

## **NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

### **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2009 AT 12:00NOON IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST**

#### **PRESENT:**

#### **MEMBERS:**

Mr Barry Gilligan (Chairman)  
Mr Brian Rea (Vice Chairman)  
Ms Martina Anderson  
Mr Tom Buchanan  
Mr Leslie Cree  
Mr Alex Maskey  
Mr Basil McCrea  
Ms Mary McKee  
Professor Sir Desmond Rea  
Mr Trevor Ringland  
Mr David Rose  
Mr Suneil Sharma  
Mr Jimmy Spratt  
Mr Peter Weir

#### **POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Matt Baggott (Chief Constable)  
Mrs Judith Gillespie (Deputy Chief  
Constable)  
Mr Drew Harris (ACC Crime Operations)  
Mr Duncan McCausland (Assistant Chief  
Constable Operational Support & Criminal  
Justice)  
Mr David Jones (ACC Rural Region)  
Mr Alistair Finlay (ACC Urban Region)  
Mr David Best (Director of Finance &  
Support Services)  
Mr Joe Stewart (Director of Human  
Resources)  
Ms Liz Young, Head of Media & PR  
2 PSNI Personnel, Command Secretariat

#### **OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Adrian Donaldson (Chief Executive)  
2 Board Officials

#### **APOLOGIES:**

Mr Alex Attwood  
Mrs Rosaleen Moore  
Mr Gearóid Ó hEára  
Mr Ian Paisley Jnr

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Good afternoon everyone and welcome to this Policing Board meeting in public, and could I pay a particular mention and welcome to our visitors from Bosnia, who are joining us today from the Independent Board within the Federal Police Directorate. You are very, very welcome and hope you enjoy this session.

Chief Constable, this is of course just your second week in the post and your first formal accountability meeting with this Board. You are very welcome and could I also at this stage thank the Deputy Chief Constable and ACC McCausland for quite ably stepping in during the gap period of the last few weeks. Thank you both very much. The previous Chief Constable set a record of 63 meetings so only 62 more to go if you are going to beat that.

In our initial meeting last week, the Vice Chairman and I outlined some of the Board's key priorities over the next couple of months. Members have also had discussion with you in our private session on these issues and we have a special meeting arranged with you and your team next week to talk through collectively how we can work to improve policing services to the community; and ensure that the resources that we have are used to best effect in providing that service to our community.

Partnership working as we discussed upstairs, is of course central to making communities safer and you were absolutely right when you said that the answers to most policing problems rest with local people and it is absolutely right that local people have direction and control over how local policing resources are used and the way in which we use them.

Across Northern Ireland as you know, the District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) are working to facilitate this engagement. Local people want to engage with the police to get a good policing service, but as we have seen in recent days with the disruption at Derry DPP and the cancellation of Moyle DPP following a bomb warning, there are those who are trying to disrupt the progress that is being made. Yesterday, and last week, I have spoken with the Chairs of both these DPPs, Alesha McLoughlin in Derry and Oliver McMullan and the resounding message that I am getting from those DPPs and the wider community, is that they will not be deterred from their work. DPPs are getting the turn out and support from the community and those that have disrupted

these meetings have absolutely nothing positive to offer to their community. There actions quite frankly are outrageous and I would urge the community to continue to use the democratic platform of the DPP to have their voices heard on policing issues.

Chief Constable, since our last public meeting there have been a number of other incidents of note and it is exceptionally fortunate that no one was killed or seriously injured by the bomb left in Forkhill. Also the attacks at the homes of the relatives of a police officer in Derry show that those behind this and these incidents have complete disregard for human life.

We also know that a number of officers have had to move home as the result of threat. Can I say that this Board fully supports your officers in their work and officials at this Board put considerable effort into resolving recent issues in relation to the SPED scheme and that is a point that I would want to put very formally on the record here today.

Chief Constable, we have a number of questions today and also we have your report on police performance. It is fair to say that the figures are not great and a lot of work is going to be needed to turn those around.

I have already mentioned the meeting scheduled for next week to examine the issues that flowing from the Strategic Review undertaken by your own service. It is imperative that we get the maximum resources onto frontline policing. There are challenges in that but we collectively, this Board and your senior team need to get these matters resolved as quickly as possible so that your officers are out on the streets tackling crime, criminality and providing that public reassurance.

So, Chief Constable again you are very welcome and it is over to you.

**Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:**

Chairman, Members of the Policing Board, can I start off by again thanking everyone for the very friendly welcome, your messages of support and encouragement of which I have truly appreciated.

I am, of course, within 9 days already an instant expert on everything because everybody has told me what I should be doing, which is very welcome. I have certainly appreciated being able to meet members of the community as well and wherever I have gone across Northern Ireland in the last 9 days, people have actually come out of shops and say hello and to introduce themselves to me. That is a truly exceptional welcome and I am very, very grateful to everybody who has taken the time to do that.

Last Tuesday I was attested with the powers of a Constable in the Police Service of Northern Ireland. It was a very proud moment for me. It made me feel truly humble to be asked to wear this uniform. It actually made me reflect upon the reasons why I became a police officer some 32 years ago and I have no doubt they are the same reasons that have influenced the people who are currently servicing in the PSNI as well. In fact, last week I met with a group of probationers and their enthusiasm and their energy to make a difference was truly exceptional.

I am also equally sure that they are the reasons why they have brought us together today. That overwhelming desire to serve people and to make a difference and I know that policing is a complex, difficult, sensitive business but its values are relatively straightforward and they are to provide all people in Northern Ireland with an effective and impartial policing service. To work with everybody and anybody to reduce harm and to try to make our cities, towns, village and neighbourhoods safer places for everybody and I believe very strongly and I will reassert it again straightaway, that policing and police officers are truly the guardians of people's wellbeing.

Now you know I am still settling in. It is important in these early days that I meet as many people as possible and people have been very kind in getting themselves in my diary already. In fact I do not think I have had 2 minutes yet to take a step back and breathe, but I have been doing just that, getting out and meeting people because it is important that as the Chief Constable I am accountable to everybody and on my first day I was very pleased to be invited here to the Policing Board. I hope Chairman, people will recognise that as a true acknowledgement of my accountability to the Policing Board and through you, to all people of Northern Ireland.

I was also very pleased to have my first encounter with the Northern Ireland media, and it is not just what you say but how you say it and I have learned that too.

Last week I attended the annual conference of the Police Federation where I received some interesting and as I would expect and welcome, robust and straightforward views where expressed.

I made my first visit to 'D' District in the North West on Friday, and I learnt there the importance of recognising peoples interpretation of language and many people came out and welcomed me. I still cannot get my head around that I was presented with a Crystal Palace pencil case as I walked the streets and that will live in my memory for a long time, but it was another side of the welcome.

This week I have been to Omagh, I have been to Newry, I have been to Ballymena and I have also began to meet with colleagues of political parties too and have had some very, very helpful insights into the way people think and their aspirations and expectations of me and they have all been incredibly positive meetings, so thank you for that.

I acknowledge Chairman as you have said in your opening remarks, that the answer to all of our problems is true partnership. In fact, I went to Dublin at the beginning of the week and met with the Garda Commissioner and met people in Dublin to hear about the importance of co-operation and to discuss with him and colleagues how we may take co-operation even further. How we will be doing some work in the next few weeks and months to develop that close working relationship in an even greater and deeper way.

I know Chairman, as you quite rightly say, that a key group of partners are the District Policing Partnerships. I am hugely impressed with the structure of people coming together to discuss policing problems and the willingness to hold my local colleagues to account. I will give everything I can to those policing partnerships and visit as many as I can as a sign of my support and encouragement for that ongoing dialogue between different parts of the community. But more importantly, for us to hold ourselves accountable to people for our actions and what we are doing and the impact of that as well. I will do everything I can to ensure, with the consent and working with the Chairs

of those partnerships, that that ongoing dialogue is not disrupted by people who do not want to enter into a conversation, but want to stop the conversation taking place. Because those conversations that take place between members of the public and ourselves, with the 2,000 to 3,000 calls a day within communities, within partnerships, is absolutely critical for the success of the police and through us, the success of communities.

So those visits have been invaluable and there will be many more, and they have reaffirmed to me what I already knew by reputation, that the Police Service of Northern Ireland is highly regarded for its professionalism and its commitment. It also reminded me that the Service is built upon a long tradition of sacrifice. Last Sunday I was in Cardiff at the National Police Memorial Day where I met with the widows and families of police officers, those recently bereaved on duty as well as those in the past, and once again it has made me absolutely convinced and I know my colleagues share this, that we must deliver progressive policing, always being self critical and challenging, so that we do not allow people to return to the days of the past. It was very important that I met with those widows and families to understand that, as indeed I am meeting with communities as well to understand their perceptions of that.

The visits so far have reinforced my confidence in the willingness of my colleagues here and their dedication to move forward and adapt to the changing circumstances. It also made me even more focused on meeting the needs of people. You will find that I introduce words into the conversation. I have done that already in the first 8 days and I think they will feature as we work together on the plans. I do believe that policing should be personal, very personal and every single encounter that we have with a member of the public is a moment of truth. Where we do not just record the crime and give a crime number, but we have a conversation about what is important to that person, their family, their neighbours, their loved ones, the community within which they live. I believe that policing should truly be personal. It should not just be about going through the motions or fulfilling a process. I know my colleagues from, what I have seen already on Districts in the community policing and in the aspiration to share that, and we are going to work hard at making that more business - like to define the outcomes, to define what the public expect and hold ourselves more and more accountable for that. I believe that policing should focus particularly on the vulnerable and reducing harm. I think the word harm is the important one because it moves the

police service away from numbers and into what really affects peoples lives and communities, whether that is burglary, whether it is robbery, we need to understand the nature of harm in an even greater and even more focused way.

I do believe that we should be held accountable for being progressive. We are responsible for a large amount of money that the public give us. We are responsible for delivering a policing service in line with the aspirations that are set out in the Plan, so I would invite the Board to hold us accountable for “are you up there with the best”? “Are you truly progressive”? “Can you account for where the money and cash is being used”? “Do you have the most innovative technology and do you have a plan to do that and are you predicting not what just happens today, but do you know and predict what is going to happen in 5 years”, and as you hold me accountable for that, no doubt we will have discussions around how we might do that together through the joint working on our Plans.

I think we have to get even better at understanding what makes and sustains public confidence and satisfaction and how we can mitigate and deal with harm in all of its many forms.

You will not be surprised to hear me say that I will not be rushed into making a decision although I understand there is a very tight planning cycle and timescale to keep to. I need to take stock and I need to listen.

Before I go on though, may I say a few words about the security situation and the activities of small groups of terrorist criminals? It is inevitable that it has been raised with me from day 1, before I arrived here and my all Members of the Board, it is inevitable that people are concerned. I am concerned, colleagues are concerned and rightly so and perhaps it is inevitable that at the top of my tray, and although the media very kindly gave me my in-tray very publicly, was the security situation and certainly the threat is high. I said from day 1 that I would not minimise the realty of the threat. But while tackling the terrorist is a priority it is by no means the only one for myself or my colleagues. Later on in the Performance Report you will see the carnage that is being caused on the roads, it is important that we deal with that. It is a matter for everybody’s young people.

We know there are victims of other crimes, robberies and burglaries which need to be tackled. There are many other things which bring about harm and misery that are in my in-tray, so although I will take this threat seriously and it is a very serious issue, I am not going to minimise the harm being caused by other areas of policing which we will have to address, which are affecting the lives of communities.

It may seem to some people that terrorist policing and community policing are somehow poles apart, not part of the same equation. Let me again say, that they are not. Both are about reducing and preventing harm and both are about making and keeping communities safe. But I do believe one of the most effective ways of dealing with criminal behaviour or terrorism is effective neighbourhood policing. It is about being right at the heart of communities where people live, where they work, where they travel, where they socialise and it is about taking away the arguments and the ground which the small minority will exploit to their own benefit. It is about making sure people understand and believe the vast, vast majority that this police service is truly impartial and doing the right things so that that ground is taken away from those who choose to bring misery through terrorist enterprise. I think we can demonstrate that very tangibly through personal policing and through words being expressed tangibly every day in a 100 different ways, in a 1,000 different ways through kindness. I do believe policing and kindness are part of the same, and the kindness that we show to communities and individuals is an important part of dealing with the terrorist threat as well as dealing with the very professional way in which we need to address the security situation.

That is why actually I think the Strategic Review is so important. The Strategic Review is all about liberating time and space to do the right things for the communities and I understand that it was a radical but a painful piece of work. I have to say that I think it is to the credit of the PSNI that it felt mature and confident enough to undertake such a painful piece of self criticism. I said it before and I will say it again, I would have been very disappointed if I had not seen signs of that and the Strategic Review is a true sign of self imposed accountability to be self critical and do the right things. Much of what is in the Strategic Review mirrors my own thinking and experiences elsewhere. I think it is a very positive piece of work.

When I have been talking to people over the last few days, I asked them what they want and they say of course they want the big things dealt with. They want terrorism tackled so that Northern Ireland becomes a prosperous place. They want the violence, the theft, the robberies, the rapes, the frauds all that organised crime, they want that to be dealt with. But in truth a lot of that remains the subject of news headlines for a lot of people, it does not impact their lives and what most people say to us is, please deal with that on our behalf and get on with it, wherever they come from. What most people say to us though is, what we would really like you to do is to deal with the anti social behaviour issues, the alcohol issues and the never ending carnage on our roads, those sorts of issues, we have to get that balance right between the two.

Many people talked to me also about the visibility and access ability of their police and I am very keen that the Board holds me accountable for the way in which people feel and how confident they are about policing, particularly that visible personal policing. I have seen great signs of that already through visiting 'F' District and the 'G' District and elsewhere where there have been some very radical and very good proposals being implemented in how our access ability can be enhanced.

I do want to challenge a lot of the bureaucracy that impedes police officers doing those things on the streets. I do believe that regulation and bureaucracy to some degree has stifled police officers in developing their professional expertise and their skills. It is easier to fill the form in than to have a dialogue. It is easier to fill a form in than to spend time talking to a victim and I think we have to pull back a lot of that regulation. I know colleagues are working very hard on that so that we can free up officers discretion to meet and talk and have those conversations that need to be had. I will be challenging more and more on the back of some excellent work you are going to hear about later today, in rolling back discretion by holding ourselves more accountable for the things that matter. I do want in time to have a view of frontline police officers in the same way that GPs are viewed by members of their communities. Trusted, always there to help, able to deal with a vast majority of problems without the need for supervision. I have not met too many GPs yet that have Sergeants ticking their prescriptions or Inspectors weighing them or an Audit Committee having a look at the depth and breadth of the prescriptions and it is that sort of discretion that I would like to bring and will work towards progressively over the next few years.

I want justice also to be speedier and more effective and I know my colleagues in the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) are working with us very hard on doing that. I do believe justice should be about meeting the individual needs of victims in communities and has to be trusted and proportionate to the matters that are being dealt with, and again later on we will hear I think, some very exciting work that is moving very fast to delivering a far greater flexibility in how justice is seen and delivered.

Also, in relation to personal promises, personal policing and that discretion, work with my colleagues on redefining some of the promises that we need to make to communities. I know there is a lot about quality service commitments and there is a lot about Victims Charters and much of that is out there, but I am not sure that the people I spoke to in the communities would understand where to look for that or understand what it means. I would very much welcome the involvement of the Board in defining on one side of A4 paper if necessary, some very clear promises to all communities that we can hold ourselves accountable for and you can hold me accountable for. So we make personal policing much more effective by giving the public exactly what we are going to provide and to which they can hold us accountable. Likewise, we will do that with the Board and the same with harm, working with the Board, working with the public on understanding exactly where harm is and what it looks and feels like.

I know many of you also will have concerns about resources and the budget. You would expect me as the new Chief Constable to also have concerns about resources and budget. How much I have to use, how much I truly have to use within that budget rather than the whole package, much of which I do not have under my control. Concerns about how much flexibility I have within that budget, not just for this year but for next year and the year after. Have I got the modern business freedoms and flexibilities to manage that budget with the Policing Board on behalf of the people of Northern Ireland? I think there are some very real discussions here as the budget issues unfold, not just about the quantity of the budget but the way in which it can be used and how I can spend it on the things that really matter.

We need to understand also the pressures and expectations placed upon us and one of the areas we are looking at straightaway is, do we really understand whether we have the right people in the right place to make a difference. Have we got, as I said before,

the modern business practice in running that budget that we need to deliver a truly effective and impartial policing service for the people of Northern Ireland.

Chairman, I set out my thanks for the welcome and have set out some key words there around 'personal'. I have set out my expectations that we should be dealing with the serious threats, I am not under-estimating that but the answer to much of that lies in very professional policing and great co-operation and consent for more people in Northern Ireland as we take that work forward together. I have also set out my desire that we will be truly at the cutting edge of being progressive and being effective and be compared to the very finest police services in the world, not just for what we do but how we use the money that we have been provided by the tax payer and members of the public.

I look forward to being held accountable by you and I look forward to the challenge that no doubt will unfold as the following years go on. Thank you very much indeed.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Thank you Chief Constable for those opening remarks, and certainly some of the key words you have used have stuck a cord with me. Commonsense, business like, innovative and I certainly look forward to seeing those translated into an enhanced service delivery.

Some questions on the Chief Constable's opening remarks, Alex Maskey.

**Mr Alex Maskey:**

Thank you, Go raibh maith agat, Chairman. It is more in the way of some observations and I just want to place on record. Obviously the Chief Constable will know that we have already a meeting with yourself and Deputy Chief Constable Gillespie in the last few days as a party grouping from the Board representation, but certainly we would be very impressed by what we have heard so far and do want to wish yourself and your top team the very best in the time ahead. You have clearly so far demonstrated your grasp I think of the totality, as you describe it, of policing. For us, central to all of this is, and your final words in a way is, that the PSNI has to do its job seeking the co-operation and consent of the communities out there, because if you do not have either the co-operation and certainly if you do not have the consent, we will not deliver

the service that we are both charged with the responsibility to deliver. I think it is very, very important that you continue your task of getting out there, reaching out to people, even people who do not agree with policing as it currently is constituted, and we should not always confuse those who are totally opposed to change or the process that we are involved in, we should not confuse that with the fact that there are people who have very legitimate concerns in respect of policing and those concerns certainly need to be addressed.

I very much welcome the fact that you are committing yourself again publicly to engage in that outreach and to be a good listener to people out there. Of course, you have to lead and I have no doubt that you will, and just would make the point that, as I have said earlier on, all this is about the delivery of a first class police service. I think we are at an opportunity now if you like, with the appointment now of a virtually new top management team with very, very able people responsible, added of course to the changes in the Board itself. We are at a new opportunity here to grasp the mettle to make sure that we do make communities safer by driving down crime, improving the detection rates and delivering that kind of professional service that you and your top team colleagues in fact and most of your organisation I would have to say would be committed to delivering.

I would just finally say, that I would accept I think what was your own challenge earlier on, that both yourself and we as a Board, will be tested in the time ahead as to whether or not we can deliver a fair, impartial, effective and efficient police service.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Thank you Alex Maskey. Any comment you want to make on that? Maybe we will hear from Jimmy Spratt, do you want to make a comment on the Chief Constable's opening remarks?

**Mr Jimmy Spratt:**

Thank you very much and I suppose it is more a statement rather than a question at this point.

But could I welcome the Chief Constable on your arrival, you are very welcome to the province and certainly we look forward as a group to work with you in the days, weeks and months ahead and we will certainly do that in a constructive way and I hope we will be able to make progress in many areas that we want to make progress in. Can I say to you that I am also pleased that you mentioned, pleased that you prioritised your attendance at the National Police Memorial Day just a few days ago because it is important. Policing is a dangerous game and it is important that you do turn up and attend those events and it is certainly important for the province given the number of police officers and the number of families who have been bereaved in this province over 30 years of bloody terrorism.

Can I also say that I would ask you to make a priority whenever the Memorial Day travels around the nations to make a priority to attend the Memorial Day next year whenever it comes to Belfast. Sadly, that was not a priority the last time it came to Belfast for the Chief Constable and I know that you will attend.

Can I welcome your commitment to community policing and also say to you that we look forward to working with you in relation to the Strategic Review, because if community policing is to work, it is imperative that police officers are moved from backroom jobs out to police the community. It is also important that we move away from the 9 to 5 culture which has been identified and very clearly identified in the Strategic Review that has taken place and we look forward to the commitments around that to take place quickly, because the community are crying out for effective and visible policing within the community.

I think on issues of resourcing and budget, we want and certainly as a party want to work constructively with you in making sure that the resources and the budget is there and that that budget will be in place, fully in place, before there is any commitment to any devolution of policing and justice. That you will not have to start of having to go and beg and borrow for money from the Government. That is our commitment, we will commit to working to get you the best possible deal because we have but one chance to do this and now is the chance and that is why we are so keen to make sure that that package is right before we do anything.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Basil McCrea.

**Mr Basil McCrea:**

Thank you Chairman. Chief Constable, can I first of all welcome you to the province and we are delighted to have you here and we look forward to working with you closely in the coming years.

I was quite struck by your introduction and actually our chats earlier as well, a number of points which I look forward to your elaborating on. But in particular, the issue about moments of truth, about the opportunity for the police to be a force for good in this society. Is there anything else we can do for you? I think that is an excellent attitude and one that we need to help foster.

I have a question for you which may, at this stage, be too hard a question, it maybe something we have to evolve on. But there obviously is a long term aim about winning hearts and minds. About agreeing the consent of all members of our community to being policed and at the same time, we have a dilemma about the severe security situation that obviously exists and that appears to me to be a challenge. I think others mentioned that I suspect that we will all be tested in the coming months in this area and it is something that we need to make sure that we all stand together on. So, at some stage I would be interested in exploring with you how that will happen.

The final thing is the issue about openness and transparency. I think you did say in your opening remarks how impressed you were about Northern Ireland's ability to give their opinions to you and to tell you, and I think you will find that carries on. There are issues that come up and the only bit of advice that I can give you, since everybody else is doing it, is that people will accept when there are difficulties, when there are hard decisions that have to be taken. If you take the people into your confidence and explain what is going on and deal with things in an open, transparent way, even when there is bad news or difficult issues to comment on, I think you will be rewarded by that stance, because above all, the people of Northern Ireland want collectively to support the police service.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Thank you Basil McCrea. A comment by Suneil Sharma.

**Mr Suneil Sharma:**

Chief Constable welcome, you have already had those welcomes from everybody but as an independent Member I would like to welcome you to the new role that you have taken on.

Many things you have said you could not possibly disagree with, and the only thing I want to add to that is, that there needs to be a significant commitment to build neighbourhood policing from the bottom up. I think that is vital to give the confidence that people want in terms of delivering an effective and efficient policing service.

In terms of the Board, this needs to be a productive and engaging dialogue with the Board and this certainly will assist certainly, both in your success and the success of the Board to hold you to account. It is not that this has not happened in the past, but I think it is a different type of engagement that needs to happen in the future. We will be your critical friend as I said earlier, but that engagement needs to be productive and engaging and we want to do that and we want to assist you in delivering the end result as a police service that we all in the province can be proud of. But there are many challenges as other Members have pointed out. I think we as a Board are up to those challenges. I hope you personally and I think you are up to the challenges, you have outlined some of them in your opening remarks and we look forward to that working relationship over the number of years ahead.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Anything you want to add Chief Constable?

**Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:**

Chairman, I would like to speak up and answer a few of the points if I may.

I entirely understand Mr Maskey's point. I think it is not just what we do, although that has to be appropriate, it is the way we do it too and I understand that. The way that we deliver policing sometimes can be as important as the motivation behind what we are actually doing. Some of that is about the way we communicate, some of it is about the

way we come across, all those things I understand and we must be sensitive and listening all the time about the way that policing is actually delivered, but the way it is perceived as well, so I am very grateful for that.

I think we have to provide through policing, space for people to express their views. I think the role of policing is to give people the security and the safety to express their views no matter how radical those views may be and I agree entirely. This is not a political point, I am here to be impartial, but my views are that the dialogue has to continue and radical are not necessarily by themselves wrong but the job of policing is to provide opportunity for those views to be had and to be heard through security and safety.

Mr Spratt, I am very strongly committed to giving police officers the space. I think that is the whole thing about reducing bureaucracy. Bureaucracy by itself is not necessarily wrong, it can be about being held accountable and I am very strong on that, but actually when the bureaucracy takes you away from having the space and time to deal with victims appropriately, then the bureaucracy must be wrong. So, I think we have got to give my colleagues, who I already have seen their professionalism, a lot more time and space to invest in relationships and understanding the needs of families and neighbourhoods, and I am certainly committed to that.

Mr McCrea on the moments of truth, you will find that word being used more and more. I do believe often, because of the volume of policing need, it can become a form filling exercise very easily which is completely wrong because the form is a justification for what you do. But I do believe again, that we should be looking at ways in which we can free colleagues time and also present to them, opportunities to do the things they joined the service for in the first place, which is making a difference. I have seen many, many colleagues with many years service who have suddenly been liberated from the tyranny of too much red tape, suddenly rediscover their passion and commitment for policing, and certainly the discretion pilots that I have run for 2 years elsewhere, showed not just a reduced offending and higher satisfaction, but they showed police officers and I am very happy to share some of the e-mails such as *"I have got 22 years service and for the first time ever I am being treated as a professional and being asked to do the things that really matter to me on the day that I joined this service"*. So, I think there is a lot of feedback about freeing space. But I think we will need some courage to do that

because I think bureaucracy can be a very helpful safety comfort blanket. You can show success by filling in a form well, does not necessarily mean that you are doing the things that matter, so I think we are going to have to have some courage together in challenging some of this red tape because I often found the more we take away red tape, some other red tape always appears somewhere else. So we are going to have to challenge that together.

On the business of how can we deliver personal policing in a security situation. My answer to that is, we keep focused on the things that really matter. We may have to do it in a different way because clearly I have a huge responsibility for the safety of my colleagues delivering frontline policing. I will never ever underestimate or diminish that. But accessibility of policing, giving people a voice can still be done in areas where there may be security concerns, so we will stick to the principles of personal policing and we will take that as far as we can, and my commitment is, that I will try and deliver that all the time to the principles irrespective of the security situation, but clearly we will have to be mindful of the security needs as we do that and I would value peoples patience and their support as we do that.

Thank you Chairman.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Thank you very much Chief Constable. You have had the kind words of welcome and I can now formally declare and end to your honeymoon period and bring you to the performance figures. So over to you on your presentation on the tackling crime performance.

**Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:**

As a way of showing empowerment and true delegation, I will now hand over to the Deputy Chief Constable to lead the presentation on performance on my behalf. Thank you.

**Deputy Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:**

Chairman thank you. I am going to cover the main headline figures and then some of my colleagues will cover some of the details. So if we move into the first slide. This shows the figures over the last 6 years and you will see that this year we have an increase in recorded crime against last year, but you will also note that if you look at the longer term trend, the crime trend does continue to go on a downward curve which is good news but of course, the bad news is the increase this year compared to last year and that is something that we obviously need to work very hard, in partnership with the Board and with others to reduce.

We have an increase of almost 2,000 crimes for the year to date and the main increases are around acquisitive crime which was exactly as one would have predicted in the middle of a difficult economic situation. Theft is well up and burglary is also up which we will come to in a moment and other acquisitive offences like making off without payment from petrol stations etc, those crimes are well up, theft in fact is up by 6.5%.

In relation to that, my colleague ACC Finlay will comment on a particular development in Belfast which has contributed in some respects to the increase in thefts, so ACC Finlay do you want to cover that just now?

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Alistair Finlay:**

Yes, thanks much. There has been a significant increase in theft in 'B' District which covers the city centre. But it should also be pointed out we have got significant increases elsewhere. 'H' District in particular, Ballymena and Coleraine and we can link this to the real increase that we have in reported shoplifting and there appears to be 2 things happening here. One, we actually probably have an actual increase in incidents of shoplifting and we are seeing an increase in shoplifting of goods such as food and such like. The research shows more akin to times of economic recession where times are hard, but we are also seeing an increase in the amount of reporting from the retailers themselves and certainly in Belfast and it seems to be beyond that, there used to be a time when retailers would have a diminimus level at which point they would report matters to the police. That has gone and we have got in effect a zero tolerance approach coming from retailers reporting thefts by shoplifting. Theft by shoplifting would also include thefts by staff for example as well, but that diminimus level having

gone as the increased amount of reporting. There is a linkage back to again the economic times.

The economic times are difficult for retailers and it does seem, and those who operate in the private sector would probably know more about this than I do, but there does seem to be some tax advantage in respect of your recording of losses that would occur as a consequence of theft. It can maybe offset some of your tax liabilities in some degree, so there does seem to be an economic advantage to retailers reporting those, in addition to probably an uprising in the actual amount of retail theft that is going on. But you are seeing it in Belfast city centre, we are seeing it in Ballymena, Coleraine and Newry to some extent and that is contributing to the main uprising in theft.

But the other area of theft we were are seeing a bit of a series going on is in relation to the theft of horse boxes, trailers and small plant and that is having some subject to further analysis at the moment, we think we can probably make more inroads into that. The shoplifting one is more problematic but we will tackle, in particular, those organised shoplifting gangs which certainly do exist and are operating in the province.

**Deputy Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:**

I am just continuing on that theme Chairman. Of course we would want to get to a point where there is confidence in policing, that all crime is reported to the police, so increase in reported crime is not always bad news but it is important that we get an accurate a picture as possible of local crime.

On the good news front, overall violent crime is down. Sexual offences are well down by 12%. Minor assaults, common assault and assault occasioning actual bodily harm, albeit that the impact on the victim maybe very severe, but those are also down. But of concern to the Board and I know at the subject of the presentation last month, most serious violent crime remains up, it is up by 21.9%.

The level of violent crime against younger people under 18s is well down, it is down by 10.3% and of course it has to be said, these figures in terms of overall crime also represent considerable police enforcement in the areas of dangerous driving, drugs and breach of Non-Molestation Orders which are proactive policing activities.

If we move onto the next slide which covers more serious violent crime. Now we had a comprehensive presentation on this subject last month and I am not going to rehearse all of that, but we do have just over 1 extra more serious violent crime per day. The definition, just to remind Board Members of more serious violent crime, includes homicide, attempted murder, wounding and grievous bodily harm with or without intent, and deaths or GMH caused by aggravated vehicle taking or dangerous driving including under the influence of drink or drugs. Interestingly, the definition does not include rape and sexual offences which is something perhaps should be included, but the definition does not include rape. So, at the moment we are sitting at 1 extra more serious violent crime per day and this is not in any way, to negate the impact on victims of more serious violent crime, but it does represent 1.8% of our overall crimes so it is a very, very small percentage of crime in general.

About 12% of more serious violent crime is recorded with a domestic motivation and that is where we need to be working very closely in partnership with other statutory and voluntary agencies and it is on the Policing Plan to reduce repeat victimisation.

Obviously, campaigns like the "Get Home Safe" campaign are very, very important in this regard, because many of these violent crimes are happening in conjunction with the Night Time Economy and whilst there are concerns around knife crime, and there has been a very, very slight increase in knife crime to date this year, the most common weapon used is the fist or the foot. That was illustrated in a very recent tragic incident in Cookstown, so we are concerned about the Night Time Economy and its link to more serious violent crime and hence our desire, along with the Board, to work in partnership. I believe there is a conference coming up in the not too distant future to discuss and address how we can work more closely in partnership to address this.

On domestic burglary, again there is an increase of 5.4% from last year but if you look at the longer term trend we are moving in the right direction. In the last couple of months there has been a considerable decrease, and even at its worst, we were sitting around the 6 year average and at a time of economic hardship as ACC Finlay as already said, we did predict the likelihood that domestic burglary would increase, so in some respects it is good news that we are an improving picture over the last couple of months, but we still have to work very, very hard around this area.

We have a service lead now, a senior officer to co-ordinate all activity on burglaries, that is Chief Superintendent Henry Irvine and we are weaving in Operation Bullent which Board Members will know is the operation against burglaries against older people and we are weaving that into the overall strategy.

Board Members may also be interested to know, that we have done a joint analysis with our Garda colleagues in relation to travelling criminals and those who travel across the border to commit these burglaries, and that has thrown up some interesting findings which have been shared with police Commanders on both sides of the border so as we can work in partnership around that area. It has to also be said that a lot of these burglaries are committed on insecure premises, and that is where we need to be working more closely with our crime prevention officers and with local neighbourhood Constables to make sure that premises are made secure and people are given good crime prevention advice. In fact 51%, over half of all of our creeper burglaries were in insecure premises.

ACC McCausland is going to mention now an initiative that we are working on with Fire and Rescue Service in relation to securing your home.

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:**

Basically Chairman, we are trying to bring forward a number of initiatives with partner agencies including Fire and Rescue where will present a joined up package in relation to securing your home, so that the messages that other agencies are putting out will complement what we are trying to get across and we believe that will, in effect, have a greater impact on householders overall.

**Deputy Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:**

And we do anticipate, with the return of students to university, there is traditionally a spike in burglaries at this time of the year and we have been working very hard with the neighbourhood teams in the university area to make sure good crime prevention advice is given out to students returning for the new term.

In terms of criminal damage and anti social behaviour, this is broadly a very good news story. These are issues that are always at the top of DPP agendas and they are issues of consistent community concern.

We are almost meeting the target of 2.5% on criminal damage. The trend has been consistently downwards over the last few years and we have hit the target for the last 2 years. This is about local solutions being developed with neighbourhood teams in relation to criminal damage and anti social behaviour. In particular if we think about the Halloween period over the last couple of years which have always witnessed a spike in anti social behaviour and criminal damage, very good work has been done to reduce those spikes which has actually reduced and resulted in an overall reduction across the board.

Other partnerships initiatives, apart from the Halloween season, include the joint funding of the Community Warden Schemes both in Derry and in Belfast city centre and Operation Snapper which to date has recovered 41,000 items of alcohol and very closely aligned with a relatively quite parade season, was the amount of alcohol seized specifically during the parades and the lead up to parades as well and a lot of good work was done around that.

The Chief Constable is very keen that we should turn our attention to a very high profile alcohol strategy in the run up to Christmas, and of course this is not just about drink driving, but it is about the abuse of alcohol generally and how that feeds into crime like domestic violence, so we will be looking to explore with the Board ways in which we can work around promoting the issue of alcohol related crime.

This is a particularly important and concerning trend in relation to the number of fatal accidents to date, and the figures you have on the screen are the financial year to date, in other words commencing on 1 April 2009 but the figures for the calendar year are equally worrying. They are still up 16 and we are sitting with 91 people having been killed on our roads to date this year. That equates to almost 10 people every month and I know it is of huge concern across the community and it is also a huge concern to the Board and we hope to do a full presentation on what the police are doing around this at a forthcoming Board meeting and we would hope that will take place as soon as

possible. We would be very keen to do this before the Christmas period because that is traditionally a time whenever there can be an increase in serious accidents.

The concern is around rural areas and there is no doubt that the nature of the roads does contribute to that, but the bottom line is, many of these tragic incidents are entirely preventable. We are prepared to do our part, but we rely on a partnership, not just with statutory and voluntary agencies, but with every single road user be that a driver, a pedestrian, a passenger or a motor cyclist. The main issues are excess speed, not wearing seat belts, inattention, poor judgement and alcohol. We will be seeking to launch our Christmas Drink Driving Campaign again in partnership with the Garda very shortly. But we make no apologies for strict enforcement, we are playing our part. We have issued over 18,000 fixed penalty notices for excess speed, 4,000 for seat belt offences and nearly 7,000 for mobile phone use. In addition to that we have made over 3,000 arrests for drinking or drug driving so we are absolutely up for playing our part in this but it is a partnership and it is a partnership with the whole community because road safety is every road user's responsibility.

The Chief Constable has also said he is very keen to explore the possibility of redirecting income from fines from fixed penalty notices into some road safety initiatives, in particular, targeted for younger people and in the months to come we will certainly be exploring that with the Northern Ireland Office and with the Assembly.

The final slide is in relation to our clearance rates and the figures in the middle of this slide show the change in percentage points compared to the end of year, but the figures on the right side show the change in clearances compared to the same period last year, so we are very clearly making good progress in this area. There is still work to be done, but compared to the previous year to date in terms of exactly where we were this time last year, we have improved our clearance rate on all crime by 3% which is good news, but acknowledging that there is still work to be done.

On sectarian crimes, we have improved our clearance rate compared to the same period last year by 2.8%. On the issue of sectarian crimes, there has been a significant increase in reported sectarian crime. We all know that sectarian crime and hate crime generally is under-reported but it is of concern that to date we have seen an increase of 99 sectarian crimes and what that equates to is almost 4 sectarian crimes per day in

Northern Ireland and if there was ever a case to be made for a Shared Future Strategy and a joined up strategy with Government, surely these figures show that very clearly and I know there is a question on that in the meeting.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Okay, thank you Deputy Chief Constable. We have some questions on your report. Desmond Rea.

**Professor Sir Desmond Rea:**

Thank you very much indeed for the presentation. I know there was an update as you said a moment ago Deputy Chief Constable and on serious violent crime at last month's meeting but not everyone was here who was at that meeting and maybe you could say a little bit more about the nature of the more serious violent crime and could you also provide an update on the police's efforts to tackle more serious crime? It is interesting that it goes right across Northern Ireland, it is not just Urban that increase is it not?

**Deputy Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:**

I think it is important for me to say first of all, at the very, very top end of violent crime on the homicide end of violent crime, to date we have a 100% clearance rate. For every murder or manslaughter to date, we have individuals charged. By way of reassurance there is a lot of effort going into those top end and most serious violent crimes.

At the Board meeting last month we covered how the Home Office definition of most serious violent crime does serve to increase some of these figures and maybe ACC McCausland would want to comment on that and then secondly, maybe ACC Finlay would want to comment on the Get Home Safe initiative and work in partnership with other agencies to reduce this, so I will pass to ACC McCausland first.

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:**

Thank you Deputy Chief Constable. We outlined last time Chairman, as you will remember, that there was a statistical issue in relation to the recording of more serious violent crimes, particularly grievous bodily harm crimes with intent. Those would be Professor Rea, where potentially a bottle or a weapon of some nature was going to be used but there was no actual physical injury to the victim. Now, that does not minimise

what the victim has suffered, that is recorded by the Home Office as a more serious violent crime, in fact the Home Office are currently examining or re-examining that particular position. We did say last time as well, that the issue of alcoholism and more serious violent crime was very significant. In fact, we shared with the Board, that almost over 40% of our arrests in the first 9 months were down to people having been involved with or having consumed alcohol and as the Board know, we are asking you to very much become involved in a significant conference we are going to take forward with the Board tackling violent crime and alcoholism, at that point I would hand over to ACC Finlay.

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Alistair Finlay:**

Thank you, just linking onto that the link with alcohol. Clearly there is a chunk of this more serious violent crime is linked with the Night Time Economy, and it was alluded to earlier the tragic outworking of that in Cookstown recently and we have seen that elsewhere. That reinforces the need for a joined up approach to the Night Time Economy involving police and other agencies and door staff and licensees of premises. Their responsibilities in respect peoples' conduct, behaviour and the ability to get people home and out of that area once they have finished their evening's festivities and enjoyment. Being able to get away because a lot of these violent incidents, these fights that break out, and I saw them recently when I was out, they are happening outside licensed premises after closing time when people move maybe from a warm atmosphere back out into the cold. They are looking for fast food, they are queuing for fast food, they are queuing for taxis, it is at those points that the arguments break out where people are under the influence of alcohol. It does not take a great deal, as the Deputy Chief Constable alluded to in terms of fists and feet from somebody moving from being perfectly well to being virtually at death's door, and tragically in some cases meeting their deaths round about that. That continuum can be very quick, it can happen in the circumstances as described, just moved from a jostling around that your whole decision making process is affected by alcohol at that time, it is why we tend to work in partnership with the councils, with the warden schemes that are coming in place, not only in Belfast but in other places as well. Other towns in Northern Ireland who do have a Night Time Economy, do have some degree of operation in place in order to try and minimise the impact, but the connection with alcohol and serious violent crime is absolute.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Thank you ACC Finlay. Jimmy Spratt.

**Mr Jimmy Spratt:**

Thank you very much Chairman and I would thank the Deputy Chief Constable for her presentation. Just 2 areas.

Firstly, on the Roads Policing and the statistics around increases. I think that is a very unfair statistic to put on the police service. The police service continually try to reduce roads deaths, that has been the history over the years, but I wonder would the Deputy Chief Constable like to comment on the recent comments of the Minister of the Department of Environment (DoE) in relation to the graduated driving licence approach. It seems to be that in a lot of times it is the young people and young passengers who tragically are fatally injured and certainly I think some of the approaches around that might help and I wondered what the view of the police was.

Secondly, in relation to the criminal damage and anti social behaviour. I mean it is good to see that there is 946 fewer offences, but quite frankly I do not think you should sit on any laurels on that, because I think you have already identified in the Strategic Review that people are not reporting some of those incidents now because they simply have not got it dealt with in a manner that they feel was satisfactory, and they just simply are no longer reporting it and I think that is a history that is coming out from DPPs. But in relation to that situation, could I ask what the views are and what the position is in the current legislation in relation to fixed penalty notices, and do you believe that for lower level criminal damage and anti social behaviour, that if legislation was put in place that that could actually have quite a beneficial affect in further reducing those numbers. I wonder would you like to comment on the fact that this legislation has pretty well been worked on now for a period of time by the police and the drafts people within the Departments, is there any reason why the Security Minister, Paul Goggins should not be progressing that legislation right now as we speak?

**Deputy Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:**

Yes, thank you for both the questions.

On the first one in relation to the graduated driving, I am going to pass to ACC McCausland on that and on the second one, I am going to delegate upwards to the Chief Constable to answer that one. But of course, we welcome any initiative that would address the dangers in particular to younger people on our roads because there have been so many tragedies involving younger inexperienced drivers and indeed, younger pedestrians, so we would very much welcome any initiative on that and I will pass to ACC McCausland to comment on the detail.

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:**

Thank you Deputy Chief Constable. I was with the Minister on Saturday when we were doing a Bike Safe initiative and we would very much welcome all approaches and in effect initiatives that the Assembly can bring forward, particularly in relation to tackling what you have highlighted and the problems around young drivers.

Chairman, I would wish to stop at that point because I am bringing a full presentation to the Board on this, I would hope next month, which would help us significantly in terms of the winter campaign. Everything that we can do together as a Board and you as Assembly members, to tackle this problem is critical because one more life lost on the roads is too many.

**Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:**

On the issue of fixed penalties, anti social behaviour and criminal damage, I am entirely supportive that they have an appropriate use and grateful to ACC McCausland for the hard work he has been doing at that moment. I think there will be some very real progress made which we will answer later on in the question session around that, but I do think they give an opportunity to bring home to, particularly young people, the impact of their behaviour very quickly alongside the discretion of police officers to ask them to repair the damage and perhaps sometimes pay it out of pocket money or income. There are a lot of opportunities there to make a real impact on this behaviour.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Trevor Ringland, do you have a supplementary on this?

**Mr Trevor Ringland:**

Just a very quick point and I look forward to the review of the Road Safety strategy. But could you build into that review, just looking at whether or not a decision not to investigate minor damage accidents is a good policy to follow, or is it really an opportunity to get an early intervention of bad driving where you can make a difference to the person being responsible for an accident?

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:**

We can certainly look at it, but there is a balancing act between being an insurance broker and in effect carrying out the investigation in crime.....

**Mr Trevor Ringland:**

ACC McCausland, it is not about insurance, it is about intervening at an early stage.

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:**

There are other issues Mr Ringland which are potentially affecting young people before they even go on the roads. We have discovered, and we are working with academics in relation to potentially the computer games that young people have. For example, there are driving games where you crash the car you restart the game, and that seems to be then replicated onto the roads. There is no penalty and what we are looking to do with the industry, is potentially develop a means that make people aware of the dangers that you just cannot relate one to the other.

**Mr Trevor Ringland:**

But where you have an accident, you have an example of bad driving. At the minute we are not investigating minor damage accidents and that could be an opportunity with young drivers to actually spot bad driving and try and do something about it and that is what I am trying to say. We need to have a look at it as part of the overall review.

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:**

We will look at it, but any accident be reassured Chairman whether it is bad driving or any offence, we investigate and potentially prosecute.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Okay, did you want to add something Deputy Chief Constable?

**Deputy Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:**

It is really just to add something in relation to Jimmy Spratt's comment about the lack of reporting in relation to criminal damage. We can of course only deal with what is reported to us, and again I would reiterate the point about encouraging people to report crime to the police that that gives us a full picture of what is actually happening.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Martina Anderson.

**Ms Martina Anderson:**

Go raibh maith agat. I know we are getting a presentation today about tackling crime and clearance rates, but I would like to talk to you about prevention and protection. I was at a conference yesterday and it was mainly dealing with domestic violence and its impact on the travelling community and from the information we got at that conference and what you shared with us today. Given of the 25 murders that have taken place, that almost half of them have had a domestic relationship in terms of its outcome. I was surprised to hear that the PSNI serve Non Molestation Orders and Occupational Orders through the post particularly with regards to that community where there is a high level of illiteracy, but in terms of just its enforcement. It was a PSNI officer who was giving the presentation now he did say that was not the only method but he said it was one of the methods they used. Now, if you are talking prevention and protection and trying to ensure that it does not result in a serious crime that ends up in somebody being murdered, then I think we need a more effective and efficient way of delivering those Non-Molestation and Occupational Orders and I do not think they should in any circumstances every be issued through the post.

**Deputy Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:**

Well that is certainly something as an organisation that we as an organisation will undertake to look at Ms Anderson and at the end of the day, good domestic violence policing is homicide prevention and if we can prevent repeat victimisation of domestic

violence and increase confidence of victims to come forward, we can prevent people being murdered. So, we will certainly look at that and I will undertake to do that.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Suneil Sharma.

**Mr Suneil Sharma:**

Chief Constable, just a question about the fixed penalty notices. What is the current position in relation to the production of the latest legislation to allow fixed penalty notices for minor offences in Northern Ireland? Before you answer that, can I add 3 important supplementaries to that?

First of all, we do not have enough information and I would like to ask 3 questions relating to that. What is the age group this is being targeted at? Will minors be targeted with fixed penalty notices? How will you inform the public of what the definition of a minor offence/lower level crime and this is pertinent in the light of what happened in the Pilkington case? Finally, I know the fixed penalty notices and the previous Chief Constable was a great advocate of this, but I want to know how this is working in the rest of GB? Is there any recent research data available to show how the fixed penalty notices have reduced repeat offending or just general questions about the effectiveness of the process and what sort of levels of collection rates would be at when you charge a youngster with £50 for doing what you would describe as a minor offence?

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

ACC McCausland.

**Deputy Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:**

I was going to say ACC McCausland would answer the first part and the Chief Constable will answer the second part of your question.

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:**

Chairman, you will appreciate that the Minister and the Chief Constable will be announcing legislative changes potentially on 6 October 2009. To answer the specific questions, there has been significant work ongoing with this Board as you would know over the last 3 years in potentially bringing forward this particular piece of legislation

and this legislation supported with other types of dealing with alternatives to prosecution.

The scheme that we are bringing forward is a limited scheme in relation to specific offences which are at the minor ends of the scale such as retail theft and very minor retail theft where the goods for example have been recovered and can be resold and there is a limited financial value. Criminal damage and a limited financial value in relation to that. Disorderly behaviour, obstructing police, simple drunk, minor harassment, and behaviours likely to cause a breach of the peace, selling intoxicating liquor to a minor, purchasing alcohol for a minor, or minor indecent behaviour. Those will all be very specifically laid out to officers and in effect, to the public, in relation to what we are trying to do.

The age group being looked at would be, there would be no-one under the age of 16 that potentially would come into this but we are discussing with the Northern Ireland Office whether it be 16 or 18 dependent upon the reality, but the Northern Ireland Office have fully consulted the public with this and this has gone out over the last 12 months. Again, we believe this is one of the many issues that need to be brought forward in an attempt to increase the justice system in terms of the speeding up of what we are trying to do and in effect, deal with crimes quicker and to give greater victims satisfaction. But I am more than happy to bring forward a further presentation to the Board in relation to this but I will hand to the Chief Constable about the general issue of fixed penalty notices.

**Mr Suneil Sharma:**

Would you address the issue of repeat behaviour? Is there anything out there that says this system works and it reduces repeat behaviour?

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:**

The reality is that in terms of repeat behaviour, the particular penalty notice does not create a criminal record but it is flagged up and therefore it puts the person into the system that we can then monitor what is happening and what is going on. It is a bit like Trevor Ringland's comment about the minor accidents, an early warning and this potentially is dealing with people without the criminal justice system rather than bringing them in with a criminal record.

**Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:**

Thanks very much. Chairman, I am a firm supporter. It is one of many ways in which we can deal with crime and it is a form of justice, but it has its place. It is not the only solution, neither should it be seen as something that can revolutionise the way in which we deal with things on the street, it goes hand in hand with cautioning and discretion and arrest. It is an option which the officer will have to make a decision whether it is appropriate to use it or not.

There are a number of things that I would be concerned about, based on experience. One is, if we issue a fixed penalty notice it has to be enforceable, if someone chooses not to pay it there has to be a consequence to that, so we need to be careful that we have the capability to do that. Secondly, it does not become a quick and convenient disposal for things that are not appropriate. I think some of the list of offences that they have been used for historically have been the wrong ones. I do not agree for example, that it should be used for no insurance. I think people that do not have insurance on their cars are a danger to road users and it should be dealt with in a much more severe way. Neither do I think it should be used, for example, when the value of goods that have been stolen are far greater than the fixed penalty notice, that clearly is not what it is about. It has to be used sensibly and wisely and proportionately, but with regard to the offences that ACC McCausland has outlined, I think it has its place, but we would need to monitor it carefully to make sure that people have trust and confidence in the use of those new powers.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Thank you Chief Constable.

If I could bring you now to the general questions which come from the Committees and members generally. If we could get those up on the screen and there is a question here from the Human Resources Committee, Professor Sir Desmond Rea.

***Q1 - The report on the "Evaluation of the Diversity Strategy" provided to the Diversity Strategic Steering Group on 12 June 2009 showed that very few exit interviews were held with officers and staff; only 8% of those leaving the service were interviewed. Could the Chief Constable comment on the reasons why so few exit interviews are held with officers and staff leaving PSNI and what plans he intends to put in place to increase this figure. Can he further outline the arrangements in place for carrying out the interviews, in particular who in the organisation carries out the interviews?***

**Director of Human Resources, Mr Joe Stewart:**

Chairman, I think in respect of this question you should understand that there are certain categories of people who leave our employment that we do not conduct exit interviews for. Those are people who have been dismissed, retired, people who have transferred to the Civil Service because we already know the reasons for leaving. Our actual staff turnover is in fact very low when all those things are taken into account but however, I am not happy with the figures as stated even though they need to be put in context.

Exit interviews are completed by Human Resources Managers within the local District or Department on a voluntary basis, and I think it is important to stress that, with the individual who has resigned.

In answer to the facts as to some explanation for those figures is a reluctance on the leaver's part to engage in such an interview. They are unavailable for exit interview because they are availing of annual leave or indeed, have failed to complete a particular duty and there is some aspect that may touch upon lack of focus on the matter which may be related to the small numbers that are actually leaving the District or Department on an annual basis. However, as a result of that data, we have already undertaken a number of actions. My colleagues, the ACCs in Rural and Urban Regions have already raised this matter with their staff. The Heads of Human Resources have reminded by me on 2 previous occasions about the need to complete these exit interviews to a satisfactory level. I am having constructed a league table, a bit like we have been already done in co-operation with the Board around absenteeism and so on and factors of that nature, that will measure the performance of the Districts and Departments in the conduct of those interviews.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Thank you.

Question 2 is in the name of Basil McCrea and it is about the relationship with the PPS (Public Prosecution Service).

***Q2 - To ask the Chief Constable how he would like to progress the PSNI's working relationship with the PPS?***

**Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:**

Thank you, I will open on this one and invite ACC McCausland to cover some of the detail on the work we are doing together at the moment.

I am used to working very closely with the Prosecution Service. They sit, while I was in Leicestershire, on the Boards that I chaired, to make sure that justice was proportionate and appropriate to local communities needs and we had a constant dialogue about the effectiveness of the system and the whole reduction of bureaucracy, so my approach is and will be, to work in very close co-operation with the PPS.

I do believe that we have to look at speedier justice, as streamlining those processes is a matter of urgency and I know that is happening. I do believe that we need to introduce new ways of working together which reduces the paperwork and gives greater discretion to colleagues at the frontline, and I do believe that we have to look at different ways of dealing with resolution of problems. So, all of this is currently taking place, but I will be looking at a very strong and constructive relationship with the PPS and hopefully a challenging one where I have to challenge the way things are currently done, and no doubt that challenge will come back to me in terms of the quality and the appropriateness of file production.

This is a 2 way co-operation. I know we have an obligation to the PPS for the quality of what we do. But let me be clear about this. If we streamline, we will be streamlining with their consent some of the paperwork to make sure justice is speedier. We have an obligation to make sure that we get it right first time, so the accountability on police officers to fulfil that obligation will increase as a consequence of reducing the amount of

bureaucracy. But I will hand over to ACC McCausland to talk about the specifics.  
Thank you.

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:**

In the specific detail Chairman, I have already said that the Chief Constable and the Minister of State will be announcing a significant initiative on 6 October 2009, some of the outline of which the press carried some details of yesterday evening.

The process whereby we, the PSNI, transfer electronic files to the PPS is governed by a joint protocol, in that protocol we have been pressing the need for fundamental reform of the relationship with, give the PPS due regard, they have accepted and taken on board. That will hopefully allow the introduction of more efficient processes and the reformed process followed the following 3 areas - the devolution of no prosecution decision making back to the PSNI; the issue of penalty notices which we have already discussed; and the return of the decision making in respect of cautioning.

In relation to the first issue, what will happen is, there will be a geographically located pilot starting from this month running through to the end of March which the PPS and the Northern Ireland Office and ourselves will assess in terms of its capability and its success and then, on the basis of that, we will make further decisions in relation to introducing this across the Service.

The Minister will deal with the issue of penalty notices when he makes his announcement on 6 October 2009 and on the issue of cautioning, the PPS and ourselves will continue our discussions in relation to the matter of cautioning and considering the issue of cautioning, relevant to what happens in the geographic pilots that we have talked about in the issue of no further police action.

Also, we will take forward and are bringing forward in 2 Districts, 'C' District and 'F' District, a discretion pilot in which we will look to in effect to empower officers to exercise discretion at the very frontend when they are dealing with victims and victims of crime and the Chief Constable has outlined some of the general areas of that and we will, of course, keep the Board informed as to the developments.

We believe these are significant steps forward by both ourselves and the PPS and we feel that they are capable, given the fundamental changes that have taken place within policing and the level of public engagement and accountability which is now within the PSNI, in particular, around the relationship that this Board has and how they hold us accountable in a transparent and open fashion. We believe that the PPS and ourselves are able to move forward in relation to these decision making processes by still maintaining confidence in the public arena in terms of the criminal justice system, and we look forward to continuing that working relationship and bringing forward further changes.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Anything you want to add to that, Basil McCrea?

**Mr Basil McCrea:**

Thank you Chairman. I like the humour and I agree it is congratulations to ACC McCausland, it is not often that you are able to gazump both the NIO and the media, so you have done very well.

I am actually interested in the detail that will come out in terms of the geographic tests and such like. It obviously does raise certain issues and maybe the Chief Constable, I realise it might be a bit early, but there is certainly differences in the way that we have a relationship with our PPS and that you might have had in other places. It does require a certain amount of confidence in the prosecutorial responsibilities shall we say of the officers and that we need to be able to reassure, not only the PPS but also the wider society, that this is the right way forward. But of course, it is the right way forward if you can get it to work because there are so many savings and such speedier justice and whatever, so it is really the relationship about how we manage the PPS, it is expectations and concerns that I am interested in.

**Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:**

I agree entirely. I think that is where the idea of piloting is very wise, but we have an opportunity to demonstrate that it works, that it is more appropriate, that victims do have more satisfaction and confidence and that we are applying the new freedoms wisely, so there will be an evaluation of the pilots and I think we need to justify why we should have that freedom, both to the PPS and to yourselves.

Just to say secondly, this is a very fast moving agenda. I am very much aware that the legislative requirements are in the hands of the Minister and quite rightly he owns that, but I know the Board will support moving this ahead very quickly because it is important we get that in place.

As I said earlier, I do know the Board has a role in terms of the efficient and effectiveness of policing, now that we are moving into the area of caution and discretion, quite rightly the Board will want to play in that and be involved in that and I know colleagues will welcome that as well. Thank you Chairman.

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:**

We have built in safeguards in terms of ensuring that oversight body, such as the Board or the Criminal Justice Inspectorate Northern Ireland or the Ombudsman and the PPS, will be happy and content as to our decision making processes in and around this and we will be using the same standards that the Director in effect had laid down in the protocols, but Members should be reassured, that if you remember in our previous history, we actually held the prosecutorial process in terms of that.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

We have a question on baton rounds from Martina Anderson, question 3.

***Q3 - In 2007 former Chief Constable Hugh Orde stated that "The government is fully committed to implementing the Patten recommendations on baton rounds. We have no desire to use these rounds again." However recent events in Ardoyne and Short Strand in Belfast have shown that the PSNI have disregarded this position and are continuing to use these lethal weapons. Can the Chief Constable confirm if his position in relation to plastic bullets is that they should not be used and detail when he intends to fully implement Patten recommendations in respect of plastic bullets.***

**Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:**

Thank you Chairman and thank you for the question. I understand in the Belfast Telegraph on 12 January 2007, my predecessor Sir Hugh, stated that he would consider a success if he never had to use the new version of the projectiles ever again, although he would authorise them when circumstances dictated, and of course he was

referring in the statement to the Attenuating Energy Projectile, I will call it AEP just for simplicity.

I do share that same view as Sir Hugh and the reason why I say that is really from personal experience. As Chief of Leicestershire there were 3 occasions in the past year or so when I am pretty convinced that without that availability of an AEP, the only alternative to deal with someone that was using extreme violence or potentially life threatening violence, was probably through the use of lethal force. I am pretty convinced there are 3 people probably who are still here who may not have been had it not been for the decision to use that projectile instead of a resort to a firearm. So I do have a sort of personal view on this. I do share Sir Hugh's view but I would hope that they would never have to be used, and are there simply in case we have to protect life and use reasonable force.

I am very much aware since I have arrived here, and indeed before, that human rights is at the very core of the PSNI's efforts to provide police officers with less lethal alternatives to the use of conventional firearms, and I share the desire of colleagues that we would never have to use those. But I think there is for me, a reality that I am accountable for making sure that officers have the means to use reasonable force should those circumstances arise, and not to have that available, I would probably see myself responsible for a violation of people's human rights. So, I think there is quite a deep conversation here but I do understand the human rights aspects, but I also understand people's concerns about the symbolism and the use of these AEPs.

Just to say, unlike its predecessors, the AEP and baton round is not a rigid baton. It does perform very differently from a traditional baton round and is both distinct and safer when compared to previous baton rounds. I will not go into the detail of that but I know it is a much more modern derivative of that and it is not intended to cause serious or life threatening injury to the subject. It is meant to be a measure of controlling behaviour and preventing violence and harm and it is meant to be used against specific individuals in a variety of scenarios that sometimes may include public order.

On the specific of the last point, but I do have an answer to that, but forgive me I will have to give you the answer I am given because I am not close enough to the detail of that.

But I do understand that following the Patten report of 1999, a UK Steering Group was set up to take forward recommendations 69 and 70 of the report. Since then, the work of the Steering Group has taken on a UK wide dimension in line with recommendations 69 and 70 and the normalisation of policing in Northern Ireland, and the Oversight Commissioner, who monitors police reform for Northern Ireland, in his report of June 2006, indicated that the recommendations would have been considered fully implemented when the Steering Group issues its 5<sup>th</sup> report and the report was published in September 2006. Forgive me if it is a bit of a technical answer but I understand that was part of the question itself.

With regard to the use of AEP in the rioting in Ardoyne and Mountpottinger, the Board's Human Rights Advisor is currently conducting a review of that usage.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Martina Anderson.

**Martina Anderson:**

Thank you. Go raibh maith agat. You shared experience with us Chief Constable and I think it is only appropriate that we share ours, from our point of view from the republican nationalist community.

There were 9 children died and they were not involved in serious crime or serious violence and it is in that context that, when I look at the tests that the PSNI set for the use of plastic bullets which is absolutely necessary and AEPs, plastic bullets, even Hugh Orde had confirmed should never be used in crowd control situations and they must be fired at the individual.

In 2007, obviously long before you arrived here, there was a group of doctors in 4 of the emergency departments who had told us about 50% of the plastic bullets that had been fired at that stage, where fired at the neck, head and chest. So, on 13 July it was reported that a 13 year boy was hit by a plastic bullet and if a plastic bullet is fired at the individual, if it is about the test that set is absolutely necessary, in line with the Human Rights Advisor looking into this. I would like you yourself to take a look at these particular circumstances around Ardoyne and Short Strand just to satisfy yourself that the PSNI was in compliance with its own test for the threat of its usage. I do not believe

that they were in compliance but I think that is a conversation I take on board that you have only come in but I would like you to do it in the context of what you said at the beginning of your introduction of public confidence and the public confidence for almost 50% of the population from the republican nationalist community has to be taken into account when you are making your deliberations. Thank you.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Before the Chief Constable responds, I have 2 supplementaries on this, you may want to get those first Chief Constable. Jimmy Spratt and Basil McCrea.

**Mr Jimmy Spratt:**

Thanks very much Chairman, and very clearly I would like you also to take into consideration health and safety of the police officers which you are tasked to look after, and also the health and safety of members of the public.

I would also like you to look at a previous incident in Ardoyne whenever 105 police officers were injured and there was a very strong argument, that had baton rounds been used sooner, that there would have been a lot less injury to police officers in that particular situation. I think in relation to the situation in the Short Strand and the Mountpottinger area, which of course was created by the very people who have spoken in relation to the closure of Mountpottinger police station. I would applaud the police and local other public representatives who have applauded the police for their use of baton rounds, because it prevented injuries against police officers in those circumstances and prevented injuries against other members of the public.

So, I would like you to give the Board an assurance and to give a commitment that you will always look at and bear in mind the health and safety of your police officers and that there will be no diminishing of using of baton rounds if it is necessary to protect officers out on the ground whenever they are dealing with some of these situations that have been created by some of the very people who actually have created the situation and are now trying to say they should not be used.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Basil McCrea.

**Mr Basil McCrea:**

Welcome to Northern Ireland. The issue Chief Constable and I speak here as Chairperson of the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee, is that you look at the legal test and when these items of equipment should be used. Can you confirm unequivocally that they are only fired at individuals that are opposing a serious risk, either of injury or life threatening, and that in those situations in terms of the risk assessment, whether the person is 13 years old or not, the question is the risk posed to themselves, to your officers and to others? Would you agree with me that it is an absolute disgrace that the parents of 13 year old children allow them to put themselves in harms way where they could be injured in what is a life threatening or serious way, whether it is from AEPs or generally being in such a situation?

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Chief Constable.

**Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:**

Thanks very much and welcome to Northern Ireland. But this is a very serious issue and I understand the concerns.

Just to say a couple of things first of all. I know, because I have checked already, that the policies we have in place are very thoroughly checked for human rights compliance. and I made the point in very early days of reading Keir Starmer's review of how the PSNI should be compliant with the human rights and I shall read that again in the near future to make sure that all that we are doing is clearly in line with Article 2 and other parts of the Human Rights Act.

Secondly, I understand that the Ombudsman does look at all cases of the discharge, and will look at that independently, and once again I commit to the full support of my colleagues in making sure they have the full facts and background of the circumstances. I am probably a little bit limited in what I can say about individual cases because I understand some of those are still being dealt with by the Ombudsman. But just to say, that I am fully behind making sure that the cases where these are used are investigated. That we review their use, whether the policy remains appropriate, and all the issues that go into that, including the health and safety of police officers as well as the use of reasonable force and community concern. This is a complicated area

because on the left there is health and safety, in the middle there is human rights, the absolute test of this and there are issues around communication, there are issues around training, but what I will commit to do is to look at the circumstances that you have told me. I do not clearly have a role in the same way the Ombudsman does, but I will have a look at the big issues around compliance, communication, circumstances, tactics, I will do all that in support with my colleagues, ACC Finlay to my left, to make sure that we review that in the light of our current training and you have my commitment on that.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Thank you Chief Constable. We also have the Ombudsman, Ms Anderson, coming the to the December 2009 Board meeting.

ACC Finlay, do you want to say something?

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Alistair Finlay:**

I was just going to add in addition to that. I think we have extended this invitation before.

The officers who are deployed with the AEP system are highly trained. They go through a rigorous training and selection procedure and it is not just an individual officer, they operate as a team, so that there is a spotter always making sure that no-one is walking across us inadvertently the circumstances are going to change from the concentration of the discharge of the system. If any Member of the Board would wish to avail of the opportunity of seeing that training and understanding what goes into that training, then of course, as always for any of our training they would be more than welcome.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Thank you ACC Finlay.

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:**

Chairman, the Board's Human Rights Advisor as you know, has been tasked by the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee, of which Martina Anderson and

Basil McCrea are Members, to actually produce 2 independent reports on those particular issues, so that should reassure the Board as well.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Alex Maskey.

**Mr Alex Maskey:**

I thank ACC Finlay for that presentation, but obviously respectfully, we will decline because you are well aware that our position is we are totally opposed to the use of these weapons whether it is against 13 year olds or 30 year olds. Our history tells us that far too many people have lost their lives as a result of the misuse and abuse of these weapons, so there is the issue of the weapons themselves regardless of any training, there is a huge issue of concern to our members and the people we represent, so thank you but we will decline the offer of witnessing the training because we are opposed to the use of these weapons.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

The invitation has been issued, it is up to Members whether they want to take it up or not. Thank you for that ACC Finlay.

Can I bring you to question 4 which is from Jimmy Spratt, it is around the resources available to police officers.

***Q4 - To ask the Chief Constable to reassure the Board that every police officer has the appropriate resources available to them, including back-up, equipment and training, to deal with every aspect of policing in Northern Ireland***

**Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:**

Thanks very much Chairman. I should right from the outset and you would expect me to say this, I would always welcome more resource. Because the appetite for policing is completely undiminished.

I know in relation to personal policing, every single community would like more police officers doing the things that matter, so the appetite for policing and more policing, I share that public desire, but I do know that we live in a world of diminishing resources

and a recession and I am a realist. However, at the moment, I am satisfied that at this moment in time, I and my colleagues have the necessary resources to deliver a service to the people of Northern Ireland, including when I need it, support from other police services in the form of mutual aid or expertise. But I have to say, within the existing restrictions that I have to work within, how that resource might be used and where, it is very tight. It is tight and there are immediate needs that have to be met.

Two things I would say in addition. Firstly, we keep the resourcing needs under continual review in the light of the emerging security situation and I will continue to do so because that is part of my obligation to secure an effective and efficient service. I will certainly be informing the Board when the resources are perhaps insufficient to meet needs and that you would expect me to make that commitment to you.

On the other side of the coin, I also have an obligation to make sure that our resources within PSNI are used to best effect, so that we do liberate time and space from the bureaucracy where we can employ police staff rather than police officers to put them back onto the street. We make those obligations as well, that is part also of meeting the security situation as well.

I would said in finality, that I think the contingent I currently have available for security is absolutely essential. I do keep with colleagues that security situation under constant review and it is essential I have some available finance to deploy immediately should I need to in the light of changing security circumstances and threats. So to repeat, at the moment, the budget is tight. You would expect me to be using that wisely. I think we need to have some flexibility around a contingency and I will commit to use that resource as wisely as possible by looking at ways of saving money and putting that money back onto the frontline and in relation to the security situation.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

It is also on the issue of resources Chief Constable, Alex Maskey has a question on the extent of resources redirected from neighbourhood as a result of Operation Descent, that is question 5.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Sorry, you did not indicate, Mr Spratt.

**Mr Jimmy Spratt:**

Thank you very much Chief Constable for the answer which partially answers, but there are issues that I have raised with you in private in relation to the Forkhill incident and the serious length of time that it took to deploy all of the police onto the ground there. I assume that you will come back to me as you have committed to do in relation to that.

I also want you to come back to me in relation to the provision of proper equipment for police officers who are being asked to stay out on the ground for up to 30 hours and the quality of the equipment that is now being provided in comparison to the quality that used to be provided. There is also issues around the training of officers for doing duties like that, there is also obviously backup resources in relation to that as well. That serious incident, in my view, some of the backup was far from satisfactory. I have already raised it with the Deputy Chief Constable, I have raised it with ACC McCausland when he was Acting Deputy Chief Constable and I have raised it personally with you yesterday in the meeting that we had. So, I think there is a number of issues that you need to come back and give us reassurance that proper equipment, training and all the rest of it will be provided.

**Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:**

Thanks very much. We have committed to come back with an answer to your issues. I would be reluctant to discuss in public the detail of operation equipment and needs, I think that would probably be inappropriate, but we will come back to you in private about those issues, and suffice to say, when there are issues where officers feel that their provisions are inappropriate, we review that as a matter of course, and we are doing that currently with the Police Federation as well.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Thank you Chief Constable. Question 5 Alex Maskey has kindly offered to get directly to the point on this question which is very unusual.

***Q5 - To ask the Chief Constable to detail the extent of resources redirected from neighbourhood duties as a result of "Operation Dissent"?***

**Mr Alex Maskey:**

Chairman, obviously thanks for that. I do not at all expect you to give a line by line explanation to this, but by way of for instance, last week we had Freshers Week in parts of the city. In the Holylands area for example in Belfast, obviously there was a great expectation that there would be provisions made to deal with some of the disorder you get there and, as I said, I do not expect you to be familiar with it and therefore to give a whole answer to all this.

I am just giving this as a for instance. I mean I was advised by your colleagues that additional resources have been requested to provide additional police support in that area for last week, and whilst that had been approved internally by the organisation, it had then been withdrawn again to facilitate this operation on roadblocks. I am just giving that as an example, that here we had a classic example where an area was well expecting a problem which erupted again in the media which brings the city and everybody else into disrepute and I am just simply saying that here, to facilitate one operation, the core of policing with the community was left to the side.

**Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:**

Chairman, could I just deal with the very general issue and perhaps ACC Finlay would talk about the specific.

One of the things I will be working at with colleagues fairly quickly in relation to personal policing is the rules around the abstraction of community officers to deal with issues beyond her community or their patch. We need to define an abstraction policy and we need to be clear that community police officers the place of last resource. I am sure those principles are already being employed, but I will be revisiting that again as part of our look at service excellence and personal policing.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Are you happy with that? You are off the hook ACC Finlay.

Question 7 from Tom Buchanan is a question about the new college in Cookstown.

**Q7 - To ask the Chief Constable to provide an update on the future of the proposed new Police Training College in Cookstown?**

**Deputy Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:**

Yes Chairman, that falls to me as chair of the Programme Board.

A Design and Business Case for the new tri-service college is being prepared and will be submitted all being well by the end of November this year. This has involved intensively liaised between the 3 services and the Programme Board members to the point where, almost every day Joe Stewart or I have a meeting in relation to the Police College, so it is intensive liaison. That is to make sure that the new facilities match our strategic needs for the 3 services.

The Design and Business Case will demonstrate in reality the facilities that will be available within the funding envelope and we are very, very close to coming within the funding envelope which I think is very good news. But it will also identify the added value and benefits that the new facilities and the shared campus will provide, in helping to improve frontline services. Obviously we are concerned with Police Service, but Fire & Rescue and Prison Service will accrue benefits as a result of this shared campus.

We hope that the business case will be approved by March 2010 and that work can begin on the site within the 2010/11 financial year and we hope it will be completed by 2013, but all of this of course is subject to government approval of the business case and the funding. We would propose to give the Board a full briefing on this in early December 2009 to make sure you are fully advised of the design and the plans for the College.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Tom Buchanan.

**Mr Tom Buchanan:**

Thank you for that response. However, this is a project that has been lingering on for some considerable time and I have a concern that there is a huge fall in capital funding for this particular project. There was money ringfenced for that, can I ask you, has any of that money that was ringfenced been sifted off for something else? Has any fresh

bids to be made now to government for more capital funding for this project and can you give us a guarantee, as we are sitting on this Board today, that this project is actually going to come to fruition, that we are going to see it realised on the ground.

We have a police service here that we are proud of because of the expert training that they have, if we want that to continue we need to have this college and we need to be getting it on the ground soon, so these are some of the questions that are raised and concerns.

**Deputy Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:**

I can only speak for the effort that has gone in, in terms of the Programme Board and the Steering Group to prepare an appropriate business case to present to our funding masters for funding. The decisions of course are not mine in relation to the funding but we have assurance that the funding that is available remains available. No-one has come to the Steering Group or the Programme Board to say that ringfenced budget is no longer available. That has not been said either formally or informally to us, but at the end of the day it is not my decision on the funding. We will submit a sound business case which presents all of the business benefits and hope we hope that it will be approved. I can say no more than that.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Thank you Deputy Chief Constable.

The final question from Peter Weir on the new arrangements for the Drugs Squads, it is question 8.

***Q8 - To ask the Chief Constable to provide the Board with details surrounding the new arrangements for the Drug Squad and how these officers will be redeployed?***

**Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:**

ACC Harris has had to leave, so ACC McCausland will answer this one specially. But just to say, I have a view that it is vital we pursue the criminal and the organised crime gang and not concentrate in silos on specific crime types and I hold to that view.

I spent a few days ago in Dublin, looking at intellectual property and it is very clear that some of the people that are involved in counterfeiting and fraud are equally involved in drugs importation and I think we have got to target the organised crime gangs and I am very confident the review will enable us to do that and I am fully behind it.

**Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:**

On the specifics Chairman and on behalf of ACC Harris, and he offers his apologies, he had to leave for an operational issue. The Board will know that you are receiving a presentation on organised and serious crime which is coming up in the near future.

The first point we want to make is, in relation to drugs and dealing with drugs, everyone in PSNI is responsible, it is not just Drugs Squad, it is uniform, its community, it is neighbourhood, its TSG, it is Roads Policing it is everyone, because organised crime respects no boundaries.

Organised Crime Branch was set up to adopt this approach taken by the organised crime gangs. In other words, that we brought together involving the various agencies, the various groups, into this particular Crime Branch.

Restructuring is intended to increase our effectiveness and efficiency, enabling the Organised Crime Branch to tackle all types of organised crime with the operational team that has now been set up. For instance, every major drug investigation there will usually come an accompanied money laundering investigation and the teams will be strengthened by the ability of the Organised Crime Branch to wholly tackle organised crime in all its manifestations so right across the Board rather than having it, as commented earlier on by Suneil Sharma in terms of silo policing, we have brought it together into one.

The reorganisation of the Organised Crime Branch will increase the number of operational teams and our ability to tackle organised drug and crime. Organised Crime Branch will amalgamate these specialists skills from across a range of current sub-branches to establish a number of multi agency discipline teams that can then tackle the crimes, that just go beyond drugs as I have already said.

Our expectations and the benefits, the operational teams will incorporate a breadth of knowledge from within the current Organised Crime Squad and Drug Squads. The financial investigators will be embedded within operational teams in order to maximise the potential for recovery of criminal assets relating to all areas of organised crime, not at least drugs, and Members will know that has been a considerable concern over many years about drug dealers and in effect, the issues that they have in terms of resources that they gradually build up.

The ability of Organised Crime Branch to focus on drugs crimes will be increased as more officers will actually be involved in the investigation of this type of crime, and the restructuring also ensures the existing breadth of knowledge in current squads is shared within the relevant teams. Combined with that, obviously as I have said before, it is the responsibility of everyone, not just Organised Crime Branch. For example, District CASE Officers have been involved and will continue to deliver educational assessments to children and young people in school throughout Northern Ireland on the dangers of illegal drugs used. Organised Crime Branch will continue to support drugs exhibition stands and advice around the community, including DPPs, to maintain this effort that people can understand that in terms of the stakeholder involvement, that everyone, not just the police, tackle this issue in society. So what we are really saying is, by doing this restructuring which ACC Harris will outline to the Board in the forthcoming months, we believe we can provide a more efficient and a more effective overall service to deal with the scourge of drugs.

**Mr Peter Weir:**

Just very briefly and almost more by the way of a comment on it. I mean agree certainly with the Chief Constable's remarks in terms of ensuring that we are not in a silo. The purpose really of the question, I know there has been a degree of media speculation and media indication on this, that I felt it was important there was an opportunity to provide that degree of public reassurance. Obviously, I think what has been said today, is something that can provide a more integrated approach and I think we all know and we are all know of individuals in communities whose lives have been blighted by the drugs trade, but it is part of an overall crime picture and I think to treat it in isolation sometimes is to miss the point and I welcome the reassurance that has been given today.

**Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:**

Okay, Peter Weir.

At the beginning of the meeting, I welcomed our guests from Bosnia and during the course of the meeting we were joined by our new US Consul to Northern Ireland, Kamala S Lakhdir, you are very, very welcome. The people of the US Consulate have been great friends to the Police Service here and to the accountability structures that we have here and we look forward to seeing you at more of our meetings, you are very welcome.

Thank you Chief Constable and your team for coming and answering our questions, and thanks to the media and the public.