was established in 1998 by the Government. The main aim of the fund is to develop preventative strategies which will divert young people from substance abuse. The resources are targeted at disadvantaged communities which have substantial substance abuse problems. The ultimate aim of the fund is that the services and facilities developed will engage the interest of young people and divert them from the dangers of substance abuse.

Grants for Special Projects to Assist Disadvantaged Youth

These grants provide funding to community/youth groups to provide out-of-school youth work programmes for youth 'at risk', including homeless youth, young offenders, young substance abusers, young Travellers and young disabled people. Projects must be based at a local level and developed with regard to the needs of the area and the current youth provision in the area.

Local Youth Club Grant Scheme

Grants are provided to support the costs of current projects, while funding is also provided for start-up projects. Priority is given to youth services in disadvantaged areas. The amount of money provided by these grants is quite limited with the maximum available being approximately €1,900.

Grants to Youth Information Centre Projects

These grants are provided (on average €38,000 each) to establish a network of Youth Information Centres which provide information and support to young people and promote personal autonomy.

National Youth Work Advisory Committee

The Youth Affairs Section of Department of Education and Science, requested the National Youth Work Advisory Committee to prepare a Youth Work Development Plan that would act as a blueprint for the development of Youth Work in Ireland for a five year period. The Committee is made up of representatives from those working in the youth area in both the voluntary and statutory sector.

Sports Capital & Swimming Pool Programmes

The aim of both of these programmes is to provide quality sports facilities to increase participation in sport and recreation, particularly in disadvantaged areas. The aim of the programmes is to promote sport and general healthy lifestyles and to develop sporting activities as an alternative to involvement in crime, drug misuse and social disorder.

FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMMES*National Parenting Skills Programme*

This programme is currently being developed by the Family Affairs Unit of the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

Parentline

Parentline is a national voluntary organisation that was founded in 1983, providing confidential support to parents who are experiencing difficulties in the family, who wish to increase their parenting skills or who wish to initiate change in their parenting style.

Family & Community Services Resource Centre Programme

This programme provides financial support to projects which are based locally and cater for between 700 and 1,000 families, based in an estate or flat complex. A centre is established and this will act as a contact point for the delivery of services for a number of Government agencies. There are currently 83 family centres either established or approved for funding throughout the country providing locally based community support to families. The ultimate aim of the programme is to have 100 centres as recommended by the Commission on the Family (1998).

Programme for Core-funding to locally based Community and Family Support Groups

This fund provides financial support to specific groups for specific purposes, for example, drug prevention projects or Traveller projects.

Springboard

Springboard Projects are located in the eight health board regions. One of the aims of the projects is to prevent 'at risk' children and young people (age 7-12) from becoming involved in various forms of anti-social and delinquent behaviour. The programmes are run collaboratively between the State agencies, the voluntary Sector and the local community. A centre is established which acts as a focal point for service delivery to children, young people and families who are 'at risk', allowing for the integration and co-ordination of all services. The projects are being run on a pilot basis with an ongoing evaluation. Emphasis is put on supporting and strengthening families by enhancing individual parenting capacity, improving children's self development and self esteem and helping them to fulfil their potential. Recognising the importance of education, children's level of attendance and attainment are monitored and steps are taken to prevent early school leaving.

Public Health Nursing Service (run by local Health Authorities)

The Public Health Nursing Service provides primary health care services at a local level, with over 1,200 public health nurses employed in Ireland. They provide primary health care services to mothers with a chronic illness, and to babies and infants, to families with a member with a physical disability or member who is seriously ill and to elderly people.

Community Mothers Programmes (run by local Health Authorities)

An example of a community mothers programme is that which is operating in the Eastern Regional Health Authority. This Programme was established in 1983 and is the longest running home visitation programme in the State. The programme is staffed by volunteer non-professional mothers who provide support services to first time parents in disadvantaged areas, during the baby's first two years of life.

The Provision of Childcare

Provision of affordable childcare allows parents from less well off backgrounds to access work, training and education opportunities. The National Development Plan 2000 -2006 allocated €317.4 million (£250 million) to the development of childcare facilities and services nationally. In recent years, childcare policies in Ireland have become more co-ordinated, with the development of County Childcare Committees. Each Committee must produce a five year strategic plan to develop childcare services at a local level and a one year funding proposal.

AREA BASED INITIATIVES*Area Development Management*

The Area District Management Board (ADM) is responsible for providing funding (via the Government and the EU) to the 38 Local Area Partnership Boards to carry out work in their specified localities. Each partnership board consists of representatives from Government Departments and agencies, voluntary bodies, non-governmental organisations, the business sector, representatives from the community sector and community representatives. The main focus of the partnership boards is to develop programmes targeted at countering disadvantage and social exclusion.

The Community Development Programme

This programme focuses on developing policy at a local, regional and national level. The Community Development Support Programme provides funding to local projects involved in anti-poverty and social inclusion work in their own communities. It allows communities to have a greater input into the decisions which affect their community and to improve their quality of life. There are currently 129 local projects being funded, in addition to thirteen regional support agencies.

Integrated Services Process

Integrated Service Process (ISP) was a pilot project (beginning in spring, 1999) that was funded by the Government under the co-ordination of the Department of Sport, Tourism and Recreation. This project was run on a pilot basis in four areas, including Togher in Cork, Jobstown in Dublin 24, the North East Inner City in Dublin and the Canal Communities in Dublin. The project was marketed as a “sustainable solution to urban deprivation”, so as to maximise the positive impact of State service provision in disadvantaged urban communities.

RAPID (Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development)/CLÁR

RAPID was launched in February 2001. The programme is the successor of the ISP and is targeted at the 25 most deprived urban areas in the State. State agencies will be obligated to front-load their investments in these areas in terms of facilities and services, so as to bring about major improvement in the living standards of the residents in these areas over the next three years. The rural equivalent CLÁR is under the management of the Department of Agriculture and Food, while the RAPID Strand II – provincial towns – was launched in February 2002.

National Drugs Strategy for 2001 to 2008

This strategy was launched in mid 2001 and sets out 100 individual actions across the pillars of supply, reduction, prevention, treatment and research. The Local Drugs Task Forces are also part of this strategy.

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