

# Lives without Fear – What Works?

Conference report and  
recommendations

Prepared for the NEIC by Quality Matters, July 2018

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 About this Report

This report is a summary of the proceedings of the conference 'Lives Without Fear – What Works', which took place on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2018 in Croke Park.

The Conference was chaired by Assistant Commissioner Barry O'Brien, who among other senior ranking Garda roles, served as the Detective Superintendent for the Garda National Drugs Unit for ten years.

One hundred delegates attended the conference on June 18 2018, including local residents, representatives of local community groups, national and local NGOs and representatives of Drugs and Alcohol Task Forces from other parts of Dublin.

The importance of the conference and the resulting actions was reflected in a high attendance rate from members of the Sub Group on Crime and Drugs (8 of 12 members). The Departments of Health, Justice, Enterprise and Social Protection were also in attendance, as were representatives of the Probation Service and Dublin City Council. An Garda Síochána had ten delegates, including representatives of the Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau and the Criminal Assets Bureau, as well as the Assistant Commissioner Special Crime Operations. One member of the Oireachtas attended, Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan.

There was a high level of positive engagement from the delegates with the majority feeling free to offer their opinions (97%), feeling that the conference had been a good use of their time (97%), that the action points emerging from their own group and from the conference in general were strong and practical (92% and 86% respectively). The majority indicated a willingness to stay involved in taking action on Drug Related Intimidation (DRI) (95%). (See Appendix II for summary of the results of the evaluation).

## 1.2 The North East Inner-City Programme

This conference was organised as part of the activities of the North East Inner-City Programme (NEIC). This programme is a major initiative for the Dublin North East Inner City, launched by Government in July 2017. The purpose of the programme is to drive the long-term social and economic regeneration of the area. The NEIC Programme was developed in response to the findings of 'Creating a Brighter Future' (1) a report by Kieran Mulvey, which highlighted a range of community needs and challenges for the North East Inner City. The report was commissioned during a time where gang feuds, gangland murders, the drug trade and other associated criminal activities were having a significant impact on the quality of life and progression of these communities.

The report, also known as *The Mulvey Report*, identified the potential for the NEIC to move from being a 'no go' neighbourhood with '*Policing resources inadequate to respond to prevalence of crime and in particular, local drug dealing*' and a '*Community silenced in fear of local criminal activity*' ((1)pg. 30) to one with the following characteristics:

- Families and communities feel safe and can speak up
- A safe place for children to play
- A safe place to go to work
- A physical space that the community can be proud of
- A sense of shared community pride
- Safe to visit and travel through

In order to achieve this, a number of priority actions are identified in the programme under the theme of Crime and Drugs:

Firstly, generally, 'Better and more visible policing with an emphasis on community policing needs to be key feature in the Plan. It must be "safe" to lead; it must be "safe" to live, work, learn and play in the community' (1) pg. 25. The specific actions to achieve this (overseen by a subgroup on Crime and Drugs) are:

- "Increase the levels of visible and consistent policing presence in the community with a strong focus on community policing to counter local intimidation and open drug dealing
- A discrete programme of events and activities to build community cohesion to tackle intimidation and make it safe for the community to 'speak out and lead '
- A public awareness campaign undertaken in the North East Inner City to promote the DRI Reporting programme" (1) pg. 31.

As well as the Crime and Drugs sub-group of the NEIC Programme, there are three other sub-groups:

- Education and Training
- Family, Children and Youth Services
- Physical Infrastructure

The aim is that these sub-groups work cohesively to improve life in the North East Inner City. The work of the programme as a whole is chaired by independent chairperson Michael Stone.

(See Appendix I for remit of each of the subgroups.)

## 2 Highlights of Conference Presentations and Discussions

### 2.1 Overview

The conference included four presentations on the themes of prevalence of DRI, policing challenges and strategies, impact on young people and impact on families. These were presented to all attendees at a plenary session, which was followed by group discussions.

The conference saw presentations by the North Inner-City Drugs and Alcohol Task Force, An Garda Síochána, The National Family Support Network and Citywide. 'Uncut Diamonds' a community drama group from the area, presented a short piece depicting the impact on an older couple of DRI and debt. Key insights from the presentations are detailed in this section.

### 2.2 Presentation One: Context Setting

#### **Chief Superintendent Sean Ward, Chairperson Sub Group 1 Crime and Drugs, 9.30am**

The first presentation, given by Chief Superintendent Ward, Chairperson of Sub Group 1 on Crime and Drugs, set the context for the day's proceedings against the Mulvey report and specifically the role of Sub Group 1.

*'This is not a talking shop'. Chief Superintendent Sean Ward*

Chief Superintendent Ward gave an update on some of the key developments which have happened under the auspices of the subgroup including:

- The development of Fitzgibbon Street Garda Station, which will be reopened towards the end of 2019, which includes the recruitment of an additional 50 Gardaí for the area
- The installation of an additional 13 CCTV cameras in strategic locations around the community

- The commissioning of a community support vehicle to allow people living in the NEIC an additional access point for the Gardaí, to give them an alternative access point than Garda stations only
- Additional mountain bikes being acquired to enhance the policing service to the NEIC community
- Enhanced outreach to young people through engagement with existing youth services: this means Gardaí working in a variety of ways with local youth recreational services, including boxing and football clubs, to support improved understanding and relationships between Gardaí, local youth and those who support them. Examples of this include supporting a boxing tournament through provision of resources and practical hands-on support by Gardaí

He also noted how the Divisional Drugs Unit and Assets Profile Unit worked together to target local drug dealers, in addition to the introduction of a new training programme for Gardaí to increase their understanding of the issues in the community. He highlighted that a new Community Policing Plan will be designed with the community and asked that people come forward with ideas.

Chief Superintendent Ward concluded by focusing everyone's attention on action, highlighting that a report including timelines, resources and accountability mechanisms would be produced arising from the conference.

## 2.3 Presentation Two: Trends and Behaviours Survey – Violence, Intimidation and Threats 2018

### **Mel Mac Giobúin, North Inner-City Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NICDATF), 10am**

The second presentation, by Mr. Mac Giobúin, highlighted findings from research on experiences of DRI in the North Inner City. The research was undertaken by the North Inner-City Drug and Alcohol Task Force in 2018, which involved twenty local groups affiliated to the NICDATF as survey participants. The results of the survey were compared to results of similar research undertaken in 2013.

The research showed a considerable increase in the numbers of people involved in the projects within the NICDATF catchment area (from 501 to 1,359), which was welcome. He highlighted that when this issue was first raised in 2011 very few people were prepared to talk about it.

*'Seven years ago, nobody was really willing to talk about this issue at all'* Mel Mac Giobúin

The research sought to understand the level of concern about violence among those accessing local support services. It found a significant level of increase in those who expressed concerns about violence, from 18% - 29%. Over half (54%) of those expressing concern were from the NEIC area<sup>1</sup>.

The age profile of those affected by DRI is getting younger. In the North Inner-City area, the age group most affected was 21- 25-year olds, whereas in 2013, it was 26- 44 year olds. In the NEIC area this is younger again, with 16-21-year olds most affected. There is also concern among people over the age of 55 in the NEIC (16% of those affected versus 7% of the same age group in the wider population).

The research also documented some details about where drug-related intimidation happens. While violence, intimidation and threats take place in a wide variety of settings the most common location was on the streets (19%) or at home (17%), with one third of the latter occurring at a homeless hostel or other homeless accommodation setting. Of the negative impacts reported, mental health was the most common (13%) with respondents reporting high levels of anxiety, stress and fear among their

<sup>1</sup> The North Inner-City Drug and Alcohol Task Force has a wider catchment area than the NEIC

service users. While verbal abuse was the most common form of intimidation (11%), specific threats of injury were frequently reported (10%). The violence, intimidation and threats are most often directed at a family member (48%) or the drug user directly (28%) – this has remained the same since the previous research in 2015).

He also noted that while talking about research in the abstract, it was important to acknowledge the lived experience of families affected by feud-related fatalities and the deep impact this has on the whole community.

Of particular note, individuals and groups in the NEIC are significantly less likely to report a concern to Gardaí than those in the wider NICDATF area (38% compared to 18%).

**Conclusion:** DRI is on the rise, and a disproportionate number of people in the NEIC are affected. In the NEIC the age profile of those affected is lower than the wider catchment area and people are less likely to report their concerns to the Gardaí.

## 2.4 Presentation Three: DRI (DRI)

**Inspector Seamus Dalton, An Garda Síochána, 10.00am**

The third presentation examined some of the key challenges to policing DRI in the division and specifically in the NEIC. These include the challenges of people reporting on those from within their own community, the challenges posed by the subtle nature of intimidation and efforts to improve community relations and trust in AGS.

Inspector Seamus Dalton, a nominated Inspector from the Drug Intimidation Reporting Programme<sup>2</sup> set out the context for policing in the area. He spoke of how, since the heroin epidemic in the North Inner City in the late 1970's, drugs and drug culture have become normalised. He highlighted how the drug user and drug supplier come from the same community, this poses a huge challenge for individuals who do not want to report on members of their own family or community and for policing.

*'It is very hard to come forward – you might be giving evidence against someone who lives right beside you, a friend, someone from your family'* Inspector Dalton

He highlighted how intimidation can be very subtle. A physical presence outside someone's house, without even a word spoken, can send a very clear message to someone who is being intimidated, but noted that such behaviours are very challenging to police.

He also described how the North Central Division which includes the NEIC has the “*largest percentage of foreign nationals per capita*”, with high drug use among this community, and a degree of internal community intimidation. He noted how a certain portion of ‘foreign nationals’ may have a mistrust of police, which can result in low levels of engagement with police by people from new communities. This low level of engagement is compounded at times by language barriers and, on occasion, concerns about immigration status.

He also highlighted the gendered nature of the impact of DRI, with female relatives being to the fore in terms of reporting and seeking Garda support around intimidation. He described the anxiety among women about how best to handle a threat. He described their sense of obligation that the debt has to be paid, and their fear that if they pay the debt over ‘too quickly’ the intimidation won't stop. He also described the impact of the Hutch-Kinahan feud<sup>3</sup>, and how names from within the feud are used by those involved in intimidation to heighten the threat.

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<sup>2</sup> The Garda National Drugs Unit and the National Family Support Network have developed ‘the Drug Related Intimidation Reporting Programme’ to respond to the needs of drug users and family members experiencing drug related intimidation.

<sup>3</sup> A drug related criminal feud which has been in the public domain since 2015 and has resulted in several fatalities.

He described the Garda response to increasing levels of intimidation in recent years, which has included increasing the capacity of the Divisional Drugs Unit to two Sergeants and 18 Gardaí, highlighting that as the force increases in size, more resources are going into community policing. Increased and more visible community policing is an agreed action specific to tackling DRI in the Mulvey report. He also noted the development of a separate drugs-focused unit for the North City Centre Shopping District and the introduction of a Small Area Policing / Community Policing strategy. This was developed in response to an issue which was identified a number of years ago whereby O'Connell Street and its environs were being used for open drugs use, sale and supply and had high levels of general anti-social behaviour. In response, a small group of plain clothes Gardaí are tasked with patrolling these areas on a daily basis to deal with drug-related crimes. He noted that they have had a significant impact in dealing with the drugs problems in the area and continue to do so.

As a response to these issues AGS have: initiated the organisation of Youth Programmes and Schools Awareness; the recruitment of people of differing nationalities into An Garda Síochána and utilising foreign language speaking Garda; providing security advice to individuals who bring concerns forward and assisting them in the complaints process; reassuring individuals and groups about the confidential nature of the information provided during the complaint process.

He specifically highlighted the importance of confidential relationships with the NGOs, and work to ensure that they feel more willing to bring information to forward. Among the initiatives currently underway are:

- Liaising with North Inner-City Drug and Alcohol Task Force
- Liaising with other State agencies regarding the welfare of vulnerable children, whereby the Gardai, through the Juvenile Liaison Officer scheme working closely with the local youth projects to support young people arrested for drug related activity to steer clear of the Juvenile Justice System. Additionally, all investigations involving vulnerable children are referred to Túsla in effort to highlight the issues being experienced by the child.
- Providing clear procedural guidelines for AGS to deal with drug related threats
- Liaising with NGO's to assist AGS to foster relations within the communities

**Conclusion:** The policing of DRI presents various challenges including people's fears of reporting, the challenges of policing nonverbal threats and the impact of the on-going feud in the community. The importance of confidential relationships with NGOs and proactive community trust building activities was stressed.

## 2.5 Presentation Four: Resourcing the change - The National Family Support Network

**Aoife Frances, The National Family Support Network, 10.15 am**

Aoife Frances from the National Family Support Network (NFSN) presented an overview of their key research and policy developments in recent years relevant to DRI, starting with the original research on this issue that the NFSN undertook in 2008. She described the work of the DRI Programme run by AGS and the NFSN and noted key points of progress in policy development in relation to tackling intimidation. She concluded by advocating for increased resources for community organisations, drug users and their families and a public awareness campaign.

The NFSN reported that they first sought to formally address this issue in 2007/2008, when they raised concerns about drug-related intimidation with the National Drug Strategy (NDS) team. Arising from this, then Detective Superintendent Barry O'Brien (Garda National Drugs unit), who was on the NDS team met with senior members of AGS and representatives from Criminal Assets Bureau, forensics and family support workers, from which it was agreed to conduct research on the prevalence of the issue.

This research was conducted in 2008 and published in 2009. Fifty family support services participated, including two services in the NEIC area. The research revealed that forty-four of the fifty services had worked with families experiencing DRI. In 30% of cases the crime originated from a debt worth €500 or less. As echoed in other presentations the majority of family members contacting services about intimidation were mothers. The average largest debt known to respondents was between €10,000-€20,000. In terms of the type of intimidation reported 78% took the form of verbal threats, 66% involved physical violence, 66% involved damage to the victim's home or property and 14% of respondents reported sexual violence or threat of sexual violence. While follow up research has not been conducted, the NFSN report continuing high levels of concern among their service users.

*"Last year DRI made up a third of the phone calls we got to our national helpline"*  
Aoife Frances.

The research highlighted the problems of reporting, with families too fearful to report to the Gardaí. This was compounded by a feeling that the authorities were powerless, and an underlying mistrust in the Gardaí among certain communities or families. The cyclical nature of intimidation, where drug users are caught in a cycle of addiction and intimidation was also raised, as was concern about the involvement of younger children. The research revealed that DRI wasn't just an issue for inner city areas but was reported by network members throughout the country.

The NFSN then highlighted the interim National Drug Strategy 2009- 2016 which at Action 5 commits to: *'develop a framework to provide an appropriate response to the issue of drug-related intimidation in the community'*. The NFSN and Garda National Drug Unit were tasked with this action and developed a joint programme. Under the DRI Programme, Inspectors, who are selected by the Garda Commissioner for this particular role, liaise directly with the relevant Superintendent in relation to cases of drug-related intimidation that are reported to them. Family members can meet with an Inspector informally and the Gardaí will provide practical safety information and advice in relation to particular threats or instances of intimidation. They also provide information on appropriate drug support services for the individual in the family who is accruing drug debts, and outline how to make a formal complaint, including what is involved, what happens afterwards and possible outcomes. She noted how it is the decision of the person being intimidated if they want to make a formal complaint. She highlighted that if a person wishes to meet with the Inspector but are apprehensive about being seen entering a Garda station or meeting a Garda in uniform, they may request to meet the Inspector in a neutral venue with the Inspector in plain clothes. She explained that the list of designated Inspectors is available on [fsn.ie](http://fsn.ie) and [garda.ie](http://garda.ie), and noted that Inspector Seamus Dalton was one such designated Inspector.

The pilot of the reporting programme began in 2011, with the identification of Inspectors and a subsequent launch of the programme later that year. The pilot reporting programme was reviewed in 2012, and NFSN produced a leaflet and online video as well as a policy and training programme.

The NFSN *'Responding to Intimidation Policy & Training Seminar'* provides services and workers with a good practice guide to responding to disclosures of intimidation. The aim is that services will be enabled to provide consistent response to family members and service users, by increasing the confidence of services and workers in their ability to respond to the issue. NFSN have trained over 650 workers to date and provide the training to workers and volunteers free of charge on request.

There have been many interventions relating to DRI in the North Inner City over the last number of years which were organized by the voluntary and community sector; the pilot of the reporting Programme began in 2011, with the identification of Inspectors and a subsequent launch of the Programme later that year. In 2012, the *'Citywide Policy Document'* committed Citywide to pursuing concrete proposals for a co-ordinated, the pilot programme reporting programme was reviewed, and a leaflet and online video were produced by NFSN as well as the NFSN policy and training programme. In 2013 Citywide published research by Johnny Connolly (*'Demanding Money With Menace'*) again outlining the issue and complexities of drug related intimidation.

In 2015, a seminar which brought together nominated Inspectors, family support facilitators and the Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau was organised by NFSN. The NEIC Taskforce was established by An Taoiseach the following year. NFSN met with Kieran Mulvey in 2016 and advocated that DRI be included in his report, it subsequently was noted as a key issue. NFSN have been lobbying the Programme Implementation Board for a focus on DRI since the launch of the report.

An evaluation of the NFSN element of the programme is currently being conducted by University College Cork and will be completed by end August 2018. It will assess how those working with family members feel the training equips them to work with people experiencing DRI. It will also examine how the reporting system works on the ground including identifying any blocks, gaps and opportunities for improvement. AGS are undertaking their own review of their elements of the programme and it is expected that this will be completed by September 2019.

The NFSN then outlined other ongoing work they were doing in relation to DRI, including on-going dialogue and review with the 28 nominated Inspectors and with the Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau and presenting to the Garda Training College in Templemore. The NFSN are also working with the Health Research Board, with input from The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction on new research to develop indicators to measure the prevalence of DRI.

**Conclusion;** In conclusion the NFSN set out their vision for the future and a call for 'no more talking shops' on the issue, identifying that this process needs meaningful involvement from the community. They highlighted that the community and voluntary sector have been active on the issue of DRI for years however their budgets are limited and constantly slashed. They highlighted that the Mulvey report signalled resources and that this is needed, alongside meaningful community involvement, for change to happen. The NFSN asserted that they are calling for a dedicated worker, with a dedicated service focussed on DRI to be established in the NEIC. This position could enable community liaison, coordinate family support, provide a safe space for families and people who use drugs and those who are affected by the issue. She stressed how families need a neutral safe space in order to feel secure in talking about DRI. They also advocated for a public awareness campaign on DRI, and increased services for people who use drugs and for their families, and ongoing support to the organisations that support families through intimidation. The NFSN called on community members and families in the audience to use their voices to demand meaningful and resourced change.

*'We need a resourced commitment for change, we need a dedicated service, a dedicated worker and a clear public campaign; we need the resources that the Mulvey report promised' Aoife Frances*

## 2.6 Presentation Five: DRI and Young People

**Anna Quigley, Coordinator, Citywide, 10.15 am**

Anna Quigley from Citywide focused on the impact of DRI on young people. She referred to a national audit of drug-related intimidation carried out by Citywide and the Health Research Board in 2016 and focused specifically on its findings in relation to children involved either as victims or perpetrators of intimidation. She also spoke about the specific impact of gangland feuds on children and young people. She concluded with recommendations on the most effective interventions to divert young people from drug related activity.

Presenting the findings of the Citywide/HRB intimidation audit, Ms Quigley reported that 19% of incidents of intimidation documented involved children aged 9 to 17 as victims of intimidation, and 10% of incidents involved children (aged 15 to 17) as perpetrators. The interplay between drug debt and drug intimidation is particularly striking, with the same young people being both victims and perpetrators of intimidation.

*'The same young person who is acting tough in one situation, is the one who is terrified in another.'*  
Anna Quigley

The research found how debts are run up through recreational drug use, resulting in significant anxiety and mental health problems. Schools can often be the setting for intimidation, with a challenge being

that it is addressed as bullying and not specifically as drug-related intimidation. The threats can lead to withdrawal from school for the victim, pushing them further into disadvantage. Echoing the input of AGS, she highlighted that the responsibility for debts is often taken on by mothers, but that the issue of drug use, let alone drug debt, often only becomes known to the young person's family when a threat is made.

*'Mothers often only find out in the worst possible way – with someone banging down their door'*  
Anna Quigley

Among the knock-on effects of intimidation can be young people paying off the debt by holding or carrying drugs. The research noted how what is initial low-level involvement in illegal drug use can progress to more serious involvement in criminal activity e.g. from drug use to possession for supply as in the example above. The importance of intervention while young people have low-level involvement was stressed.

Citywide also presented some findings from the report by the School of Law, University of Limerick (UL), supported by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (2016) *Lifting the Lid on Greentown – Why we should be concerned about the influence criminal networks have on children's offending behaviour in Ireland*. This study examined the context of children who engage in serious offending behaviour and participate in criminal networks. Using a case study design, it first identified and then examined the behaviour of a criminal network operating in a Garda Sub-District in Ireland in 2010–2011. The Garda Sub-District was given the pseudonym 'Greentown'.

The research, based on a district that had an 'active crime network', essentially a gang structured around family and kinship, shows that there appears to be different life experiences for children in the family/kinship group and the "associate" group, with children who are close to the family/kinship group being relatively well looked after or 'protected', while associate children are more vulnerable due to chaotic and difficult backgrounds. The culture of the gang can appear more attractive to young people than the culture of the "system" (e.g. schools and state institutions).

*'The young people don't believe in the system, they don't trust the system, they see the difference between the opportunities that are there for them and those that are available to other people. The people that have authority over them - Gardaí, teachers, social workers – tend to be people from outside, whereas the power structures in the gang are people from their own community.'*  
Anna Quigley

A further study, the 'National Prevalence study', was carried out by the Greentown team to identify whether the findings from Greentown extend beyond that area. It found that the profiles of children described in the Greentown study appear to resonate in many other communities across Ireland. Citywide highlighted that addressing this issue young person by young person is of limited impact, and sustained, long-term planning and intervention is needed. In December 2017, €1.2 million was allocated by the Dept of Children and Youth Affairs to fund a new intervention programme to help children escape the influence of criminal networks, with more detailed design work being carried out as part of the ongoing work arising from the Greentown project. Citywide noted that the criteria for allocation of this funding have not been developed yet and there will be a national tendering process based on those criteria.

In terms of developing a response, there are some interesting points from the Greentown Programme that are relevant for the NEIC. As part of the report, a model has been outlined that would address this issue on a more systematic level, called the 'Greentown Model'. Citywide stressed that the Greentown Model is based on having four mutually supporting pillars and it cannot be reduced to individual pillars, they are as follows:

- Disrupting the network – make children less attractive to gangs and make gangs less attractive to children
- Community efficacy – gain community trust and confidence, with community at centre of design and development
- Pro-social opportunity structure – the gang offers expectations and opportunities – how can we match that for young people and for target group?

- Child self-determination – aim is that a young person does not feel under the control of the criminal network

Citywide noted that a programme outline under each pillar is now being worked on through the Greentown Programme, but stated it is crucial that the detailed design for the implementation of the intervention programme is carried out in partnership with the community where the intervention is to happen.

Citywide also referred to two other pieces of work relevant to young people and drug-related intimidation. As follow up to its 2016 audit, Citywide is engaged in research to look at the experience of youth services and community drug projects who are engaging with young people involved in, or at risk of becoming involved in, the illegal drugs trade. A report on the findings will be completed soon.

The Health Research Board (HRB) carried out an international evidence review on responses to drug-related intimidation to inform the development of the National Drugs Strategy and is now involved in work to develop the evidence base in Ireland.

Citywide described an innovative approach that was developed in the North Inner City by Young People at Risk (YPAR) for engaging with young people. The approach involves a comprehensive wraparound programme with interagency collaboration focused on young person's needs and engaging with community and family. The approach is now mainstreamed as part of Meitheal, a Túsla interagency programme for supporting at-risk children and young people. Citywide noted a concern that community-led models that are mainstreamed into state services in Ireland tend to become less flexible and responsive.

**Conclusion:** Citywide concluded with a series of recommendations

- Engage with young people who have been involved in gangs about their experience and the "desistance" process and gain an understanding of how it works. She noted key moments in the journey out of gangs as noted in the HRB Evidence Review including: first doubts, anticipating alternatives, turning points, ex-role, and belonging somewhere else.
- Address the mismatch between expectations and opportunities that young people have in relation to status and income – this needs real structural changes as well as providing individual opportunities
- The potential for strong messages, voiced by the community itself saying that it is not acceptable to recruit children into criminal gangs is important. However, it has to be recognised that the local community don't necessarily trust statutory agencies to support them if they take a leadership role.
- Have a specific focus on educating people about drug debt amongst young people. There is a lack of awareness in schools, families and the wider community and, in particular, among young people themselves about how quickly debt runs up.
- Recognise the crucial role of positive, supportive and consistent relationships in young people's lives. There is substantial evidence that an adult who is a consistent supportive presence in a young person's life can make a significant difference. Our current mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on the efficacy of projects that work with young people doesn't take this into account and appropriate systems need to be developed.
- Do not have any more short-term "pilot" programmes, invest in sustained and long-term planning and intervention.

## 2.7 Uncut Diamonds

The drama group Uncut Diamonds presented an extract from Under Pressure, a devised play about a family, their community and how they respond to the threat of violence in relation to their son's drug debts.

The performance had a very strong impact on the delegates, with a number of delegates (e.g. conference attendees) voicing their own experiences immediately after the performance, and others reflecting on how much the performance impacted their understanding of the reality of drug-related intimidation. It was a salient reminder of the importance of giving voice to people's lived experiences at events where policy and action are being decided.

*'What happened to me was much worse. They came looking for ten grand, and my 13-year-old granddaughter was upstairs and heard everything. If I'd be younger I would've told them exactly what I thought, but I was terrified.'* Delegate

*'I had a €6000 debt, and they wanted me to carry a gun for them, I am in recovery now, but I'm up for the charge on Tuesday and I'm terrified.'* Delegate

*'People are terrified, terrified to talk to the Gardaí - but they should, they can give safety advice.'* Delegate

*'We were really struck by the drama and what that opened up for people in the room - we need to get the voices of people heard and try to make the fear go away.'* Delegate

## 2.8 Summary of presentations

DRI is increasingly reported as an issue among local services. In the NEIC it affects over half those who interact with local support groups, but the community are much less likely to engage with the Gardaí than those in the wider area. The age profile of those affected is getting younger, and this is starkest in the NEIC, with additionally a high proportion of over 55s affected. People in the NEIC affected by DRI are substantially less likely to report intimidation to the Gardaí than those in the wider North Inner-City area.

The challenges of policing stem from a number of factors. Drug use, drug selling and DRI all happen within very tight contexts, within the same community and sometimes within the same family, making people fearful of, and conflicted about, coming forward. Intimidation can be very subtle, often without an overt verbal threat, which makes it challenging to police. There is also the challenge of a lack of community trust in authority and this is seen in particular among new communities.

A national audit has shown that children as young as nine have been caught up in DRI, with those as young as 15 perpetrating intimidation. Young people can be both user and 'intimidator' at the same time, caught in the cycle of intimidation before they even realize they have a drug dependency issue. The existence of criminal gangs in a community poses an additional challenge. Meaningful alternatives which fulfil the natural desire for status and income need to be available to young people in the area, as well as programmes that intervene when people are caught up in the cycle. More proactive engagement from a primary school level onwards as well as comprehensive supports for young people and their families who are caught up in the drug culture are needed.

The National Drugs Strategy has seen the development of a reporting system involving designated Inspectors as well as training on Drug Relation Intimidation by the National Family Support Network. The evaluation of this work will be completed before the end of 2018.

As noted during the conference presentations, a number of other actors have a significant role in relation to drug intimidation, including the Health Research Board, and the actors engaged in the delivery of the National Drugs Strategy. Additionally, the issues raised both by presenters and by delegates naturally also have implications beyond the specific remit of Sub Group 1, with particular relevance for Sub Group 2 Education and Training.

## 3 Delegate Recommendations

### 3.1 Overview

The second half of the conference saw all delegates asked to consider the following questions:

- What can be done to reduce DRI?
- What role can statutory agencies play in addressing DRI?
- How can communities help reduce the impact of DRI?

Delegates were assigned tables to ensure that there was a strong mix of representation from different groups and perspectives and asked to report back on three priority actions, including an identification of the agency that should lead on the action.

Additionally, delegates were invited to offer individual written feedback via an evaluation form and a comments box, both of which were anonymous. The responses from these have been incorporated below. Please see Appendix IV for a full transcript of the recommendations from the tables and an analysis of the evaluation forms and comments box forms.

### 3.2 Delegate Recommendations Summary of Themes

A number of key themes emerged from the delegate feedback, which can be grouped as follows:

- A **meaningful public communication strategy**
- **Opportunities and pathways** for young people in order to combat the attraction of drug related activities
- A specific focus on building trust and communication between **AGS and the community**
- **Support** for individuals who are active drug users, and support for their families.
- **Legislative reform** which address issues such as nonverbal threats and the recruitment of children into criminal activities.
- The need for **clear coordination** and a **resourced action plan**

### 3.3 Theme one: Meaningful community communications strategy and ownership over reporting mechanisms

The commitment to a public awareness campaign has already been given in the Mulvey report, and six of the ten tables prioritized this issue. The need to have more input from the people most directly affected by drug addiction and DRI was the most frequently raised issue in the evaluation forms (17 of 51) in response to the question about what issues were not adequately addressed at the conference. The importance of involving the lived experience of people directly affected came through both in the conference presentations, via the verbal responses to the 'Uncut Diamonds' piece and in the feedback from delegates on the issue that was not adequately addressed during the conference as noted above.

Among the key suggestions raised by delegates in relation to a public awareness campaign on DRI were that the campaign should"

- Include clear information for people on how to report DRI, and on the powers of the Gardaí in relation to this
- Include success and survival stories from the community informing the public awareness campaign

- Involve a wide range of front line service providers including General Practitioners and Public Health Nurses in its development and promotion
- Include a focused strand on young people

### 3.4 Theme Two: Opportunities and Pathways for young people

The issue of creating opportunities and pathways for young people to both avoid engaging in drug related activity and to leave criminal activity if they do get involved was highlighted repeatedly. The challenges presented by a lack of work and education opportunities and the 'attraction' of criminal activity in terms of status and money was discussed as were the potential pathways for young people. The issue was raised by five of the ten tables during the discussions. Among the key ideas raised were:

- Ensuring that there is an adequate range of opportunities and pathways to prevent young people getting involved in drug related activity e.g. pathways into meaningful alternative education, employment etc.
- Ensuring that there is an adequate range of opportunities and pathways to enable young people to move away from DRI.
- A programme in schools around drug use and understanding DRI
- Specific outreach to young people who are not currently engaged in services, but may be at risk of DRI, so that they know what services are available to them

### 3.5 Theme Three: Building Trust and Communication between the Gardaí and the community

The issue of improving relationships between the Gardaí and the local community was raised by six of the ten tables and was the second most common theme (15 of 51 respondents in the evaluation forms) in terms of blocks to progress on responding to DRI. Additionally, the issue of the genuine fear experienced by community in reporting DRI was mentioned by seven delegates via the evaluation forms.

Among the key suggestions raised by delegates were:

- Increased community liaison on DRI, including but not limited to liaison with AGS
- A community forum specifically to address DRI offering a safe space where issues can be raised and progressed with agreed level of involvement from AGS
- Increased, visible community policing with buy in from the community

### 3.6 Theme four: More support for those directly affected by drug use and DRI

There was a clear sense that tackling DRI cannot be done in isolation from tackling drug addiction. As noted above, the most commonly cited issue that delegates felt was not adequately addressed was the lived experiences of families with direct experience of drug addiction and DRI. Five of the ten tables highlighted the importance of treatment facilities and supports for families affected by drug use.

Among the key suggestions raised by delegates were:

- Long term commitment to case management / key-working for individuals, and support services for families living with DRI
- More resources for people in recovery from addiction to prevent relapse/re-engagement in DRI

- The need for a medical approach to drug misuse

### 3.7 Theme five: Legislative changes to tackle intimidation

The challenges of current legislation in effectively tackling DRI were raised by two tables, and as noted above, the challenges of policing non-verbal intimidation was also noted by AGS in their presentation.

The specific suggestions raised by delegates were:

- Amend current legislation that deals with this issue to include verbal harassment
- The need for legislation to make a specific criminal offense to engage children in criminal activity

### 3.8 Theme Six: The need for clear coordination and a resourced action plan

The need for greater coordination between the various statutory and voluntary agencies who are working on DRI, including the gathering of best practice and the need for a very clear action plan, with designated resources was raised by five of the ten tables.

Delegates were specifically asked to identify what blocks there might be to progressing the ideas raised during the conference twenty delegates, (approximately 38% of those that responded and 20% of those that attended) raised the issue of resources for community groups, with a small number (n=4) of respondents also noting the need for more resourcing of the Gardaí and statutory agencies .

Among the key points raised were the need for:

- A multi-agency forum with both statutory and voluntary actors at the table, with clear structures, resources and access points
- Funding for actions identified to reduce DRI
- Reporting and quantification of success of actions to reduce DRI

## 4 Process for arriving at recommendations

### 4.1 Overview

The process by which the recommendations in this report were agreed were as follows:

- 1) Based on the priorities identified by delegates (summarised above) six recommendations were drafted
- 2) Organisations who presented at the conference, and who are not members of Sub Group 1 were invited to preview the report, including draft recommendations, before it was submitted to the Sub Group.
- 3) A revised report incorporating comments by those organisations was then presented to Sub Group 1 (these original recommendations are available on request). At this discussion it was agreed that it would be of benefit in devising a time-lined action plan to involve other key players including the Chairperson's of the other four Sub Groups, representatives from the Department of Justice, the Department of Health and Dublin city council and a representative of new communities.  
On October 16th a workshop was held which involved {LIST ORGS} to examine the recommendations, which resulted in agreement on several priorities and the highlighted the need for further clarity on other items.
- 4) A further final consultation meeting involving {WHICH ORGS} was held on DATE at which the recommendations and timeline were finalised.

### 4.2 Criteria for Recommendations to be Included

The Sub-Group agreed to a number of criteria that, if met, would ensure recommendations that were relevant, actionable and supported. The recommendations could be included if:

1. The action is not duplicating work being done elsewhere
2. There is a lead agency with responsibility for the action
3. While the work may draw on best practice from other parts of the country, or inform best practice in the future, it should be specific to the NEIC.
4. There is a likely source/pathway for funding identified, if additional funding is required,
5. It is in line with an objective of the national drug and alcohol strategy, or another relevant national strategy or is connected to another priority in the Mulvey report
6. There is a clear process for community engagement and a continuous feedback loop
7. It can be sustained over time, and if evaluated positively made part of a mainstream funding programme.

## 5 Recommendations

### 5.1 Overview

Each recommendation below is a result of the process detailed in the previous section which involved consultation, review, testing against agreed criteria and sign off by the oversight group.

Each recommendation includes:

- A rationale as provided by conference participants
- A context for the action, which provides additional information on local or national issues
- A detailed recommendation
- **A draft action to be included in the overarching strategy arising from this report, to be completed by the Implementation Group**

### 5.2 Appoint Drug Related Intimidation Action Director for a fixed term of three years to spearhead and coordinate the work on DRI in the NEIC

#### Rationale from the Conference and from the consultation process

The need for coordination among agencies and for the prioritization of this issue was very clear from both the conference and the consultation process. The need for one post holder who had the authority to bring all the relevant actors to the table and to hold them to account for their commitments under the strategy was clearly articulated in the consultation process.

#### Context

Sub Group 1 has a specific mandate in relation to Drugs Related Intimidation and has led the process to date. This issue of DRI is multifaceted and requires a whole of the community approach as well as the engagement of multiple statutory stakeholders.

#### Recommendation

The post holder should:

- Convene the working group detailed in 5.1 below
- Agree a time lined implementation plan to support these recommendations (*if not agreed through consensus*)
- Map all the work by statutory agencies and community organisations that respond to the issue of Drug Related Intimidation in the NEIC
- Ensure that the population and specific needs of the NEIC are reflected in relevant regional and national research and programme interventions
- Create robust communication and reporting mechanisms between the relevant agencies
- Ensure that local communities are aware of the supports already available
- Lead on the sharing and implementation of best practice standards
- Lead an intensive community consultation process which underpins the community communication strategy on DRI
- Lead on the delivery of the community communication strategy

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<p><i>To be agreed by oversight group</i></p> <p><i>Dept of Health for community communication strategy</i></p>	<p><i>Recruitment complete by end Q1 2019</i></p>	<p><i>Salary (needs to be someone with authority to pull in all actors, thus needs a reasonable salary), plus employers PRSI and an operating budget/ hosting agency costs</i></p> <p><i>Budget for Community Communication Strategy f</i></p>

## 5.3 Establish an implementation group to ensure the delivery of this action plan

### Rationale from the Conference and from the consultation process

There is a need for a dedicated mechanism for progressing the issue of DRI in the NEIC, and to take forward the recommendations from this report in a timely and time bound fashion.

### Context

In addition to Sub Group 1, each of the other Sub Groups within the NEIC engage in work that directly impacts on DRI. Additionally, there are several statutory agencies and programmes with a specific remit on either direct or indirect remit on DRI in addition to significant inputs and front-line service provision from the community sector.

### Recommendation:

A time bound implementation group under the auspices of Sub Group 1<sup>4</sup> with a clear timeframe and terms of reference to be formed to oversee the implementation of the recommendations arising from this report.

- The working group will be under the auspices of the Sub Group 1 on Crime and Drugs
- It will be convened by the Drug Related Intimidation Action Director as detailed in 5.1.
- The following agencies will commit a representative to the working group who has the authority to lead on coordination and best practice:
  - The four other NEIC Sub Groups, including the newly established group on Drugs
  - The Departments of Health, Justice and the HSE
  - Dublin City Council
  - The North Inner City Community Coalition
- The working group is responsible for managing the delivery of this action plan against agreed timeframes
- Additionally, the terms of reference for the working group may include:
  - Managing the dissemination of best practice from existing and ongoing research and programme evaluations for the duration of its existence
  - Formulating best practice principles to be shared with all relevant agencies
  - Ensuring that any new initiatives have a complimentary monitoring and evaluation framework
  - Overseeing the adequacy of training available to organisations responding to DRI
- The action plan will be independently evaluated on a yearly basis to ensure it's ongoing strategic relevance

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<p>NEIC?/ AGS</p> <p><i>As this is a mechanism under Sub Group 1 arguably it is an NEIC entity</i></p> <p><i>It will require resourcing so NEIC need to reflect on this</i></p>	<p><i>Working Group in place by end Q2 2019</i></p>	<p><i>€ 5K for admin and operations. Action is predominantly driven by paid role as per action 1.</i></p>

## 5.4 Build meaningful community communication strategy on DRI and reporting mechanisms<sup>5</sup>

### Rationale from the Conference and from the consultation process

<sup>4</sup> It is noted that a new structure on Addiction has been established under the NEIC

<sup>5</sup> Originally there were two recommendations – one on a public awareness strategy and a second on building trust between AGS and the community, see Appendix I. These were merged into one recommendation at the

There is a strongly felt and persistent fear among the local community about reporting DRI. A number of factors influence this including a lack of understanding about the powers of the Gardaí, the challenges of reporting on members of one's own family or community, the challenges of securing convictions in relation to DRI, and the challenges of persistent street dealing which contribute to a daily lack of security. There is also agreement that relations between the community and AGS have improved exponentially in recent years, and that while the structures may be in place to deliver a micro-level community policing strategy that awareness in relation to these structures is low.

There is agreement that a specific campaign to address DRI in the NEIC region is required, and that it must have, as its focus, the empowerment of individuals and families to engage in reporting.

**Context**

The need for a public awareness campaign has already been highlighted in the Mulvey report. Under the National Drugs Strategy (2017-2025) there is also a specific mandate to strengthen the Drug Related Intimidation programme and if successfully evaluated, to develop measures to raise public awareness of the programme. Additionally, the standing subcommittee responsible for the implementation of the National Drugs Strategy has a specific remit to to 'develop, implement and monitor responses to drug-related intimidation as a matter of priority'.

The evaluations of the National Drug Related Intimidation Programme by An Garda Síochána and the National Family Support Network will be complete before the end of 2018.

**Recommendation**

Following the completion of the evaluation of the National Drug Related Intimidation Programme, design and deliver a community communication strategy on DRI in the NEIC in consultation with the local community, with a focus on the following:

- Ensuring the lived experiences of people who have first-hand experience of intimidation is reflected in the campaign messaging, and the direct experience of those who are involved in intimidation is sought
- Providing clear accessible information on how to raise concerns confidentially with the Gardaí, with a single dedicated phone number
- Having a dedicated, named community liaison person who can support improved relationships with the Gardaí
- Providing clear and accessible information on the powers of the Gardaí
- Establishing a safe structure for the community and Gardaí to communicate about DRI
- Engaging all those with front line access to the community including GPs, Public Health Nurses, Teachers, Community Adolescent Mental Health Services and Youth Workers
- A strand specifically targeting schools and youth work settings
- The use of community appropriate media and community champions
- The use of learning from other comparable programmes such as that run by Cosc<sup>6</sup>
- A clear feedback loop for the community and a formal evaluation process
- Identifying a budget to specifically support the work of the New Communities Community Policing Forum which currently operates on a voluntary basis, and ensuring that the community communications strategy specifically engages those who have English as a second language
- The development of technology led reporting mechanisms for younger members of the community

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<i>Department of Health for budget – nb what is the dotted line reporting mechanism to Dept of Health if they are funding this</i>	<i>This strategy should be rolled out over a three-year period with an intensive focus on community consultation to underpin a meaningful public facing campaign</i>	<i>Needs to be formally costed, that is out with the current process, but a ballpark should be suggested now to ensure it is in the Dept of Health estimates Suggested at the meeting that PIB decide final budget based on a pilot project, this might be</i>

<sup>6</sup>Cosc is The National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence. The aim of their national awareness campaign is to increase the awareness of domestic and sexual violence, to bring about a change in long established societal behaviours and attitudes and to activate bystanders with the aim of decreasing and preventing this violence.

		<i>a good solution for now – just get seed funding</i>
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## 5.5 Map and prioritize strategies that can divert young people from criminal activity

### Rationale from the Conference and from the consultation process

There is, anecdotally, a high level of engagement of young people in drug related activity, criminal activity and intimidation. There is a pressing need to address this both at an individual level for young people and at a systematic and strategic level.

### Context

There are a number of agencies contributing to this process in the NEIC including Sub Group 3 on Creating an Integrated System of Social Services, the Department of Justice, AGS and the community youth services. Additionally, there is growing evidence of the impact of gang related activity on young people and emergent strategies from the Greentown project on this topic.

### Recommendation

- Sub Group 3 to map available youth diversion interventions in this area as they relate to the NEIC. This is with a view to identifying gaps in practice as mapped against need, evidence in research and to create shared understanding among the different actors
- A conference to be convened on the issue of youth diversion strategies, with a strong emphasis on the direct engagement of young people who have been directly impacted by DRI. This conference will highlight gaps and developments needed as identified by research in previous step.
- A specific action plan on youth diversion strategies to be adopted by the Working Group based on the outcomes of the mapping research and conference, with timed activities and a specific evaluation strategy
- The inclusion of NEIC as one of the three pilot areas for the roll out of the Greentown project research

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<i>Sub Group 3/ NEIC</i>	<i>Mapping exercise including bringing all the agencies together by end Q1 2019</i>  <i>Conference by end Q2 2019</i>  <i>Action Plan adopted by end Q4 2019</i>	<i>Additional capacity for Sub Group 3 to lead on this?</i>  <i>Conference Budget ~ €7,000</i>  <i>Additional actions arising from the action plan – TBC</i>  <i>Monitoring and evaluation ~€5K annually</i>

## 5.6 Research and propose legislative changes to tackle intimidation and administrative powers to target welfare and other fraud to be investigated<sup>7</sup>

### Rationale from the Conference and from the consultation process

There are limits to the legislation regarding drug-related intimidation. Strengthening, for example, the Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act (1997) would ensure that Gardaí can pursue and prosecute individuals for specific crimes relating to this. Additionally, the issue of those benefiting from drug related activities availing of state benefits and the impact that this has on the community in terms of their belief in the justice and regulatory systems was also raised.

<sup>7</sup> The latter half of this recommendation was suggested by The North Inner City Community Coalition at the workshop on October 16, while it was welcomed in the room the area requires further discussion in order to ensure buy in.

## Context

It is noted that the Criminal Law (Recruitment of Children to Engage in Criminal Activity) Bill is currently going through the Houses of Oireachtas.

## Recommendation

- The Implementation Group to identify the relevant legislative gaps and make recommendations to the Programme Implementation Board to recommend changes to An Taoiseach's office directly.
- The Implementation Group to debate the issues of whether welfare and other supports can be withdrawn from those profiting from criminal activity, with due regard for the relevant human rights and equality provisions under Irish law and due process. Once this topic has had a full and considered debate, if appropriate research should be commissioned.

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<i>Implementation Group</i>  <i>Note: AGS cannot be seen to be seeking changes in legislation, so it is important that they are not commissioning the research</i>  <i>A conference on addressing welfare fraud may be a useful way of bringing this issue into the public domain and getting multi-stakeholder buy into a potential best practice model</i>	<i>Commission independent research on outstanding legislative gaps by end Q2 2019</i>  <i>Make recommendations to PIB by end Q3 2019</i>  <i>Commission independent research on appropriate mechanisms to address welfare and other fraud by those benefitting from drug related criminal activity by end Q4 2019</i>  <i>Make recommendations to PIB by end Q1 2020</i>	<i>I would suggest a research budget of ~€20K here, but as with all budgets, some parallel work by NEIC staff team to reflect on likely costs would be helpful</i>

## 5.7 Seek delivery of an adequate level support for those directly affected by drug use and DRI in the NEIC

### Rationale

Conference delegates underlined the importance of adequate treatment and rehabilitation for people with drug and alcohol difficulties and support for their families in the NEIC.

### Context

At the time of writing this report, a needs analysis of the North Inner City in relation to service provision for people living with drug and alcohol difficulties and their families is being undertaken by the Department of Health/ North Inner-City Drugs Task Force. In addition, a HSE audit review have commenced to ensure adequate services.

There is an opportunity to ensure that these two research processes are complementary, and can collate specific information on needs and coverage of same in the NEIC<sup>8</sup>. This information will support the effective implementation of this action, specifically, where a gap is identified in relation to service coverage for those with drug/alcohol difficulties and their families in relation to substance misuse support or DRI related support.

### Recommendation

The specific needs of the NEIC area in relation to drug services and supports to families to be identified and lead agencies identified for the delivery of additional / improved services.

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<i>PIB</i>	<i>Both reports will be complete by Q1 2019.</i>	<i>TBC post reports</i>

<sup>8</sup> Subgroup members will progress this: Anita Whyte will ensure the HSE review picks these recommendations up. Mel Mac Giobúin will ensure that the researcher picks this up and addresses in her work

<i>Department of Health (oversight)</i>	<i>Timeline for delivery of outcomes and budgetary dependent upon outcomes.</i>	
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## 6 Appendix II: Subgroups of the Programme Implementation Board

The four subgroups of the Programme Implementation Board

### 1. Tackling Crime and Drugs:

- **Objective:** to promote better and more visible policing with an emphasis on community policing as the key feature in the Plan. It must be "safe" to lead; it must be "safe" to live, work, learn and play in the community.
- **Chaired by:** Chief Superintendent Sean Ward, An Garda Síochána

### 2. Maximising Educational / Training Opportunities / Creating Local Employment Opportunities:

- **Objective:** to promote significant enhancement of the linkages between education and employment opportunity for this current generation of school goers, young adults and the unemployed in local businesses and enterprises, particularly in the business / retail area of the inner city and in the Docklands Development – both in construction and business occupation stages.
- **Chaired by:** new Chair TBC

### 3. Creating an Integrated System of Social Services

- **Objective:** Social, educational and training services to address the real problems faced by families and their children need to be planned and delivered in a far more coordinated fashion. Services should be co-ordinated under a single plan which is in response to the particular needs and circumstances of different communities within the area.
- **Chaired by:** Conor Rowley, Department of Children and Youth Affairs

### 4. Improving the Physical Landscape

- **Objective:** The area has some of the broadest streets in the City with potential for refurbishment and revitalisation. Future regeneration needs to explore the potential within the area to renovate, make it liveable and bright with improved physical landscape; to eliminate waste, derelict sites and progress the refurbishment and replacement of the existing flat complexes.
- **Chaired by:** Brendan Kenny, Dublin City Council

## 7 Appendix II: Membership of Sub Group 1

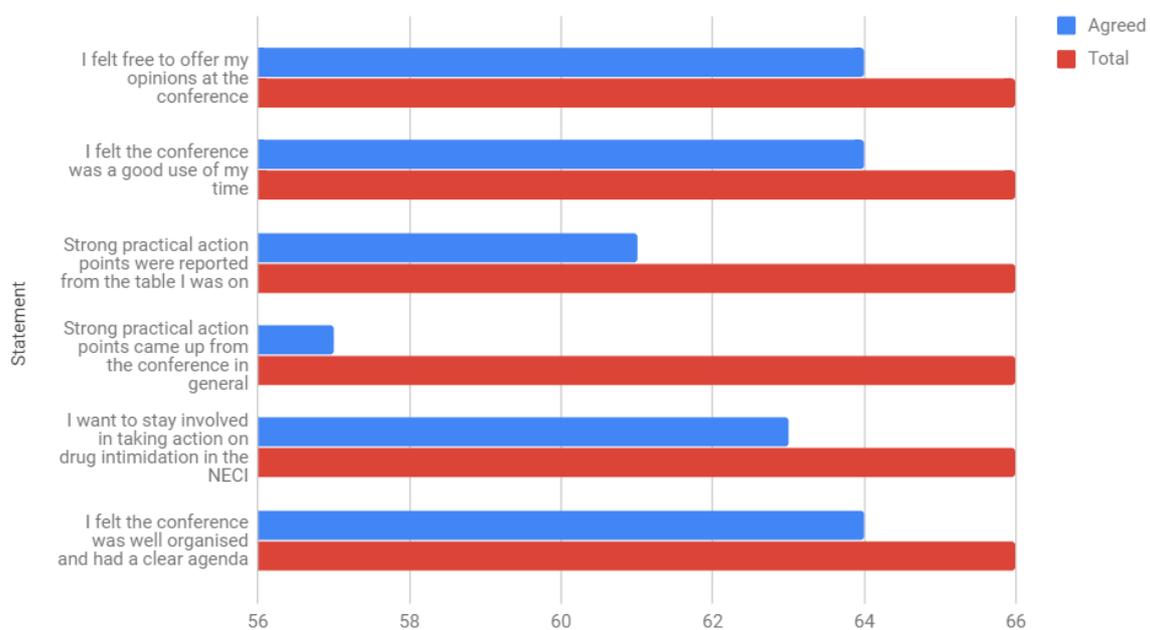
- Chief Superintendent Ward, AGS
- Mr Donal Barron, DCC
- Mr Eunan Dolan, Retired Superintendent
- Ms Anita Whyte, HSE
- Superintendent Gerard Murphy, AGS
- Mr Elfin Moran, DPS
- Ms Marie Metcalfe, CPF
- Ms Trina O'Connor, NCCCAP
- Mr Mel Mac Giobúin, NICDATF
- Mr Michael O'Riordan, NEIC programme office
- Ms Ciara Cunningham, Swan Youth Service
- Mr Richard Carson, ACET

## 8 Appendix III: Conference Evaluation Report

An evaluation survey was presented to delegates at the end of the conference, there were 66 respondents.

The evaluation form was in two parts, the first with a series of closed questions, to which delegates were asked to indicate whether they agreed, disagreed or had no opinion on the statement; the second with....

There was a high level of positive engagement from the delegates with the majority of respondents feeling free to offer their opinions (97%), feeling that the conference had been a good use of their time (97%), that the actions points emerging from their own group and from the conference in general were strong and practical (92% and 86% respectively). The majority indicated a willingness to stay involved in taking action on DRI (95%).



The open questions included in the evaluation were:

- Was there an issue/s that you felt was not adequately addressed today?
- What do you think the major blocks are to making progress on the actions identified today?

Fifty-one delegates offered opinions via this option and two more through an additional 'comments' box which was made available.

The most common theme which emerged in terms of issues that delegates felt weren't adequately addressed was the lived experience of people involved in or affected by DRI, with 17 delegates raising the issue. Delegates commented that there needed to be more focus on the impact of drug or alcohol use, as well as supports for people living with these difficulties, as well as more discussion on the long-term solutions to the drugs epidemic. It was also suggested that the voices of young men involved in intimidation needed to be heard and understood.

*'More family member input and real experiences talked about.'* Delegate

*'We need to talk about the real fear of reporting intimidation.'* Delegate

*'We need to focus on questions like how you can pay your debt if you are sent to prison'. Delegate*

Additional issues raised by delegates in response to the question about issues that had not been adequately covered were more focus on the existing powers of the Gardaí and clear information on what could be achieved, and more focus on education.

In terms of the blocks to actioning the ideas raised during the conference twenty delegates, (approximately 38% of those that responded and 20% of those that attended) raised the issue of resources for community groups. The second most common theme in terms of blocks to progress was the need to build enhanced trust between the local community and the Gardaí, including combatting the genuine fear that people feel about reporting (15 respondents). The third most common theme was the need for better coordination and clearer structures between all the agencies working on the issue, with long term commitments and clear roles for the community highlighted. (6 respondents).

*'We need funding, and a long-term commitment to fund key workers, eliminate competition of services – have all the services work cohesively together.' Delegate*

*'The genuine fear that people have about reporting needs to be acknowledged'*  
*Delegate*

*'We need to focus on the child issue as well as intimidation – build public support, makes it easier for people to disclose and bring issues to the authorities', Delegate*

## 9 Appendix IV Action points arising from the tables

### Table 1

1. Provide opportunities and pathways to prevent young people getting involved, and to enable them to leave. Responsible? Youth Services
2. Structured framework - where there is open and better communications between everyone Gardai, DCC, DSCP - similar to Meitheal framework for both perpetrator and victim.
3. Support for families when in crisis, build resilience, harm reduction, public awareness, education schools on intimidation. Responsible? Community and Statutory Organisations

*'let the perps know that the community is involved and are acting'.*

### Table 2

1. Community services to be informed of Criminal Assets Bureau and its power and local asset profiler. Community groups need to promote the 1800 250025 number. Responsible? Local Services and Community, Community Gardai.
2. Community networks, successful stories being relayed to the community. Responsible? Local statutory and voluntary services
3. Long term commitment to case management / key - working for individuals. There needs to be a continuum of care. Responsible? Local statutory and voluntary services

*'We need to have people sharing their stories of how to get out of it, to build up community resilience'.*

### Table 3

1. Relationships: To enhance relations between community projects and Gardai, there needs to be funding for a dedicated worker who is responsible for advocacy, liaisons, policy, public awareness of reporting programme. Responsible? The funding should come from the Programme Implementation Board, the community should be able to input and to tender to provide the service
2. Mechanisms: We need structures and resources (restoring pre-cut levels) with interaction points for task force, community reps and Gardai. Responsible? Task Forces / Projects
3. Action Plan: There need to be an action plan on DRI for the NEIC, make it happen from today, put proper resources behind it, a timeline and feedback opportunities. Responsible? All stakeholders with leadership from the Programme Implementation Board.

*'What's missing in communities? Building pride, confidence, giving people options.'*

### Table 4

1. To address legislation to include verbal harassment – this is a tough ask as it will take time. Examine the Portuguese model on how we address drugs. Responsible? TD's and Community Coalition.
2. We need safe structures for community and the police to communicate – for example a subcommittee of the community policing forum and preventative education in schools. Responsible? Community Policing Forum and Task Forces.

3. We need to build up trusting relations. 'Let us in' – we (the community) are (should be) the police, the teachers and the researchers. Responsible? Investment from the state, not a national policy but a local strategy.

*'Let us in - We are the police, the teachers, the researchers – we as a community need to be the leaders, and we need the changes so that we can get in.'*

#### **Table 5**

1. Community liaison person – not just for Liaison with the Gardaí. It needs to happen yesterday. Responsible? Funding from the Department of Health and Department of Justice, input
2. More resource for people for recovery from addiction, making the lifestyle away from drugs more attractive. We shouldn't forget other addictions like gambling and tablets, we need a treatment centre. This all needs to happen yesterday too. Responsible? Department of Health, HSE, Statutory bodies, the Community and the Task Force.
3. We need consumption rooms and to provide medical heroin [note there was not unanimous agreement on this point in the group]. Responsible? Department of Health, it should happen this year as the resources are in place [fact check]

*'All of this is urgent, it needs to happen 'yesterday''.*

#### **Table 6**

1. Set up a community forum specifically to address DRI, a safe space where issue can be raised and progress, with education and case conferencing used to respond to specific issues. Responsible? The Community with supports from the Gardaí.
2. Address the fear and reluctance to report intimidation: A clear and transparent process using trust and relationships within the community. Responsible? Not specified.
3. Revision of how issues around drug use and related intimidation is responded to [in schools?]. Responsible? Not specified.

*'We could have public awareness posters in places like the doctors office, so people know they could raise the issue there, and the GPs would have the knowledge to link people into available supports.'*

#### **Table 7**

1. Multi agency response with decision makers at the table alongside community decision makers. Responsible? Dedicated coordinator for DRI who work with all agencies.
2. Reporting and Quantification of DRI. Responsible? Health Research Board working with local service providers.
3. Increased community policing visible in the community with the support of the community, this is to create the conditions to enhance reporting and strengthen the relationships between AGS and community. Responsible: AGS and the Community

*We need to create the conditions that will build trust and increase reporting*

#### **Table 8**

1. Dedicated national phone number, sign-posting of supports, consistent advice and a public awareness campaign. Responsible? Minister for State

2. Dedicated DRI worker specifically for NEIC, with special responsibilities, a focus on interagency working, case work, signposting and referral and keep a consistent goal for the work and message. Responsible? Sub Group 1
3. Educate young people (primary school age) on what intimidation really is. Responsible? Schools, NICDATF Education and Prevention sub group, NECI sub groups.

*We could draw on experience like COSC on domestic violence, we need to target the media to get to the right people*

**Table 9**

1. Education and Information: Targeting young people and the victims and young people so that they access service providers Responsible? All the statutory and voluntary agencies
2. Creating a 'mediator' role a liaison between services and Gardaí. Responsible? All services involved
3. Creating champions in the community – to meet people where they are at and increase the rates of reporting. Responsible? Community Representatives.

*Trying to increase the proportion of the people who feel safe in bringing their concerns to the Gardaí – so that it becomes the norm*

**Table 10**

1. Empower with information on the ground, include the people that are trusted by the communities like public health nurse, coordinate the response and have a public awareness booklet. Responsible? PIB should fund a position.
2. Lobbying and legislation for funding for treatment beds and rehab thus reducing cyclical nature of intimidation. Responsible? Community Agencies and TDs.
3. Supporting introduction and implementation of legislation making it criminal offense to engage children in criminality [fact check]. Responsible? TDs, Oireachtas, Communities.

*People who meet with people on an informal level find out what's going on so we need to empower the Vincent de Paul, the Public Health Nurse, to know what to do next*