Mid and East Antrim Community Planning

Community Safety & Cohesion
Briefing Notes

Chairperson: Supt Ryan Henderson, Police Service of Northern Ireland

Mid & East Antrim
Borough Council

"Reducing crime and creating good relations between people and communities"

1.1 Remit

To work together to make Mid & East Antrim a safer place by reducing crime and working to improve community relations between people and communities.

1.2 Reporting arrangements

The Task & Finish Working Group reports directly to the Strategic Alliance in the first instance. The Chairperson of the Working Group will be appointed by the Strategic Alliance.

1.3 Frequency of meetings

The Working Group will meet at least monthly. The Chairperson may at any time convene additional meetings.

1.4 Operational arrangements

Administrative support will be agreed between the partners participating within the Working Group. All meetings require a quorum of five members.

Agenda and papers will be circulated at least five working days in advance. Notes and Action Points from meetings will be circulated within five working days after the meeting.

1.5 Work programme

The outputs from the TFWG will include the following:

1. A short statement (one or two sentences) setting out an ambitious aspiration for the theme which is consistent with the Strategic Alliance's Vision for Community Planning in Mid and East Antrim. This should set out the strategic direction for the theme over the next 5 to 10 years.

2. The strategies and objectives required to deliver the vision in this theme:

   A. Initial objectives for the first 5 years

   B. Longer term objectives to be achieved over the next 10-15 years

3. The top three priority strategic actions identified for implementation or significant advancement in the next 5 years.

4. A summary of how this theme can contribute towards other cross cutting themes such as good relations, infrastructure, sustainable development, rural development and communications etc.

5. In line with the DoE Guidance on the Operation of Community Planning[1] the TFWG will utilise an outcomes based approach in the development of their action plan. The facilitator for the TFWG will guide the working group members in this approach. At the end of the process the Chair of the TFWG will provide the Strategic Alliance with an action plan in an agreed format.

6. Recommendations for performance targets and key result areas including recommendations on how these will be measured.

7. A list of key stakeholders and other beneficiaries.

8. Any outstanding issues are not addressed within the action plan which have been identified as important within the Mid and East Antrim area and are needed for delivery of the Community Plan.

---

[1] Department of the Environment Statutory Guidance for the Operation of Community Planning – October 2015

1.6 Baseline Report Findings

1.6.1 Outline priorities

The emerging issues identified from the Baseline Report (Section 7.4) are:

1. There is a need to address negative perceptions of particular communities in the Council area in relation to sectarianism and drug abuse.
2. Need to ensure that the rural perspective is considered in all policy decisions, in particular:
- Addressing rural crime and isolation;
- Need to preserve the open countryside;
- Addressing the decline in population (particularly amongst the young)

1.6.2 Strategic Review

Appendix A: Strategic Review of the Baseline Report highlights a number of key strategies relevant to this theme.

The Department of Justice, Northern Ireland Strategy "Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities" (2011) aims to build:

- Safer communities, with lower levels of crime and anti-social behaviour;
- Shared communities, where each person's rights are respected in a shared and cohesive community; and
- Confident communities, where people feel safe and have confidence in the agencies that serve them.

The Northern Ireland Executive's "Together Building a United Community" Strategy (2013) provides a framework for government departments and local government to take action with cases of sectarianism, racism and various forms of intolerance while maintaining to address division, hate and separation.

The Reducing Offending Strategy (2013) supports a thematic approach to cover the areas of Prevention, Diversion, Reducing opportunities to commit crime, Effective delivery of justice, and Reducing reoffending.

The NI Organised Crime Strategy (2012 – 2014) highlights the following objectives:

- Tackle organised crime and put the perpetrators not only out of business but where possible, before the courts

- To highlight the successes of the Organised Crime Task Force (OCTF) so that its work is known and supported

- To help the various communities in Northern Ireland that have been affected by organised criminal activity

1.6.3 Qualitative Evidence

Perception surveys of residents/visitors and stakeholders who believe that urban areas within Mid & East Antrim Borough Council area have a significantly higher crime (in particular hate crime than NI as a whole). Anecdotal evidence from Ballymena Inter-Ethnic Forum and the local PSNI confirmed that there is an under-reporting of racist hate crime in the area.
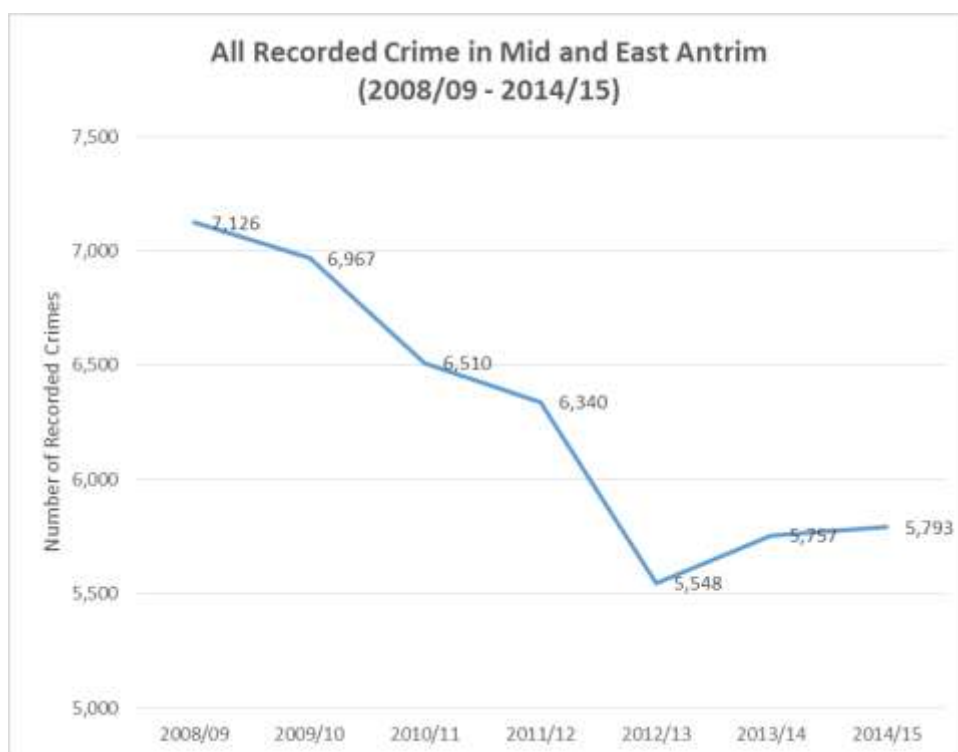
In common with other Council areas, reported incidences of domestic violence (particularly against women) are on the increase.
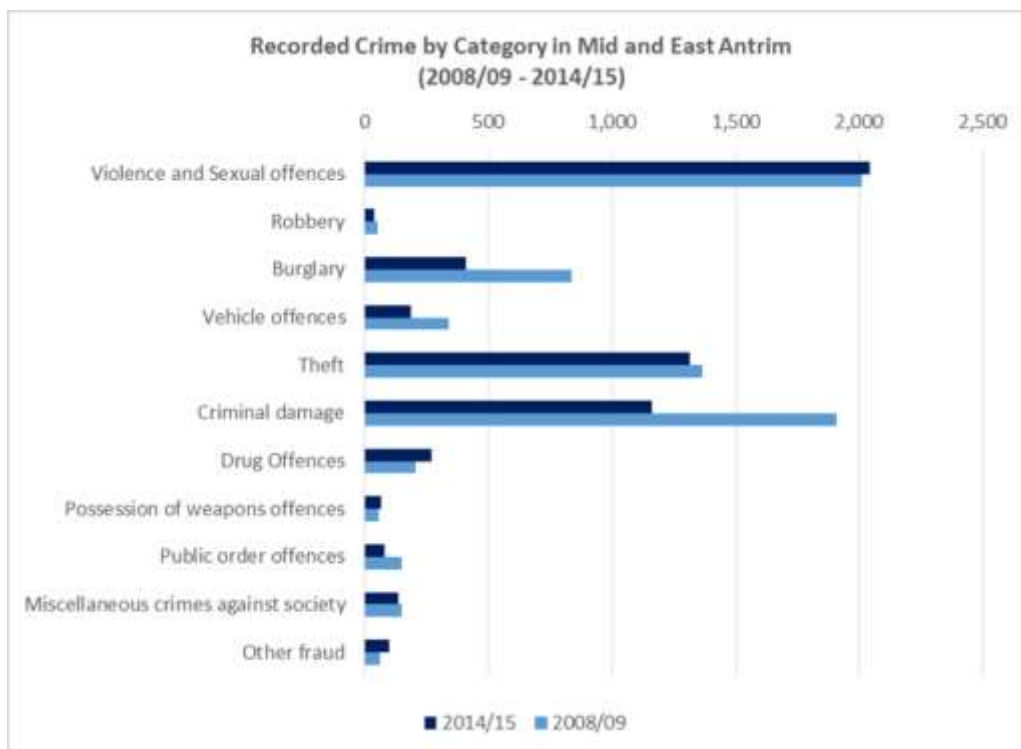
1.7   The Big Picture Statistics

Deprivation *(Source: Demography and Methodology Branch, NISRA)*

- Of the 65 Super Output Areas making up the Mid & East Antrim LGD, 13 (20%) are classed as being in the 20% most deprived areas in NI when ranked by the Crime and Disorder Domain.

- However, almost half of these areas (6) are not deprived in terms of the overall multiple deprivation measure e.g. Park

- Almost a third (31%) of areas (20) lie within the 20% least deprived areas in NI.

- Dunclug, Castle Demesne and Killycrot are the three most deprived areas in Mid and East Antrim in terms of Crime and Disorder.

- Grange, Galgorm 2 and Kells 2 are the three least deprived areas.

- There is a large variation in this indicator across Mid and East Antrim. Out of the 890 Super Output Areas in NI, Dunclug was ranked 16 while Grange was 889. *With 1 being the most deprived to 890 being the least deprived.*
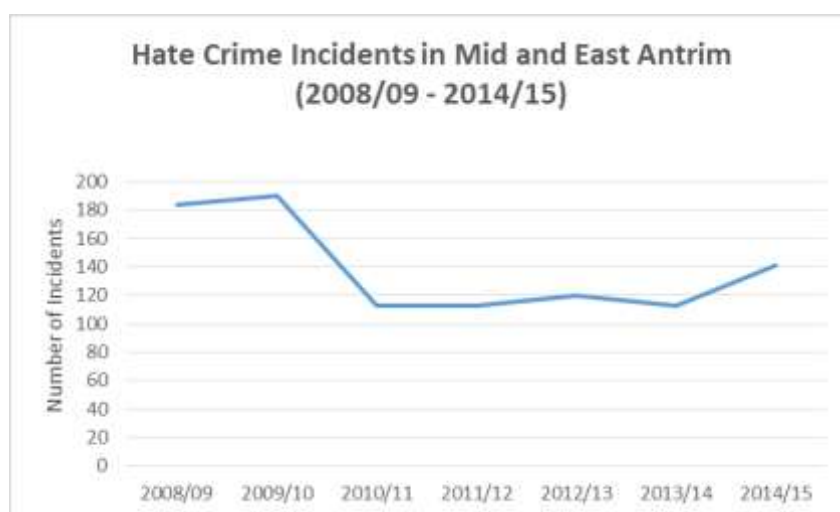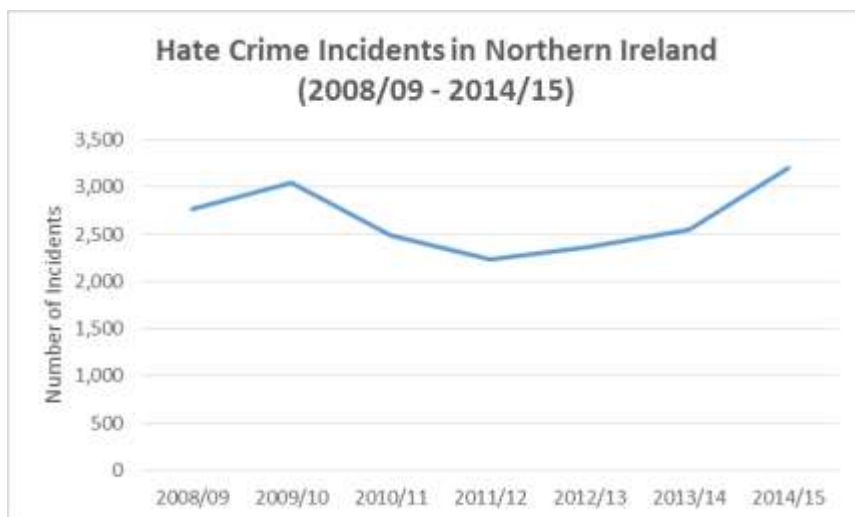
Recorded Crime *(Source: PSNI)*

- In 2014/15, 5,793 crimes were recorded in Mid and East Antrim.

- This was a decrease of 19% on the 2008/09 figure compared to a decline of 5% across NI.

- Mid and East Antrim had the second largest reduction in recorded crime across the 11 councils between 2008/09 and 2014/15.

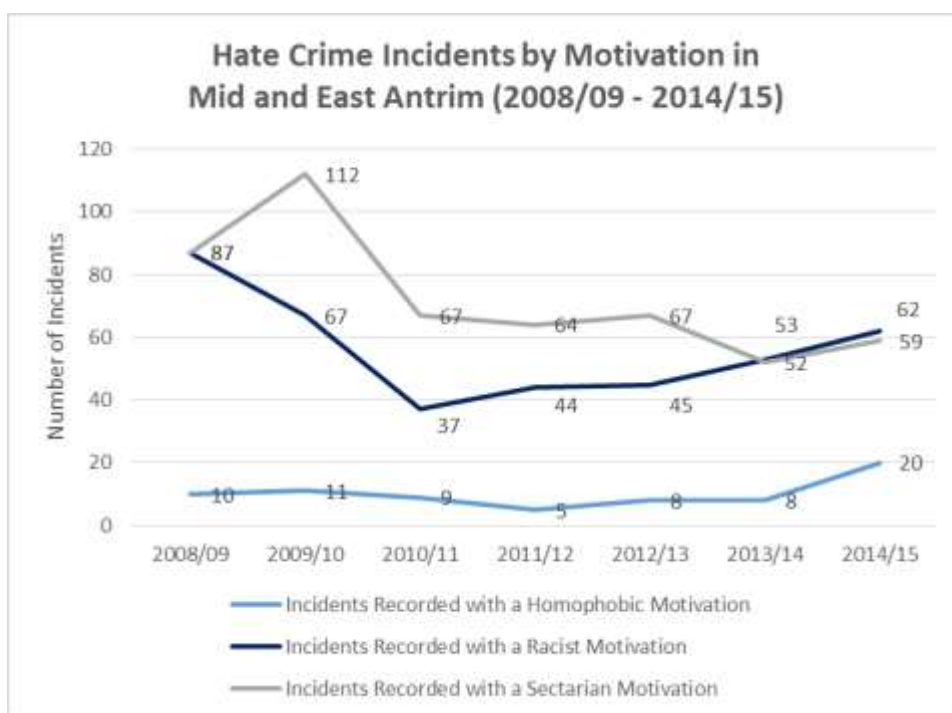Recorded Crime by Category in Mid and East Antrim (2008/09 - 2014/15)

- In 2014/15, violence and sexual offences accounted for the highest number of crimes (35%).

- A large decline in the number of criminal damage and burglary offences accounted for the majority of the 19% reduction in the number of recorded crimes in Mid and East Antrim between 2008/09 and 2014/15.

- Of the 11 offence categories, only 2 have experienced an increase over the 7 year period. These are drug offences (32%) and violence and sexual offences (1.4%).

Hate Crime *(Source: PSNI)*

Hate Crime Incidents in Mid and East Antrim (2008/09 - 2014/15)

Hate Crime Incidents in Northern Ireland (2008/09 - 2014/15)

- Between 2008/09 and 2014/15 the total number of hate crime incidents in Mid and East Antrim fell by 23% compared to an increase of 16% across NI.

- Mid and East Antrim had the largest reduction in hate crime incidents across all 11 councils.

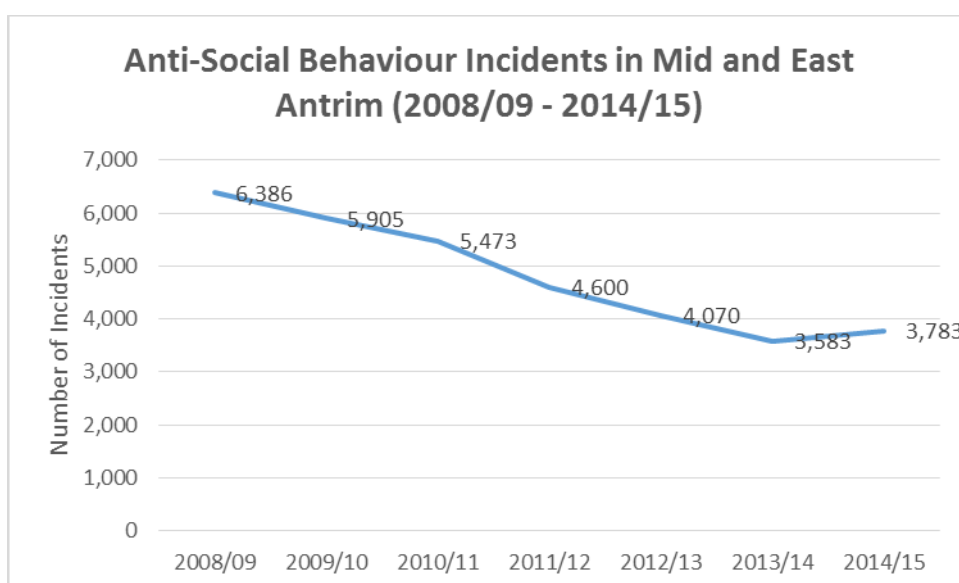Hate Crime Incidents by Motivation in Mid and East Antrim (2008/09 - 2014/15)

- In terms of the motivation for hate crime in Mid and East Antrim, racism and sectarianism account for the majority of incidents.

- Between 2008/09 and 2012/13 the gap between sectarian and racist motivations has widened, however since 2013/14 the number of incidents with a sectarian motivation has fallen slightly below those with a racist motivation.

- There was a significant increase in incidents with a homophobic motivation in 2014/15.

Anti-Social Behaviour *(Source: PSNI)*

- In 2014/15 there were 3,783 anti-social behaviour incidents in Mid and East Antrim.

- There was a 41% reduction in anti-social behaviour incidents between 2008/09 and 2014/15 in Mid and East Antrim compared to a 28% reduction across NI.

- Mid and East Antrim had the second largest reduction in anti-social behaviour incidents across all 11 councils.
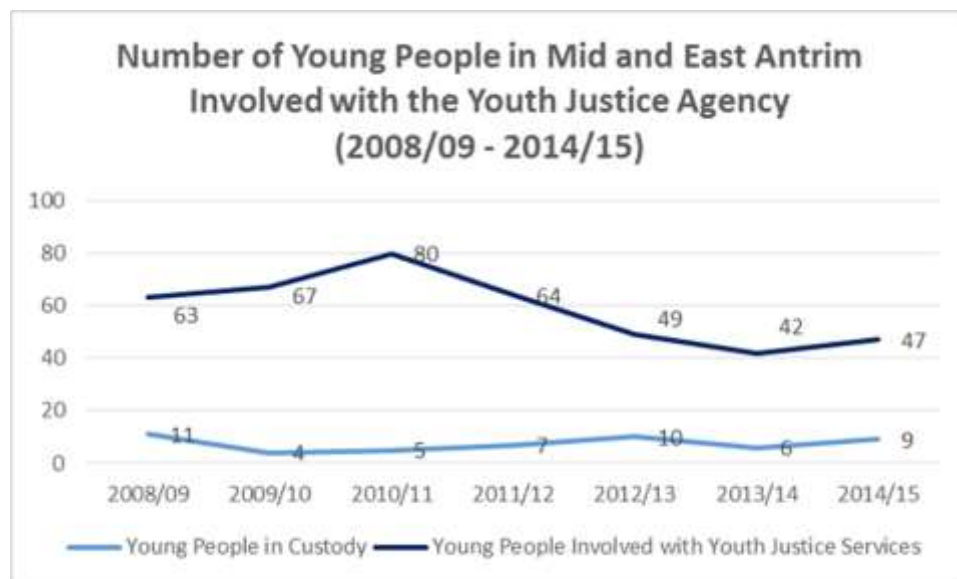

Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents in Mid and East Antrim (2008/09 - 2014/15)

Domestic Violence *(Source: PSNI)*

Incidents Recorded with a Domestic Abuse Motivation in Mid and East Antrim (2008/09 - 2014/15)

- In 2014/15 there were 2,079 incidents recorded with a domestic violence motivation.

- Between 2008/09 and 2014/15 there was a 36% increase in incidents recorded with a domestic violence motivation compared to 20% in NI.

- Mid and East Antrim had third highest increase in incidents across the 11 councils.

Youth Justice (Source: Youth Justice Agency)

Number of Young People in Mid and East Antrim Involved with the Youth Justice Agency (2008/09 - 2014/15)

- The number of young people involved with Youth Justice Services fell by 25% between 2008/09 and 2014/15. This was comparable to NI as a whole.

Road Traffic Collisions (Source: PSNI)

Road Traffic Casualties in Mid and East Antrim (2013 - 2015)

	2013	2014	2015
Killed	9	4	6
Seriously injured	64	46	62
Slightly injured	494	570	519
Total Casualties	**567**	**620**	**587**
Casualties per 10,000 population in Mid and East Antrim	41.69	45.37	42.78
Casualties per 10,000 population in NI	*50.21*	*51.01*	*52.90*
Rank across 11 councils	3rd lowest	5th lowest	2nd lowest

- In 2015 there were 587 road casualties in Mid and East Antrim which equated to 43 per 10,000 population, 6 of which were fatalities.

- The number of road traffic casualties per 10,000 population in Mid and East Antrim remains lower than the NI average. In particular, in 2015 the council was second lowest behind Causeway Coast and Glens.

Voluntary Work *(Source: Census 2011)*

- In the 2011 Census, 14.7% of people in Mid and East Antrim reported carrying out unpaid voluntary work compared to 14.9% across NI.

- Mid and East Antrim was ranked fourth lowest out of the eleven councils.

NI Life and Times Survey 2013/14 *(Source: ARK)*

- This survey monitors the attitudes and behaviours of people in NI on political attitudes and community relations.

	Better	Worse	About the same	Don't know
Are relations between Protestants and Catholics better than they were 5 years ago, worse, or about the same now as then?	43%	10%	44%	3%
In 5 years time do you think relations between Protestants and Catholics will be better than now, worse than now, or about the same as now?	49%	10%	40%	2%

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?...	Strongly agree / Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree / Strongly disagree	Don't know
The culture and traditions of the Catholic community add to the richness and diversity of Northern Ireland society	74%	18%	5%	3%
The culture and traditions of the Protestant community add to the richness and diversity of Northern Ireland society	79%	16%	2%	3%
The culture and traditions of people from different minority ethnic groups adds to the richness and diversity of Northern Ireland society	65%	21%	11%	3%

Has there been any time in the last year when you personally have felt...	Yes	No	Don't know
...intimidated by republican murals, kerb paintings, or flags?	8%	92%	0%
...annoyed by republican murals, kerb paintings, or flags?	21%	78%	0%
...felt intimidated by loyalist murals, kerb paintings, or flags?	19%	81%	0%
...annoyed by loyalist murals, kerb paintings, or flags?	33%	67%	0%
Do you feel a sense of belonging to this neighbourhood?	84%	15%	1%

	Own religion only	Mixed religion neighbourhood	Don't know
Would you prefer to live in a neighbourhood with people of only your own religion, or in a mixed-religion neighbourhood?	10%	84%	3%
Would you prefer a workplace with people of only your own religion, or a mixed religion workplace?	7%	88%	2%
Would you prefer a school with children of only your own religion, or a mixed-religion school?	30%	65%	2%

- Across the 11 councils Mid and East Antrim had the highest percentage of residents preferring to live, work and educate their children in mixed religion neighbourhoods.

Summary

Positives
Across the 11 councils, Mid and East Antrim has:
- Second largest reduction in recorded crime.
- Largest reduction in hate crime.
- Second largest reduction in anti-social behaviour.
- Second lowest road traffic casualties per 10,000 population.
- Highest percentage of residents preferring to live, work and educate their children in mixed religion neighbourhoods.

Issues
- Large variation in crime and disorder deprivation across Mid and East Antrim.
- Drug offences have increased by 32% between 2008/09 and 2014/15.

- Mid and East Antrim had the third largest increase in domestic violence across the 11 councils.

1.8 'Putting People First' Findings (March 2015)

Things to Stop Doing

The dominant discussion was centred on the need to stop making assumptions about what people need and that people know what agencies do. In this, there is a sense of a need to listen more and to stop assuming people have knowledge and understanding. This is generated by a sense that citizens were confused as to who was responsible for what.

In addition, a strong sense that agencies must stop working in silos and 'reinventing the wheel', with a community planning process which formulates more joined up action.

Things to Start Doing

A range of actions were highlighted as priority. These included:
- Understanding and communicating roles and responsibilities
- Being smarter on how resources are used
- Enhancement of community safety wardens
- Integrated work on fear of crime –environmental issues
- Diversionary projects to divert people from negative anti-social behaviour

Key Issues

The key issue highlighted the need for sustainable funding for community interventions, with a sense that the **CP process should address the lack of knowledge.**

1.9 Other Relevant Information

Mid and East Antrim Police and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSP) (2015-18) and Action Plan (2015-2016) has been influenced by the NI Community Safety strategy 'Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities', with a specific focus on the following issues within the Transitional Strategy:

- To form and successfully deliver the functions of the PCSP for the area;
- To improve Community Safety by tackling crime and anti-social behaviour;
- To improve Community confidence in policing.

The Draft Programme for Government highlights several outcomes directly relating to this theme, namely:

7. We have a safe community where we respect the law, and each other.
9. We are a shared society that respects diversity.
10. We are a confident, welcoming, outward-looking society.

To be further populated by TFWG.