

**Policing, partnerships and profits: The operations of Business Improvement Districts  
and Town Centre Management schemes in England<sup>1</sup>**

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*Abstract:* This paper considers the emergence of Public Private Policing Partnerships (PPPPs) in England and focuses on two increasingly commonplace partnership bodies in particular: Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and Town Centre Management (TCM) schemes. It argues that in order to fully understand the operations of these partnerships, research must pay attention to their introduction, evolution and social relations. Through comparative case studies of local TCM schemes and BIDs in Coventry, Plymouth and Reading, it reflects upon the ways in which policing services are speculatively used to improve the ‘experience’ of being downtown and increase the likelihood of consumers and investors spending more in their district. It also sheds light on the evolving policing ‘portfolios’ the partnerships have developed and the roles that socio-technologies (such as CCTV and circulars) play in shaping the performance and relations of the partnerships. [Key words: urban policing, public-private partnerships, social relations, Business Improvement Districts, Town Centre Management, England]

## INTRODUCTION

Liz Millett is responsible for managing CCTV cameras, a security radio network, two warden patrol schemes and the licensing of street traders in Coventry city centre. She is not from the local police force or the city council. She is the Chief Executive of CV One, a not-for-profit Town Centre Management (TCM) company responsible for the day-to-day management of the city centre. As part of her work duties at CV One, she manages the Business Improvement District (BID), a recently-established subsidiary of the company, which is uniquely funded by a mandatory tax on business occupiers in the city centre, and delivers a variety of additional street services. In leading CV One and its BID, Millett is not limited to managing policing services, important as they are to CV One. She oversees a wide variety of

services, such as street cleaning, horticulture, marketing and car park management, all of which are seen to increase the attractiveness of the city centre to consumers and investors. As CV One's corporate logo spells out, Millett is responsible for 'destination management'.

CV One is not alone. TCM and BID schemes have emerged throughout England. By June 2008, there were over 500 TCM schemes in operation in England together with 59 BIDs – many of which are subsidiaries of TCM schemes ([www.atcm.org](http://www.atcm.org); [www.ukbids.org](http://www.ukbids.org)). Like CV One, the majority of these TCM and BID partnerships have developed some form of policing services, as have the numerous BIDs and TCM schemes that have been established in countries such as Canada, Germany, Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, Spain, South Africa, Sweden and the US (Forsberg *et al*, 1999; Hoyt, 2004; Cook, 2008a).

Everyday millions of people experience the areas in which BIDs and TCM govern. When in these areas, many are monitored by partnership security patrols or, if they have been installed, by CCTV cameras. As Vindevogel (2005) notes, it is also within the remit of many of these partnerships to apprehend and even punish those deemed to be misbehaving. As a result, BIDs and TCM schemes have a significant influence on how people behave in public. While there is a small academic literature detailing BID policing services in the US and South Africa (e.g. Stokes, 2002; Vindevogel, 2005; Miraftab, 2007), little is known about the policing services delivered by English BIDs and TCM schemes. This paper addresses this lacuna by considering the development, evolution and social relations of BIDs, TCM schemes and their policing services in England. To do this, the next section draws upon the existing literature to outline how Public-Private Policing Partnerships such as TCM schemes and BIDs should be conceptualized. The paper then engages in a comparative study of TCM and BIDs in the urban centres of Coventry, Plymouth and Reading. Such a study facilitates a better understanding of the *hybrid* nature of English BIDs and TCM schemes, simultaneously

highlighting the commonalities and differences within these ‘actually-existing’ partnerships (Ward, 2008).

Methodologically, this paper draws upon semi-structured interviews with 37 individuals who were either staff of the partnerships, members of the partnerships or representatives of other institutions that worked closely with the partnerships (e.g. council, police). 12 individuals connected to the development of national TCM and BIDs governance were also interviewed. Interviewing was supported by documentary analysis of selected core policy documents, policy speeches, websites and media documents. When used in combination, these methods provided a rich insight into the development and evolution of TCM and BID partnerships, and the policing services they have rolled out.

#### UNDERSTANDING PUBLIC-PRIVATE POLICING PARTNERSHIPS

Echoing wider trends in Western Europe, North America and Australasia, a recasting of the governors and deliverers of English urban policing is underway. Recent studies have shown that policing is becoming increasingly pluralized and fragmented, with the role of the police subject to significant transformations (e.g. Crawford and Lister, 2004a, 2004b; Crawford *et al*, 2005; Newburn and Jones, 2006; Yarwood, 2007). An ever more important element of the new landscapes of ‘plural policing’ is the private sector. The private sector has long been involved in manufacturing, servicing and consuming security equipment, as well as the buying and selling of security personnel (Jones and Newburn, 2002). However, it is only recent that the private sector has become involved in governance and delivery of selected ‘public’ policing services. Indeed, a small number of policing services, such as prison escorts and the management of selected prisons, are now conducted by private sector firms (Jones and Newburn, 2006). Some private sector elites have also been given seats on Public-Private Policing Partnerships (PPPPs) such as CCTV committees, Crime and Disorder Reduction

Partnerships (CDRPs) and, of course, BID and TCM schemes (Coleman *et al*, 2002; Hughes and McLaughlin, 2002; Hughes, 2003, 2007; Gilling, 2005). However, as I have noted elsewhere, private sector representation is rarely democratic or representative, and influence on public policies is far from uniform (Cook, 2009). That said, the PPPP has become an increasingly conspicuous and powerful feature of urban policing.

How, then, should PPPPs be conceptualized? I argue that three issues should be foregrounded in academic accounts: their (i) emergence, (ii) evolution, and (iii) social relations. Attention to all three is necessary if we are to truly comprehend the complex and contingent ways in which ‘actually-existing’ PPPPs have been operationalized. To be clear, this is not to say that other issues should not be studied. Rather, it implies that the three aforementioned aspects are of primary importance. This section will now consider these three aspects in turn, briefly highlighting how they have been studied within the urban policing literature and how they should be understood.

The emergence of a PPPP is widely seen as a significant moment of political reform. As a result, studies of PPPPs frequently discuss the political debates, discourses and institutional reform behind their development. The reasons behind their introduction have also been subject to significant speculation. For Jones and Newburn (2006), a key reason for the growth of auxiliary partnerships and the wider private security industry is the inability of police resources to meet spiralling public demands. The police, they argue, have sought to work with and empower others in order to close this resource-demand gap. Other studies have pointed to the influence of wider ideological change and the coercive influence of central government. Since the early 1980s the neoliberal belief that policing works better when ‘stakeholders’ work together, cutting across institutional and public/private demarcations has become hegemonic. As Crawford (1997, p. 170) notes, crime and disorder

are now seen as being multi-faceted with no one single agency, therefore, able to provide an effective, all-encompassing response. Partnership-working is viewed as a way of designing and delivering a holistic, strategic response, pooling information and resources, and removing duplicity. Studies have pointed to two ways in which central government have coerced public sector elites to engage in partnerships. First, the stipulations of selected governmental funding streams have been changed so that only PPPPs can bid, thus encouraging the formation of ‘grant-grabbing’ PPPPs (Jones and Ward, 1998; Williams *et al*, 2000, p. 176). Second, CDRPs have been rendered as statutory bodies under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. This makes it compulsory for the police, local authorities, fire and rescue authorities and, from 2004, primary care trusts to form local CDRPs and liaise with other public and private local ‘stakeholders’ to audit the governance of crime and disorder and establish ‘holistic’ responses to it (see Hughes, 2002). It is clear, therefore, that studies of partnership formation cannot overlook the *extra-local* influence of government and other bodies. Nonetheless, such a focus should not preclude the fact that that local partnerships can be set up through the discretion of local elites.

The ways in which PPPPs evolve post-introduction are also important. PPPPs are not set in stone; they change and adapt to their wider social, political and economic contexts. Yet, policing studies underplay the ‘institutional morphing’ (Fernie and McCarthy, 2001) of PPPPs (a characteristic which also plagues the studies of partnerships in other policy domains such as regeneration). This oversight is perplexing when policing studies have stressed the historical development and alteration of the police force (e.g. Reiner, 2000; Newburn, 2003) and the wider transformations in urban policing. In both cases, studies have demonstrated the trends towards partnership-working; the increasing use of preventive measures and disembodied surveillance (Norris and Armstrong, 1999; Coleman, 2004; Crawford, 2007); the amplified focus on minor misdemeanours, popularly known as ‘Anti-Social Behaviour’

(Burney, 2005; Millie, 2008); the return to foot patrols (Coleman, 2004; Crawford, 2007; Crawford and Lister, 2004a, 2004b) and the intertwining of policing and urban regeneration strategies (Johnstone, 2004; Hancock, 2007; Helms and Atkinson, 2007; Helms *et al*, 2007). It is important, therefore, to critically examine how and why partnerships morph in particular contexts. This, however, must be done *vis-à-vis* an analysis of the instances of organizational continuity and inertia, issues that have been highlighted in policing studies – for instance, Chatterton’s (1993) studies of ‘rank and file’ resistance to police restructuring and Sklansky’s (2007) analysis of the ‘burn-in’ of police mentalities.

PPPPs, their origins and their evolutions do not exist in a social vacuum. Throughout the social sciences and in geography in particular, there has been a growing awareness that institutions and other ‘things’ exist in complex networks of association. Geographers have argued that ‘things’ can only be understood *relationally* with reference to their connections, porosities and positions within wider power geometries (Massey, 1993; Yeung, 2003; Amin, 2004; McCann and Ward, forthcoming; cf. Sunley, 2008). Within criminology meanwhile, Johnston and Shearing’s (2003) concept of ‘nodal governance’ – which argues that “collective outcomes are pursued within a network of nodes, some of which are state institutions, but many of which are made up of commercial or community actors” (Jones, 2007, p. 857) – has influenced a growing number of policing studies to ‘think relationally’. Subsequent empirical studies have shown how the police have engaged in joint operations, shared information and other resources, and developed trust and reciprocity with other public and private security organizations (e.g. Dupont, 2004; Fleming and Wood, 2007). More critical studies have highlighted inter-institutional conflict and a lack of coherence among policing providers in the UK (Crawford *et al*, 2005; Crawford, 2006). Studies of nodal governance, however, suffer from excessive localism as they almost always focus on ‘horizontal’ networks, ignoring the more ‘vertical’ connections to actors and institutions

situated at other spatial scales. As recent debates within geography have shown, networks and spatial scales are both important aspects (materially and discursively) of the social world (Bulkeley, 2005; Leitner *et al*, 2008). Collapsing all social relations into a ‘flat ontology’ of networks as Marston *et al* (2005) have recently proposed, however, is counterproductive. Such a perspective blinds us to (a) the ways in which institutions, such as nation states and BIDs, actively (re)construct and govern territorial spaces at particular scales (MacLeod and Jones, 2007) and (b) the scalar discourses that actors and institutions construct, disseminate and act upon (Herod, forthcoming). Therefore, in order to understand the plurality of PPPP’s horizontal and vertical relations, it is important to recognize the multi-scalar aspect of networks (Dicken *et al*, 2001; Wood, 2005). More concretely, I suggest that studies of PPPPs should examine the heterogeneous, spatially-situated networked relations between the PPPPs and other actors and institutions situated at and across various sociospatial scales. Within this, close attention should be paid to the form and intensity of these relations, their development and evolution, and the uneven power geometries imbued within them. Furthermore, there is a need to examine the ways in which socially-mediated technologies such as CCTV and radios facilitate and constrain the behaviours and relations of the partnerships and their officials. After all, the act of policing is not conducted by humans alone but involves complex and contingent assemblages of human and non-human agents and relations (Haggerty and Ericson, 2000; Smith, 2007a).

Building on these understandings, the following sections will explore the operationalization of three English Town Centre Management partnerships and their BID subsidiaries. The introduction, evolution and social relations of these institutions will be comparatively and critically focused on. As these partnerships have undergone several name changes, the partnerships will be referred to by their current names throughout the paper: CV

One (Coventry), Plymouth City Centre Company (henceforth Plymouth CCC) and Reading UK Community Interest Company (henceforth Reading UK CIC).

## INTRODUCING AND EVOLVING TCM AND BIDS

By the late 1980s English urban centres were struggling. Footfall was declining, inward investment was waning and there was a general feeling that the ‘experience’ of shopping and doing business downtown was far from ideal. This was the case in the centres of Coventry, Plymouth and Reading, all of which were losing ground to the various out-of-centre and off-centre, purpose-built retail and business developments that had emerged since the late 1960s. Fuelled by a variety of factors – including relaxed planning regulations, cheap greenfield sites, the increased mobility of consumers, and consumer dissatisfaction with the experience of urban centre retailing – an uneven decentralization of business, and retail in particular, was taking place (Schiller, 1986; Bromley and Thomas, 1993; Guy, 2007). The built environment of Coventry and Plymouth’s city centres, which were almost completely reconstructed following the Second World War, were also problematic. They were increasingly viewed by many consumers, residents and investors as being out-dated, unexciting and deteriorating which in turn influenced their willingness to *be* in these spaces (Chalkley, 1998; Chalkley and Goodridge, 1991; Hubbard *et al*, 2003; cf. While, 2006). Reading’s urban centre, which was relatively untouched by bombs and hosted limited Modernist architecture (Philips, 1999), was also regarded by many as visually uninspiring and lacking an attractive array of retail outlets (Raco, 2003a).

In addition to this, deindustrialization took hold in Coventry, Plymouth and Reading from the mid-1970s onwards. Coventry’s experience was particularly severe as car manufacturing formed its economic base. In 1971, 119,069 Coventrians were employed in the

manufacturing sector. By 2001, this figure was 26,116, just under 22 percent of the 1971 figure (census data). In Plymouth, this was compounded by a significant downsizing of dockyard employment from the mid-1980s onwards, a result of reduced government spending and dockyard privatization (Bishop, 1991; *Western Morning News*, February 2, 2002, pp. 14). In contrast to Coventry and Plymouth, Reading found a relatively stable fix to the problems of deindustrialization through a significant growth in Information Technology, insurance and financial industries since the 1980s. The influx of new companies such as Compaq, Oracle, Cisco and Prudential brought a growth in professional and managerial jobs (Fletcher, 2002; Raco, 2004). Nonetheless, like its counterparts in Coventry and Plymouth, its centre was still stagnating.

In order to actively facilitate market growth in British towns and cities, the then-Conservative government insisted that local government must be *re-populated* through the political empowerment of the private sector and *re-orientated* through the prioritization of economic development projects (Deakin and Edwards, 1993; Ward, 2000). In Coventry, Plymouth and Reading, local government was relatively slow to follow this neoliberal prescription. Nonetheless, all three councils began to engage in piecemeal partnership-working and contracting out public services by the 1990s. Concurrently, speculative economic development projects aimed at encouraging inward investment were increasingly engaged in, taking the form of place marketing campaigns, business support, regeneration projects and shopping centre construction (see, for instance, Raco, 2003a, 2004; Spring, 2004). The emergence of neoliberal urbanism followed ideological shifts in the local political elite, many of whom were disillusioned with the ability of ‘insular’ and ‘defensive’ welfarist policies to reinvigorate the local economy (Cook, 2008b). The reconfiguration of urban government was also heavily influenced by central government’s alterations to statutory

legislation, funding requirements, circulars and ‘good practice’ guidance, all of which sought to neoliberalize the practices and personnel of the local state.

As part of the transformation of local government and the wider expansion of TCM in the UK, local TCM schemes developed in the three centres during the late 1980s and 1990s. The schemes were introduced to create conducive conditions for shopping, doing business and enhancing business profitability. In the words of Harvey (1989, p. 157), they would be about the ‘production of preconditions’ (Ward, 2007b). All three were set up by council leaders in reaction to the declining fortunes of their centres and reflected two ideological understandings. First, working with the private sector would improve policy decisions as businesses, operating there day-in day-out, better understood the needs of existing and potential businesses and customers. Second, consumers and investors were more likely to invest if these places were better marketed, cleaner, greener and safer.

As Table 1 demonstrates, the development and evolution of the three TCM schemes has taken on heterogeneous forms. In Coventry, selected city centre council operations were pulled together ‘in-house’ in 1987 under a dedicated city centre management team. In 1997 this team was replaced by an arms-length, not-for-profit, limited by guarantee private company, the City Centre Company. Local authority city centre services – namely car park management, CCTV monitoring, street trading licensing, street lighting maintenance, street cleaning, landscaping and the maintenance of the city centre public spaces – were transferred to the company. It remains the biggest wholesale transfer of city centre services to an outside body ever experienced in the UK (interview, official #1, CV One, August 2006).

Orchestrated by a newly-appointed Director of City Development, the transfer was in response to an emerging belief from within the council that “you cannot work in silos” (ex-official, Coventry City Council, interview, September 2006). It was also seen as a necessary

change so that the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which required a partnership formation from bidders, could be accessed. In 2002 the City Centre Company was subsequently merged with Coventry and Warwickshire Promotions, a partnership focused on events management and promoting Coventry and Warwickshire as a tourist destination, and renamed CV One (after the city centre's postcode).

Plymouth City Council conducted a similar reorganization by placing responsibility for street trading licensing and city centre events (among others) in the hands of a dedicated 'in-house' team in 1996. The rationale for this being that the services could be improved through closer communication and 'joined-up' thinking and working practices. An informal TCM board, dominated by private sector elites, was also set up in 1996 to bid for and govern two ERDF and Single Regeneration Budget-funded environmental improvement schemes in the mid-to-late 1990s. With council backing, the TCM board constructed a long-term Action Plan for its centre, focusing on improvements to its physical appearance, appeal and competitiveness (Plymouth City Centre Partnership, 1997). In 1998, a Centre Manager was installed, funded by the Chamber of Commerce, businesses and the city council, and given responsibility for encouraging inward investment and managing selected city centre services (e.g. street trading licensing, city centre events, a warden scheme). A privately-funded Centre Manager was deemed important to the council and the retailers and Chambers of Commerce that funded the position. As was the case in Coventry and Reading, it was hoped that, on the one hand, the manager would bring a degree of fiscal and discursive independence from the council, who were viewed with mistrust and scepticism by some local and extra-local businesses elites. On the other hand, the manager was seen as a conduit through which the views of businesses could be transmitted quickly to the council and other public organizations (interview, official #1, Plymouth CCC, October 2006).

**TABLE 1.** Partnership structures, operations and funding

	<b>CV One</b>	<b>Plymouth CCC</b>	<b>Reading UK CIC</b>
Establishment of TCM and BID	Appointment of City Centre Janitor in 1987. TCM company formed in 1997. Merged with Coventry and Warwickshire Promotions in 2002. BID established in 2005	Informal TCM board established in 1996. City Centre Manager appointed in 1998. BID established in 2005	Town Centre Manager appointed 1989. TCM board established in mid-1990s. BID established in 2006. Evolution into economic development company in 2007
Legal status	Not-for-profit company limited-by-guarantee (from 1997)	Not-for-profit company limited-by-guarantee (from 2004)	Community Interest Company (CIC) (from 2006)
Relationship between TCM and BID tables	BID sub-committee reports to TCM board	One board focusing on all TCM and BID issues	BID committee reports to CIC board. The Reading Market Group and Local Economy groups also report to CIC board
Major TCM operations	Car park management, street cleansing, landscaping, toilet cleaning, street trading licensing, retail radio and PubWatch, events management, marketing, CCTV monitoring, business development, Customer Service Assistants	CCTV monitoring, street cleaning, street trading licensing, events management, marketing	Strategic planning, marketing, inward investment and business support
Major BID operations	Evening Ambassadors, rapid response cleaning team, landscaping, Christmas lights, marketing	Free membership to Plymouth Against Retail Crime (PARC) initiative, landscaping, cleaning, Christmas lights, signage and CCTV installation, PCSO match-funding	Street washing, graffiti removal, Christmas lighting, marketing, PCSO match-funding
2007/08 funding	Approx. £9.7m including £6.3m grant from City Council and £286,000 from BID levy	Approx. £660,000 including £256,000 from BID levy, £292,000 from City Council and £105,000 from property owners	Approx. £550,000 including £275,000 from BID levy and £42,000 from Borough Council
BID assessment formula	0.9 percent of rateable value with 33 percent discount for businesses within shopping centres	1 percent of rateable value	1 percent of rateable value excluding shopping centre businesses that do not have street-facing shop front

*Source:* Partnership websites, interviews conducted and personal communication

In Reading, meanwhile, council services in the town centre continued to be delivered through a variety of departments. Amid this however, a Centre Manager was introduced in 1989, funded by public and private monies. One interviewee described his role as “a town centre janitor, admittedly a bit of an unkind phrase, whose main role was nagging people if the bins didn’t get emptied in Broad Street” (senior elected official, Reading Borough Council, interview, July 2006). Following a new appointment, however, the manager’s job description changed from janitorial supervision to attracting inward investment and supervising the pedestrianization of the town centre. A private sector sounding board was subsequently developed in the mid-1990s with the responsibility for advising the council on key policies affecting the town centre and, later on, developing a long-term Action Plan for the centre (Reading City Centre Management Board, 2005).

Although all three partnerships received funding from their respective local authorities and received other public grants, they actively sought to collect voluntary private sector contributions from local businesses. Badgering businesses for funding was widely seen as a ‘necessary evil’ as relying on public sector grants alone was considered insufficient if they were to compete effectively with rival localities. However, private contributions were at best modest and *ad hoc* with the vast majority of businesses situated in the centres not contributing (Cook, 2008a, 2008b).

Problems of inadequate private sector funding for TCM were a similar story nationwide (Medway *et al*, 1999, 2000). As a result, the Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM) lobbied the New Labour government to introduce a funding remedy for TCM that was sizeable, sustainable and long-term. Influenced by the seemingly-successful BIDs in the East Coast downtowns of New York City, Philadelphia and Washington DC, New Labour introduced legislation for English BIDs (Ward, 2006; Cook, 2008a). Echoing TCM schemes,

BIDs would be partnership-based and focused on improving the ‘trading environment’ of businesses. Unlike TCM schemes, however, they would (a) be funded by a mandatory levy on business occupiers within the district, and (b) only ‘go live’ if voted in by a majority of business occupiers (by number and rateable value) in a ballot. The proposed voting and funding procedures also stood in contrast with the BIDs in the US which are funded by property owners rather than business occupiers. The US system, however, was deemed to be ‘incommensurable’ with the existing system of collecting local business taxation through business occupier rates in England and Wales (interview, senior New Labour MP, February 2006).

Perceiving BIDs as a solution to the problems associated with voluntary private sector funds, and assisted by a national pilot scheme governed by the ATCM, all three TCM partnerships developed BIDs. Although BIDs were developed independently of TCM schemes elsewhere in England, the BIDs in Coventry, Plymouth and Reading were to be extensions, rather than replacements, of TCM. Services paid for by the BID levy would be governed by a separate BID committee within CV One and Reading UK CIC, with the committee accountable to the TCM board of directors. Meanwhile, BID and non-BID funded services would be governed by one overall board within Plymouth CCC. Following extensive consultation, marketing and successful ballots, the BID elements ‘went live’ in April 2005 (CV One and Plymouth) and April 2006 (Reading UK CIC) (see Table 2). CV One has subsequently experienced a successful re-ballot in February 2008, extending its stature until April 2013. Plymouth CCC and Reading UK CIC are set to go to re-ballots in 2010 and 2009 respectively.

**TABLE 2: BID ballot results**

	<b>CV One</b> (1 <sup>st</sup> ballot)	<b>CV One</b> (2 <sup>nd</sup> ballot)	<b>Plymouth CCC</b>	<b>Reading UK CIC</b>
Ballot ended	February 24 2005	February 28 2008	March 1 2005	17 November 2005
% of votes for by number	78%	83%	77%	68%
% of votes for by rateable value	75%	85%	66%	60%
Turnout	37%	36%	58%	38%
Number of votes	263	254	305	134
BID duration	3 years	5 years	5 years	3 years
Commencement date	April 1 2005	April 1 2008	April 1 2005	April 1 2006

*Source:* Partnership websites

Now up-and-running, the BID levies actually provide a variety of relatively modest, additional services to the partnerships. These range from bi-annual chewing gum removal in Reading to the installation of Christmas lights in Coventry. What is more, as the next section will highlight, a significant portion of the levies are earmarked for policing services.

Alongside the development of BIDs, a number of small transformations also took place including the formalization of Reading UK CIC and Plymouth CCC into limited by guarantee companies and, in the case of Plymouth CCC, the transfer of CCTV monitoring for the whole of the city. Showing further signs of a reterritorialization of TCM schemes (Cook, 2008b), Reading UK CIC became an economic development company in mid-2007 responsible for the whole Borough of Reading. Its BID committee was retained as was its town centre BID boundary.

Over their relatively short histories, the partnerships have continued to share a core *economic* objective. That is, to increase the profitability of businesses within the districts by bringing visitors and investors to them. In order to attract these individuals and organizations, the three partnerships have attempted to satisfy and stimulate the visual and emotional senses

of the target audiences, notably middle class consumers and inward investors (Ward, 2007b). As the next section will demonstrate, the partnerships have increasingly utilized policing services, alongside other services, to satisfy the desires of these audiences and encourage spending and investment.

#### CREATING AND DEVELOPING POLICING AGENDAS AND SERVICES

“The cornerstone of a great shopping environment is a safe and clean environment... We will be cracking down hard on all low level anti-social behaviour.”

Official, Plymouth CCC (quoted in *Western Morning News*, May 26, 2005, pp. 50)

Since their inceptions, the three partnerships have become increasingly concerned with the incidents and consequences of crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). While the ability and desire to *directly* address issues of these issues has varied between the partnerships, the belief that ASB and crime has a negative influence on the profitability of businesses within their districts has long been accepted by partnership officials. As part of this, it has been widely thought that the signs, stories, expectations and experiences of crime and ASB discourage consumers from (a) visiting the centres in the first place, (b) staying longer once there, or (c) repeating their visit. The middle classes, furthermore, have been seen as being particularly concerned about their safety in these central spaces and tempted by seemingly-safer spaces elsewhere. During an interview a Plymouth CCC official (#1, October 2006) reasoned that:

“It would seem to make intuitive sense that if you have a really grotty area with people that look intimidating and where there is no sense of security that it would put people

off from the ABC1 [socioeconomic] bracket<sup>3</sup>. I think it is just good common sense...

After all, a lot of people just want to be in a mall. They expect pristine clean conditions and if they then step outside of the mall and then see a rather drab, dirty and unsafe area then they will then stay in the mall rather than go outside and explore the rest of the offer. So I think that is part of what we are trying to address.”

As the partnerships have focused their attention on attracting ‘stay away’ middle class consumers and investors in particular, it is not surprising that they have sought to address their perceived concerns about safety and misbehaviour in the centres. Over time they have developed policing agendas that seek to create actually and psychologically safer spaces through the monitoring, deterring and apprehending of misbehaviour, its signs and its perpetrators.

All three partnerships have developed a number of policing services. Nonetheless, as Table 3 demonstrates, the longitudinal development of these services has varied. Since their inception, CV One and Plymouth CCC have developed and acquired a number of policing services, notably CCTV monitoring, street trading licensing, mobile patrols and radio networks. These are either delivered in-house or contracted out. Unlike these two, Reading UK CIC neither developed, nor was given, any *direct* policing responsibilities prior to the inception of the BID. This is due to the partnership being considered as a strategic, economic development-focused partnership with no direct service delivery functions. However, the BID was seen by local elites as a way of financing ‘hands-on’, day-to-day services for the partnership. Even so, the policing services selected as part of the BID were relatively modest

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<sup>3</sup> ABC1 is an occasionally-used phrase in Britain which signifies the working upper and middle classes. It is the amalgamation of the socio-economic categories A (higher managerial, administrative or professional workers), B (intermediate managerial, administrative or professional workers) and C1 (supervisory and junior managerial, administrative or professional workers) as originally devised by the National Readership Survey in the 1950s ([www.nrs.co.uk](http://www.nrs.co.uk)).

in the form of part-funded Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and the installation of CCTV warning signs throughout the BID area.

Mobile security patrols are key figures in all three partnerships. In Coventry city centre, Customer Service Assistants (as they are now known) were introduced in the 1980s by the city council and transferred to CV One in 1997 (Green, 1998). Plymouth CCC have had three different patrol schemes since 1999, the latest being PCSOs whom the partnerships co-funds with the Devon and Cornwall Police. In 2006 Reading UK CIC agreed with the Thames Valley Police to part-fund the deployment of PCSOs in its BID area. CV One, therefore, are the only partnership of the three who deliver patrols 'in house'. All these schemes, past and present, have focused on the patrolling of public space by foot, defusing confrontational situations and communicating with businesses and the public. Behind their introduction was the belief that mobile, uniformed personnel can discourage people from misbehaving and can report any incidents to the relevant bodies (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2006; Paskell, 2007). It was also recognized that PCSOs, as uniformed civilian employees of the police force, had a number of legal powers and an ability to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for a limited number of minor offences (such as littering and cycling on the footpath) that other auxiliary figures did not have (see Tables 4 and 5). Perhaps more importantly, the various mobile patrol schemes were viewed as 'reassurance beacons', making customers less apprehensive about experiencing intimidating behaviour, injury or theft and more concerned with their consumption desires.

**TABLE 3.** Key policing services governed, paid for or provided by CV One, Plymouth CCC and Reading UK CIC

	<b>Service</b>	<b>Inaugural year</b>	<b>Coverage</b>	<b>Operational funding</b>	<b>Service provider</b>
CV One	CCTV monitoring	1997 (t)	Across CBD and Earlsdon Street	Coventry City Council	CV One
	Customer Service Assistants	1997 (t)	Across CBD	Coventry City Council	CV One
	Street trading licensing	1997 (t)	Across CBD	Coventry City Council	CV One
	Retail radio network	1998 (d)	BID members	Coventry City Council/BID levy	CV One
	Evening Ambassadors	2002 (d)	Across CBD	BID levy	CV One
	CCTV monitoring	2007 (pr)	Across 88 industrial estates in Coventry that are governed by Coventry Best for Business BID	Coventry Best for Business BID levy	CV One
Plymouth CCC	Street trading licensing and enforcement	1998 (t)	Across CBD	Plymouth City Council	Plymouth CCC
	CCTV monitoring	2005 (t)	Across Plymouth	Plymouth City Council	Plymouth CCC
	Retail radio and exclusion orders network	2005 (pu)	BID members and other shops within CBD. Recently expanded to include shops outside CBD	BID levy	Plymouth Against Retail Crime
	PCSOs	2006 (pu)	BID area	Match-funding between BID levy and Devon and Cornwall Police	Devon and Cornwall Police
Reading UK CIC	PCSOs	2006 (pu)	BID area	Match-funded by BID levy and Thames Valley Police	Thames Valley Police
	CCTV warning signs	2006 (pu)	BID area	BID levy	Reading Borough Council

*Key:* (t) transferred from council, (d) developed in-house, (pu) purchased from external supplier, (pr) provided for external organization

Source: Partnership websites, interviews conducted and personal communication

**TABLE 4.** General powers designated to PCSOs

<b>Powers</b>	<b>Coventry</b>	<b>Plymouth</b>	<b>Reading</b>
<i>Standardized</i>			
To require name and address	Yes*	Yes	Yes
To require name and address for anti-social behaviour	Yes	Yes	Yes
To require name and address for road traffic offences	Yes*	Yes	Yes
To confiscate alcohol in designated places	Yes	Yes	Yes
To confiscate alcohol from person under 18	Yes	Yes	Yes
To confiscate tobacco from person under 16	Yes	Yes	Yes
To seize drugs and require name and address for possession of drugs	Yes*	Yes	Yes
To enter to save life/limb	Yes	Yes	Yes
To seize vehicle used to cause alarm	Yes	Yes	Yes
To remove abandoned vehicles	Yes	Yes	Yes
To stop pedal cycle	Yes	Yes	Yes
To direct traffic for purposes other than escorting abnormal loads	Yes*	Yes	Yes
To carry out road checks	Yes	Yes	Yes
To place traffic signs	Yes*	Yes	Yes
To cordon off areas	Yes	Yes	Yes
To stop and search in authorized areas under the Terrorism Act 2000	Yes	Yes	Yes
To photograph persons away from a police station	Yes*	Yes	Yes
<i>Discretionary</i>			
To detain	No	Yes	Yes
To require name and address for offence causing injury, alarm, distress, loss or damage to property	No	Yes	Yes
To use reasonable force to transfer control of detained persons	No	No	No
To enforce byelaws	No	No	Yes
To deal with begging	No	Yes	Yes
To enforce certain licensing offences	No	No	Yes
To search detained persons for dangerous items	No	No	Yes
To use reasonable force to prevent a detained person making off	No	Yes	No
To disperse groups and remove persons under 16 to their place of residence	No	Yes	Yes
To remove children in contradiction of curfew to their residence	No	No	No
To remove truants to designated premises	No	No	No
Power to search for alcohol and tobacco	No	Yes	Yes
To enter licensed premises	No	Yes	Yes
To stop vehicle for testing	Yes	Yes	Yes
To direct traffic for purposes of escorting abnormal loads	Yes	Yes	Yes
To deal with Park Trading offences (only available to Metropolitan Police Force)	No	No	No
Total prior to national standardization	13	26	28
Total after national standardization	19	26	28

Key: \* = Power not previously delegated to PCSOs prior to national standardization

Source: [www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)

**TABLE 5.** Offences PCSOs can issue Fixed Penalty Notices in response to

<b>FPN offences</b>	<b>Coventry</b>	<b>Plymouth</b>	<b>Reading</b>
<i>Standardized</i>			
Littering	Yes	Yes	Yes
Offences under Dog Control Orders	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cycling on a footpath	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Discretionary</i>			
Truancy	No	No	No
Graffiti and fly-posting	No	Yes	Yes
Drunk in the highway	No	No	No
Throwing fireworks	No	Yes	Yes
Trespassing on a railway	No	Yes	No
Throwing stones at a train	No	Yes	No
Drunk and disorderly behaviour	No	No	No
Wasting police time/giving false report	No	No	No
Destroying or damaging property (under £500)	No	No	Yes
Causing harassment, alarm or distress	No	No	Yes
Drinking in a designated public area	No	Yes	Yes
Supply of excessively loud fireworks	No	Yes	Yes
Using public electronic networks in order to cause annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety	No	No	No
Breach of fireworks curfew	No	Yes	Yes
Possession of category 4 firework	No	Yes	Yes
Possession by a person under 18 of an adult firework	No	Yes	Yes
Selling or attempting to sell alcohol to person who is drunk	No	Yes	Yes
Sale of alcohol to person under 18	No	Yes	Yes
Buying or attempting to buy alcohol on behalf of an under 18	No	Yes	Yes
Purchase of alcohol for person under 18 on licensed premise	No	Yes	Yes
Consumption of alcohol by a person under 18 or allowing such consumption	No	Yes	Yes
Delivery of alcohol to a person under 18 or allowing such delivery	No	Yes	Yes
Knowingly giving false alarm to fire and rescue authority	No	No	Yes
Excluded pupil found in public place (September 2007 onwards)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total prior to national standardization	3	18	19
Total after national standardization	3	18	19

*Note:* All forces issued Fixed Penalty Notices to standardized offences prior to national standardization

Source: [www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)

The decisions by CV One and Plymouth CCC's to take up its management from their respective councils (in 1997 and 2005 respectively) were structured by the belief that CCTV could simultaneously reassure well-behaving, apprehensive citizens and discourage potential 'troublemakers' who would be afraid of being 'caught-on-camera'. Both councils felt that CCTV operations would be run more effectively by private sector officials, although it was never made clear publicly *how* private sector management could improve CCTV operations. Unlike Coventry City Council's decision to transfer only the city centre cameras and keep responsibility for the other cameras in the city, Plymouth City Council were keen to transfer *all* of their cameras to the partnership to avoid fragmenting the network.

Radio networks – which allow businesses, CCTV operators, mobile patrols and the police to communicate with each other via handheld radios – were developed in-house by CV One in 1998. Plymouth CCC, in contrast, used BID levy funds to pay for all retailers in the BID area to become members of the Plymouth Against Retail Crime (PARC) scheme in 2005. As part of this, BID members were given free handheld radios. The radio networks were developed as it was believed that they would facilitate rapid communication between local 'stakeholders' and that requests for assistance, information about potential and actual deviants and the sharing policing tactics could be easily and quickly transferred (official, PARC, interview, October 2006; see also Wright, 2000; Brown, 2007). As I will explain later, radios were also seen as effective mechanisms through which civilians could be 'responsibilized' and additional 'eyes and ears' recruited. Reading UK CIC, meanwhile, did not develop a retail radio scheme because it was initially unwilling and financially unable to engage in 'hands-on' policing services. Even when Reading UK CIC were able and willing to finance policing services through the BID levy, a radio network was deemed unnecessary as other business radio schemes were being planned and implemented in Reading (officials #1 and 2, interview, July 2006).

The partnerships in Coventry, Plymouth and Reading have also developed other services and projects that have less obvious policing and social control dimensions to them. Cleaning and landscaping services, for instance, have been responsible for cleaning up the debris of ASB whether this is the dropping of litter or chewing gum, the spraying of graffiti or the destroying of greenery. Much of the partnerships' marketing, furthermore, represents and promotes their localities as being fun, scenic and, by implication, safe (cf. Neill, 2001). The distinctiveness of each service area is, therefore, blurred at the edges.

After 'going live' the policing services in the three partnerships – CV One and Plymouth CCC in particular – have undergone notable alterations. Their CCTV networks, for instance, have experienced an increase in staff numbers, manned surveillance hours and camera numbers. In line with Surette's (2005) assessment that CCTV is undergoing significant and rapid technological development, both CCTV control centres have also been re-equipped with new technology in recent years. Although the recent arrival of Home Office-funded 'talking CCTV' cameras in early 2007 received attention in the local media (see, for instance, Keller, 2007; Nichols, 2007), the switch from analogue to digital technology in both control rooms is probably the most significant technological development. This has offered the opportunity for instant playback as well as 'real-time' recordings on all the cameras in the network. Few static cameras remain in either network with the majority of the cameras being Pan, Tilt and Zoom (PTZ)-enabled allowing the operator to have instant control over the movement of the cameras. Furthermore, in July 2007 CV One were contracted to monitor CCTV in the 88 business parks and industrial estates across Coventry governed by the recently established Coventry Best for Business BID in return for a profit-making annual fee.

As noted earlier, CV One and Plymouth CCC have both restructured their mobile patrol personnel. In 2002 and following a successful bid for European Regional Development Fund

monies, CV One hired an *additional* patrolling unit, the Evening Ambassadors (see Fig. 3). They were deployed to extend the presence of CV One mobile patrols into the evening (the Customer Service Assistants work between 6.30am and 9.30pm, Monday to Sunday, while the Evening Ambassadors work between 5pm and 4am, Wednesday to Saturday). They were also created amid fears of escalating night-time violence and misbehaviour as well as the growing numbers of over 30s staying away from the centre past six o'clock (interview, official #5, CV One, 19 January 2007). Plymouth CCC, meanwhile, have employed three consecutive wardens schemes. The first warden scheme, which operated between 1999 and 2005, also acted as an Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) programme in which long-term welfare claimants worked full-time for a low salary while they searched for alternative employment (interview, official #2, Plymouth CCC; cf. Helms, 2007, 2008). The scheme finished when the cocktail of Single Regeneration Budget, New Deal and European Social Fund monies ended. The two subsequent schemes were funded by the BID. Chubb security guards were contracted in to patrol the streets between 2005 and 2006 and these were soon replaced by part-funded PCSOs. Plymouth CCC viewed the PCSOs as having greater enforcement powers than the security guards. Unlike the PCSOs, security guards had no powers of arrest above citizen's arrest and while they could report misbehaviours to the relevant authorities, they were unable to issue fines. In addition to this, PCSOs were also seen as being better recognized and respected by the public. The fact that Plymouth CCC and Reading UK CIC could opt for PCSOs was not only due to the recent introduction and empowerment of PCSOs under the Police Reform Act 2002 but also down to Home Office directives instructing police forces to seek external funding sources, whether public or private, for PCSOs (Home Office, 2006). While vehemently opposed by the Police Federation (Caless, 2007), PCSOs were popular among senior officials within the Devon and

Cornwall Police and Thames Valley Police, both of whom actively sought out ways of expanding the numbers of PCSOs through various match-funding agreements.

The introduction and evolution of these policing agendas and services have been structured by a variety of factors. These include localized and evolving perceptions of what problems exist, the service delivery gaps and failures, the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the service options, the estimated popularity of these services (for instance, among the BID voters), and the perception of how effective and efficient existing services are. What is more the ability to provide services such as wardens and CCTV has been structured by the relatively limited finances of the partnerships and their somewhat ‘hit-and-miss’ abilities to access external (and often short-term) funding streams. The importance of obtaining external funding and the implications of external funding ‘drying up’ shows only too clearly that the operations of these partnerships are influenced heavily by decisions made elsewhere at a variety of spatial scales, an issue that will be examined in depth in the next section. To conclude this section, however, it is worth noting that the alterations in the partnerships’ policing agendas and services have been somewhat uneven and selective. These partnerships are not in a state of continuous change. Indeed, several core aspects of the partnerships such as the desire to improve business profitability, the perceived casual linkage between minor misdemeanours and reduced profitability and the belief that CCTV cameras and wardens ‘work’ have remained. The partnerships have therefore experienced a contingent, but not completely self-determined, cocktail of change and continuity.

## NETWORKED RELATIONS

The three partnerships are situated within complex, evolving and multi-scalar governance networks. A large series of actors and institutions attempt to influence what they do and how

they do it. This section will examine a number of these relations, focusing in particular on the role of socio-technologies – such as regulations, legislation, funding applications, contractual agreements, network radios, CCTV and good practice guidance – in framing these relations. Let us look first at good practice guidance. A small number of national institutions – notably the ATCM, British BIDs and the Department of Communities and Local Government – have created and disseminated what they believe TCM and BIDs could and should be doing, often with reference to seemingly-successful schemes elsewhere (McCann and Ward, forthcoming). These ‘good practice’ benchmarks are disseminated through a number of mediums including websites, conferences, workshops, PowerPoint presentations and booklets (e.g. Reilly and Szabo, 2005) as well as less formal oral and written communication. These guides offer a range of policy alternatives but, as Bulkeley (2006) argues, they often silence more radical alternatives. However, as a result of the voluntary nature of good practice guidance, staff time pressures and scepticism toward its relevance and transferability, the uptake by the three partnerships has been somewhat limited (Cook, 2008b).

Businesses, the public, local and regional authorities, police forces and other organizations also frequently contact the partnerships and their officials to suggest alterations to existing operations. The PARC and CV One radio networks, for instance, are constantly used by businesses to contact partnership officials with requests for ‘action’ (e.g. for CCTV to monitor certain individuals). Similarly, the various mobile patrol schemes are marketed as being approachable and responsive to the wishes of businesses and the public (see Fig. 1). Indeed, all three partnerships encourage businesses, the public and other institutions to alert them to potential and actual disturbances. To use a well-worn metaphor, external actors such as door staff, police officials and the public are viewed by the partnerships as additional ‘eyes and ears’ who can see and hear when partnership officials are not present (cf. Saunders, 1999). Of course, the utilization of this information by partnership officials is rarely uniform

because of the value judgements made by the officials over the source, accuracy and timing of the information and the perceived ‘seriousness’ of the incident reported. Furthermore, these communication channels are not used simply for the flow of external information into the partnerships. As well as being used to watch the public at-a-distance, the CCTV cameras and radio networks are also used to help provide mobile patrols and door staff with *in situ* instructions and advice whether this is from the partnership, police or other radio users (cf. Smith, 2007b). Furthermore and in the words of Garland (2001), CCTV and radios are also subtle means to ‘responsibilize’ businesses. The cameras implicitly suggest that ‘inappropriate acts’ of policing (such as excessive force by door staff) may be recorded, watched and recordings possibly used as evidence against them. Meanwhile the radios are accompanied by subtle messages that businesses are responsible for their own safety and that they should be pro-actively sharing information with others.

In recognition that they lack the funds, institutional capacity, expertise, power or public legitimacy that the police possess, the partnerships have actively sought to liaise with the police. Concurrently, the police have also recognized the need for co-operation, viewing partnership officials as additional ‘eyes and ears’. In addition, as several interviewees noted, the partnerships’ mobile patrols tend to engage in more-menial activities that can potentially ‘free up’ the time of the police to engage in more serious, specialist activities. In all three cases, police-partnership relations have intensified over time. However, the *form* of these relations has varied. In Reading and Plymouth, the match-funding of PCSOs has facilitated a client-service provider relationship between the partnerships and the police. In both instances, the day-to-day management and hiring of the PCSOs are provided by senior police officials in the Basic Command Unit. The duties and roles of the PCSOs are selected through negotiation, and outlined in a Service Level Agreement signed by both parties. However, despite the contractual agreement and rhetoric about sharing ‘similar goals’, the interviews

revealed that (a) the relations between the two institutions are continually negotiated and (b) tensions exist over the level of influence the partnerships demand over the day-to-day duties of the PCSOs. As one official at Thames Valley Police (interview, July 2006) argued:

“[The PCSOs] are not bitches of retail and not bitches of the [BID] committee... Ultimately I am in control of where they operate and what they do. You ask [the BID staff] and they will say that the BID committee are. But if I say no, it won’t happen because I’m their line-response manager in effect... Now saying that, it is not a dictatorship and I haven’t got sole responsibility. Really it is a coming together of minds about the best mechanisms for doing that. And there will be conflict no doubt.”



**Fig. 1.** PCSOs talking with the public on Armada Way, Plymouth

Photo taken October 2006

In Coventry and Plymouth, the police and partnership officials frequently work together on CCTV. In both cases, the monitoring is conducted by partnership officials and live images are fed through to the police station. The police, in both instances, make frequent directional requests via networked radios to camera operatives, in most cases asking for specific suspects, incidents and spaces to be monitored. The police are also given CCTV tapes for use as evidence, and, on occasions, police officers visit the control centres to help monitor the cameras. A similar police-partnership relation does not exist in Reading as Reading UK CIC has no involvement in CCTV operations (which are run by Reading Borough Council).

The (selective) use of CCTV and network radios, along with other technological innovations such as emails and websites, have assisted with rapid communication between the partnerships and other actors and institutions. Yet in spite of this, face-to-face communication remains vital to the networked operations of the partnerships. In Coventry, for instance, every morning a meeting takes place, chaired by the West Midlands Police's City Centre Inspector and attended by the CV One's Customer Service Assistants and CCTV operators, police officers, PCSOs and city council-managed neighbourhood wardens. In this meeting, selected intelligence is shared and the spatial division of labour discussed and set out for the day ahead:

“If, for instance, we [the police] have a problem with car crime, [the Customer Service Assistants] will be tasked with aims to walk a particular car park or walk a number of car parks. There is no point all of us doing one car park and car parks two and three don't get walked. So the morning meeting provides the opportunity to say, if you do one, we'll do two and someone else can do three and we will do it at these times of day.

The daily meeting provides the meat on the bones if you like. And the wardens and CV One officials bring with them an awful lot of intelligence and I would like to think take away an awful lot as well.”

Official, West Midlands Police (interview, November 2006)

Face-to-face meetings are very important to the partnerships. Senior partnership officials spend a considerable amount of their working time in various meetings and conferences. Meeting rooms also provide the setting for the various board and committee members to come together, discuss matters and actively govern the partnerships. ‘Front-line’ staff also engage heavily in face-to-face communication with the public, businesses and other institutions. For instance, CV One’s Evening Ambassadors spend a large amount of time during each shift talking with door staff and the CCTV operators in the Skydome (a privately owned leisure complex in the city centre) sharing information about incidents and ‘troublemakers’ (see Fig. 2). Despite the attractiveness of electronically-mediated communication, proximity and face-to-face interaction can offer a more personal and sometimes more convenient form of communication. As some interviewees argued, this facilitates fast responses and can lead to a greater degree of trust and reciprocity (for a discussion of the merits of face-to-face communication see Storper and Venables, 2004).



**Fig. 2.** Evening Ambassadors liaising with door staff on Spon Street, Coventry

*Source:* CV One

Nonetheless, central government control over these institutions is rarely enacted face-to-face, but at-a-distance. The imposition of nationally-constructed legislation and regulations is a key mechanism through which ‘governing-at-a-distance’ is exercised (Miller and Rose, 2008). BIDs, for instance, only exist in England because the Local Government Act 2003 and Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004 were drawn up and sanctioned. The aforementioned Act and Regulations also detail how certain BID activities should be carried out, most noticeably the BID ballot and the collection of the levy. Similarly, PCSOs were authorized by the Police Reform Act 2002 which also outlined their powers, although these powers have been subject to constant revision through a series of Acts, Orders and circulars (most noticeably a 2007 Order which authorized the nationwide ‘standardization’ of selected PCSO powers). CV One and Plymouth CCC’s CCTV, radio and crime database

schemes are subject to legal requirements about the use of selected ‘personal data’ through the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Information Commissioner’s CCTV Code of Practice (see Edwards, 2005 for an overview of CCTV legal regulation in the UK). It is not possible to list every centrally-prescribed legal and regulatory ‘code’ that the partnerships must abide by, however these examples hint at the complex multi-scalar legalities that the partnerships are situated within. It is also important to note that the partnerships are potentially subject to legal procedure if they are deemed to have contravened any of these codes. However, the partnerships’ status as limited-by-guarantee private companies means that they are not subject to the close public and governmental audit and scrutiny that public sector bodies are subject to. Therefore, it could be argued that breaches of the law may not necessarily be discovered so easily.

Moving on, the partnerships are reliant on other institutions to fund them. Indeed, the development of BIDs was a direct result of the limited private sector voluntary funding of TCM with BIDs bringing about a new mandatory funder-funded relation between businesses and the partnerships (Cook, forthcoming). In addition to private sector funding, the partnerships are reliant on a variety of public bodies to fund them. CV One, for instance, receives over six million pounds per annum from Coventry City Council as part of a rolling five year contract to manage street services in the city centre. In addition to this, it has successfully applied to other external funding bodies, most noticeably the European Union and the Home Office. These external funding streams not only influence the partnership in terms of giving them extra money but often also influence the partnership dynamics more subtly by stipulating, for instance, what the money can and cannot be spent on, which actors can distribute or receive this money, the length of funding, or how the use of this funding is assessed. As noted previously, the speculative and short-term nature of funding streams means that services can be short-term, as the case of Plymouth CCC’s ILM programme

demonstrates. Furthermore, these ‘Cinderella’ funding structures mean that the partnerships dedicate a lot of time and resources into finding alternative funding streams.

Above all, these socio-technologies – from CCTV cameras to government regulations – are used to exercise power, subtly and not-so-subtly encouraging people to act in accordance with the wishes of others. To use the Foucauldian expression, these are used to conduct the conduct of others (Argent, 2006). In the words of Jessop (2001), these exercises of power are strategically selective. Central government, for instance, seeks to closely control some aspects of the partnerships (e.g. the collection of BID levies) while other aspects are less tightly controlled (e.g. the services BIDs and TCM can select). The partnerships themselves are strategically selective in two key respects: first, in how they exercise power and, second, in how they react to and interpret external pressures and opportunities such as the development of a new funding stream or the restructuring of PCSO powers. Although these partnerships are not in conditions of their choosing, the partnerships do have varying degrees of autonomy about how they work within and, on occasions, against external pressures (Raco, 2003b).

## CONCLUSION

Business Improvement Districts and Town Centre Management schemes embody several key aspects of contemporary policing. They are focused on addressing minor misdemeanours, they use mobile patrols in conjunction with disembodied socio-technologies such as CCTV, and they are partnership-based. When viewed in this way, this paper’s empirical focus on the operations of BIDs and TCM in England offers important insights into the contours of contemporary urban policing and the emergence of Public-Private Policing Partnerships within this. Conceptually, this paper has argued that in order to understand the

operationalization of TCM schemes, BIDs and other PPPPs, close attention must be paid to their introduction, evolution and social relations. To conclude, three key messages about the nature of BIDs and TCM schemes can be drawn out from the empirical study.

First, the introduction of BIDs and TCM schemes have been important, contingent moments of ‘creative destruction’, introduced amid the neoliberal restructuring of urban governance and the desire for enhanced business profitability and investment in urban centres. They are creatively destructive in the sense that they have, on the one hand, been brought in to enact change, whilst on the other hand they have been accompanied by the selective restructuring (and often dismantling) of existing governance arrangements (Brenner and Theodore, 2002). Although the political debates and the process of ‘rolling out’ vary from place to place, TCM schemes and BIDs have been introduced primarily because they are perceived as being mechanisms through which business profitability and investment can be enhanced. However, we cannot forget that, as with many neoliberalesque policies, BIDs and TCM schemes have proved to be inherently speculatively as they do not necessarily lead to enhanced consumer spending, investment and business profitability.

Second, the internal structures of partnerships experience continued and contingent moments of creative destruction. Borrowing from Peck (2003, p. 223), they have been subject to “messy... and uneven processes of institutional restructuring”. The introduction of policing services by Reading UK CIC and the ongoing enhancement of the policing ‘portfolios’ in CV One and Plymouth CCC reflect an increasingly resolute belief that these partnerships can and should *act* to ease the anxieties of their well-behaved but overly-fearful customers. This development also reflects the wider entanglement of policing and economic development within English cities, whereby visible, ‘reassurance policing’ is increasingly used to ‘sow the seeds’ for economic development (Hancock, 2007; Helms and Atkinson, 2007; Helms *et al*,

2007). In this sense, the development of policing services is very much a means to a (hopefully profitable) end (Mitchell and Staeheli, 2006). However, these policing services have been subject to frequent alterations to their appearance, performance, funding and relations which reflect the indecision about how to resolve public anxieties, the perceived success of the services, the changing regulatory codes they are subject to, and the difficulties in gaining and sustaining funding.

Third and finally, TCM schemes and BIDs are situated within wider social relations operating at a multiple spatial scales. Their operationalization cannot be understood independently of these relations or by sole reference to internal characteristics and processes (not least because these are conditioned by their external relations). Following the work of Massey (1993) and others, the partnerships should be understood relationally, as unevenly open and connected. They are involved in complex networks of association whereby flows of information, materials, money and, of course, power are mobilized in and out of the partnerships. As the case studies demonstrate, the act of policing is conducted through negotiated relations with the public, private security and other policing providers, most noticeably the police force. These relations, furthermore, are often at-a-distance, and facilitated by and conducted through socio-technologies such as CCTV cameras, circulars and radios. These socio-technologies enable power to be exercised and negotiated by selected people who are not always present in the partnership boardrooms, CCTV control rooms, streets or retail premises, allowing them to make an imprint on the day-to-day policing of urban centres. Power, as we have seen, is by no means synonymous with presence. Likewise, the usage of socio-technologies such as CCTV cameras and radios gives the partnership officials opportunities to influence – or rather, *attempt* to influence – the behaviours and attitudes of those who govern, work, shop, play and live in these districts.

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