

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2011 AT 10:30AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

Mr Brian Rea (Acting Chairman)
Mr Gearóid Ó hEára (A/Vice Chairman)
Ms Martina Anderson
Mr Leslie Cree
Mr Alex Maskey
Mr Basil McCrea
Mr Ian McCrea
Ms Mary McKee
Mrs Rosaleen Moore
Professor Sir Desmond Rea
Mr Trevor Ringland
Mr David Rose
Mr Jimmy Spratt

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 Dave Jones (ACC Rural Region)
Mr Will Kerr (ACC Criminal Justice)
Mr Duncan McCausland (ACC Operational Support)
Mr Joe Stewart, Director of Human Resources
Mr David Best, Director of Finance & Support Services
Ms Liz Young, Head of Media & PR
Superintendent, Command Secretariat

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Dr Debbie Donnelly (Acting Chief Executive)
Mr David Jackson (Director of Community Engagement)
Mr David Wilson (Director of Planning)
2 Board Officials

APOLOGIES:

Mr Jonathan Bell
Mr Daithí McKay
Mr Alastair Ross
Mr Suneil Sharma

Good morning everyone and welcome to this Policing Board meeting in public.

This is the first meeting of 2011 and I am pleased to say that I have made it to today's session; albeit I voluntarily re-routed myself to get here and I am glad I did because I see the kit is there. I want at this point to record my thanks to the Chief Constable and to ACC McCausland and to our own Communications Manager, for giving me such care and attention that day and also to the Chief Constable's 2 Close Protection Officers who took me to hospital, stayed with me for 2½ hours whilst I was mended. So, I want to record those thanks in public.

Chief Constable, we do have some serious business to cover today, and I want to begin by paying tribute to all those involved in the handling of the policing operation on the Antrim Road last week; and indeed in North Belfast in very recent hours, and particularly I want to commend the communication skills of Chief Superintendent Mark Hamilton on his significant contribution as the extent of the operation unfolded. In a very serious situation the information flow through the media handling of this incident helped ensure that local people were kept fully informed, and indeed, people further afield who have got concerns about ongoing threat from dissident republicans.

At the weekend, there was a further attempt to draw officers into a dangerous situation. There was a period of disorder, so if you could provide the Board with any updates on those 2 incidents.

Now also, we have had 2 major report launches in the last 2 weeks, and the most recent one of course was just yesterday and there has been considerable debate around human rights issues and overall police service delivery. There is an overwhelming desire within the community to get a good service that meets community needs and this desire is shared by the Board as we work towards finalising next year's Policing Plan. Within that Plan, future budget provisions for policing will be critical and we have had some discussion on that in the private session, and it is of course welcomed news on future funding provision for the new college project at Desertcreat.

Today, we are due to get a performance report and it is encouraging that approximately 75% of the targets are either exceeded or improving, and particularly in respect of

domestic burglary which has been a focus public awareness raising over the last few months.

Now, I also know that there are questions on this, but we would want to begin with your report. But before we move to that Chief Constable, on behalf of the Board, I am pleased to be able to confirm that the Deputy Chief Constable, Judith Gillespie will not be leaving the Police Service of Northern Ireland in March 2011. Deputy Chief Constable, we very much appreciate your continued commitment to serving the community and ensuring the best possible policing service through your work within the Chief Officer Team. I know that the Chief Constable is also very happy with your decision, and that continuity in the Top Team and in the excellent service that is provided continues and the contribution you have made to the Top Team. Chief Constable.

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

Chairman, thank you very much for those kind words. I also would like to commend the exemplary leadership of Chief Superintendent Mark Hamilton and indeed, all the District Commanders in dealing with the day to day challenges they have, and not forgetting of course, the leadership shown by police officers, men and women of great courage who are going out there as we speak and confronting very real and difficult situations. They are leaders in their own right and I want to commend them as well at this time for what they are doing.

We will have the update on performance in a short while, but I just wanted to say that I hope both the public and ourselves will find them of encouraging news. As you say Chairman, 75% of our ambition is either being exceeded or there is real progress being made. I am particularly encouraged by the latest Omnibus Survey. It is early days, but the trends are welcome and encouraging.

More people now think we are doing a good job in Northern Ireland in local areas than this time last year. Confidence levels in the PSNI's ability to provide an ordinary policing service are up. Satisfaction with the levels of police patrols are up and that is a consequence of the scrutiny applied by the Policing Board to getting people out back onto the streets. More victims of crime are satisfied with how they have been kept informed and that is early days, but our new policy of ringing victims back and keeping

them informed is clearly having a significant effect and importantly for me, there has been a 6% increase in people feeling safe in their community, which in the light of the last year, I think is quite a remarkable achievement by both neighbourhood and response officers in their visibility and their accessibility.

Of course, those achievements have to be considered against the challenging operational backdrop, I do not think there is any other police service in Europe or indeed in the world that is facing the current challenges to security alongside delivering a very real and welcome policing with the community challenge, alongside dealing with the matters in the local Policing Plan. So, I want to pay credit to my colleagues for what they are doing. They have faced again in the last month sadly, a continuing severe situation, but we will continue to challenge that and deliver the local Policing Plan.

What we want to see clearly is a continuing progress particularly in the lift of confidence and satisfaction in policing day to day. We are moving rapidly towards the issue of the commitments in April 2011. We are giving back a huge amount of professional, discretion and commonsense back to police officers and our work on keeping victims informed I think is very, very important indeed. I am very confident that they will deliver in the next year, again an uplift in that very personal, professional service that we wish to provide.

Chairman, over the past 2 months, I have had the privilege of visiting many people. Community groups from Derry, in Lurgan last week, District Policing Partnerships (DPPs), and they are overwhelmingly supportive of what the PSNI are attempting to do. I say that because I think there are for me 3 challenges over the next few months that I would very much share with the Board and I am very encouraged and welcome the Board's challenge and involvement in that.

The first challenge for me, which is again a reflection of what people are saying is, that they would like to have clarity around our budget situation, not just for the next year but for the next 4 years. I think it is very important that we work hand in hand with the Board on delivering some very testing cash efficiencies, our part in meeting the recession. But, as you know, I have been working with the Justice Minister on securing a £200m contribution over the next 4 years which will enable us to deal with the security situation, but more importantly, not compromise our work in policing with community. It

is very important that we do that work alongside dealing with the issues of serious harm.

We have had some lengthy, very detailed and very responsible conversations at the highest level. We have received a very sympathetic hearing and that matter is currently being progressed, so I am optimistic that we will have news in due course. I think that we have to be realistic though. We are being asked to make significant efficiencies over the next few years, which leads onto my second issue.

I think there is a need for accountability to be shared in a greater way, particularly in terms of how we use our people wisely, how we tackle crime, how we deal with the serious issues. I am anxious that the current work on Community Safety Partnerships for example, should bring in the Health Services, the Housing Executive, and District Councils to make sure we can tackle the issues of anti social behaviour, right through to people trafficking in a way that sustains results. At the moment I think the proposal is that the police will be held accountable, but I do believe particularly in a recession, it is important that we really do focus our efforts and sometimes that might need a legislative change to bring that about.

I think some of the issues at the moment on the Licensing Act, where for example, there are powers proposed that will enable us to close licensed premises once disorder has broken out, really does need to be brought forward so we can do that in the pre-emption or anticipation of violence. This is very important because the consequence of having violence breaking out as we know can not only be expensive, but very harmful to communities and I would value the support of politicians and the Executive in taking some bold measures in making sure we can become more effective in what we do. We are having some real progress in the criminal justice system. The Justice Minister I know, because I have been involved in the meetings, is having a look at the whole system from the beginning to the end. It is absolutely right that we stop producing the paperwork we currently do, and great support from the PPS (Public Prosecution Service) on that, but there is a lot more to be done about incentivising early police, dealing with the length it takes for trials to come to fruition and also making sure that our support for victims is better. Once again that will require very bold decisions, but I know we are up for it and I am looking forward to working with all the agencies in

making sure that we can become collectively more effective and make the reforms that we need to bring about assured.

The third issue for me which I am very mindful of. I think we had a very good morning yesterday in public. That for me was one of the most constructive few hours I spent for a long time. Really understanding people's challenges and perspectives on human rights and having a conversation which was public, but very meaningful. I am very grateful for the Board's challenge in these areas because it helps us to focus on the things that matter. I do think that we, as the PSNI, again need to reinvigorate ourselves so that we can get to the point where every person in every community can truly say that the PSNI are 'our police'. I think in terms of persuading those that are still trying to take us back, getting the information to deal with serious harm, the most vulnerable, concentrating our efforts in the right place, we need to have and move very quickly this year to a position where everybody can say, "*after 10 years of existence, the PSNI is our police. It is the police that stands for our young people*". That is my ambition. I know it is shared by colleagues that not only are we human rights compliant, not only are we making the local Policing Plan work, not only are we delivering performance, but the bit that really matters to me is, that everybody says the PSNI are 'our police' and we can name the officers who are helping our community get better. We acknowledge their impartiality, we recognise their integrity, and that for me that will be the Mission for this year that we get to that point which is so important. As I say, yesterday I thought was a very good day in relation to that and I am very grateful for the Board's continuing challenge.

Finally for me Chairman, I am grateful that you acknowledged the decision taken by the Deputy Chief Constable. I just want to say again, there are people at the moment who have made a hugely personal choice to leave the police service. They go with my entire respect for the service they have provided. We have colleagues who are still deciding a deeply personal choice and many will continue I suspect in the public service but many have given many years of loyal service, and others will stay because they have made that personal choice as well. I have a great team. I have enjoyed for the last 18 months a really great team whose commitment and integrity, quite frankly in my 34 years of policing, has been second to none and I share that throughout the ranks and I think personally I am really encouraged that we are going to do something very special this year on behalf of all the communities and that is our commitment to you.

I am also very pleased that the Deputy Chief Constable is staying. I value very much her significant leadership and professionalism and I am grateful for that decision.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Jimmy Spratt on the opening remarks.

Mr Jimmy Spratt:

Can I thank the Chief Constable for those opening remarks and can I just say in relation to the Antrim Road incident and the very great deal of work that went in there over quite a number of days, can I just say thank you to the police in terms of how that operation ended up, it could have been so much different. I think we all owe a great debt to the officers and to Chief Superintendent Mark Hamilton and others who dealt with that situation up there. But what you did not mention Chief Constable, there has been a number of fairly severe incidents around dissident threat and may be you could tell us, is the dissident threat still severe or what is the situation in relation to that? I think the public have a right to know that given the ongoing number of incidents that have taken place in relation to that.

Can I just say, in relation to the accountability issue around anti social behaviour. We very clearly view anti social behaviour as something that the police needs to deal with and I recognise the fact that other agencies have a responsibility in trying to help in that situation, but in many respects, many District Councils are tied financially as well at this time and I think that needs to be recognised. There is no point in saying that District Councils will be able to take on because at the end of the day, it is the ratepayers that has to pay for all of this, including the police service and I think we need to be very careful what we are asking for and what the costings around that would be in terms of dealing with some of those things. I certainly think CSPs (Community Safety Partnerships) and DPPs (District Policing Partnerships) joining up together is a big issue and there is amounts of money around both those organisations that can be very well spent in terms of dealing with some low level anti social behaviour. We have seen that in various District Council areas, Belfast City and various District Councils throughout the province where various schemes, like Midnight Soccer and all sorts of things have been used and very effectively used, not great deals of budgets and DPPs have been involved in that as well. I think there is big encouragement there that the 2

things are joining and certainly that is going through the processes at the minute, and certainly we will be supportive of whatever we can do on that.

In terms of the human rights, we very clearly support human rights and support the ethos of human rights, but what we do not support is, where we believe human rights oversteps into the line of the independent operation of the police service, and we will certainly raise our voices in terms of that whenever that issue comes up. I certainly think there has been examples of that in the terms of the montage photographs and other things that have been raised by this Board over past days. Can I say, that in terms of human rights, I would like to see this Board turning to the human rights of police officers, turning to the human rights of victims and starting to deal with those issues as opposed to a one sided human rights programme which I think very clearly is on the agenda at this moment in time.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Could I ask you to get to the question please?

Mr Jimmy Spratt:

Well, I have already raised the question.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Can we have the answer?

Mr Jimmy Spratt:

But just to finish of, in terms of the human rights issue, we will certainly support what we think is supportable and we will not support stuff where we think very clearly is going into the operational responsibilities and the operation independence of the police service.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Chief Constable.

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

Thank you for the questions. The threat remains severe. There has been no change in that. We have been relentlessly working with our Garda colleagues day in, day out to

try and bring those responsible to justice and there has been real success but the problem remains severe which is why I think it is very important that I have a stability for the next 4 to 5 years against which I can plan what we need to deal with serious harm alongside keeping the policing with the community plan really on board without compromising any of that local policing. So, we need to do both, but the problem remains severe. It is not simply related to dissidents, we also have some loyalist problems now with pipe bombs which are sectarian, we are dealing with that as well, so there is a debate still out there about persuading people to move away from violence. We can do so much with our security response. As I said, we have had so real successes over the past few months again working closely with our Garda colleagues, but at the end of the day, this has to be a community resolution of persuasion and politics.

On the issue of anti social behaviour, I do not believe the current framework is sufficient. I think the accountability focus purely on the police is no longer sufficient. I think if you have statutory partnerships you have both focus and leadership. I think you need that to concentrate on the most vulnerable neighbourhoods. In terms of the thoroughness of the approach, particularly when it comes to anti social behaviour, the relationship between young people and drink, the locations themselves. I went to Lurgan last week and had a very good day with neighbourhood officers. I walked through a location that quite frankly I think could have been improved. It is about the environment, it is about what young people are doing, it is about housing policies, it is about the way that we treat other groups. I think the issue for me about enhancing the accountability within Community Safety Partnerships is simply one of focus and leadership and I do not think we should be afraid of taking those decisions.

On the human rights issue, I know that the Board support me entirely in terms of the operation independence. I have not felt though that that has been compromised, I welcome the challenge to how we are using photographs, we may disagree on that and have had very long debates but I think it is necessary to have a challenge to how we are using the powers and the tactics and I certainly welcome that.

The issue about the human rights of police officers was well rehearsed yesterday in a very public way, and that was a good debate because it covered victims as well in a way that I think you would want us to be thinking about. There is an issue for me. An
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example would be the legislation around the closure of licensed premises which I do not have been cognisant of the rights of police officers. If we are asking our colleagues only to deal with disorder once it has broken out, when they can see it clearly starting to escalate and in their professional judgement is getting to a point where there will be real violence, we are asking our police officers to expose themselves because they cannot deal with it unless there is a power to close licensed premises. So, in those sorts of areas that is where I shall be challenging this afternoon, advised by my own human rights lawyer, the current proposals to limit closure to when disorder has broken out rather than anticipation. I think I am quite at rights to challenge back on that and I am sure the Board would have sympathy with that. So, I do not see the challenge to how we are using our powers, how we are using our equipment as a threat to operation independence, I do see it as a welcome incentive to think hard about the issues.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Alex Maskey.

Mr Alex Maskey:

Thank you Chairman. It is not so much a question that I want to really ask, it is just a kind of a number of observations. First of all could I thank the Chief Constable for giving us a fairly wide range in his introduction and certainly from the private session, there are a lot of challenges which do face all of us, both from the police side and from the wider community. There is no doubt there has been some successes in recent times in terms of the way in which the police have carried out their work, but there have also been some problems. There is no point in us sitting here and saying those problems do not exist, and I know for one second that you do not want to avoid those discussions.

I certainly, from our party's point of view, see absolutely no contradiction between making sure that all of us, but in the context of this discussion, we are talking about the police being human rights compliant and I do not think you have ever averted from that suggestion yourself, so there is no contradiction in terms of the safety of police officers in how the police operate in a way which protects everybody's human rights. So, I do not see any contradiction at all and I would actually like to commend this Board, and those people particularly involved in the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee for bringing to the public fore the whole question of human rights

compliance and how it is actually delivered and let us have the debate, I mean that is what this is all about. Let us have a mature and informed debate, and I would echo the invite from both of those launches in terms of the Children and Young People Thematic and the Annual Report to all those people who have engaged in the work leading up to those reports to continue that engagement because it is a very, very important engagement.

If I may say Chief Constable that you spoke earlier on about the idea and the concept of people talking about our police service and that is where we want to be at. We are not actually quite there yet and maybe we never will be, but the point about it is, what we do want to get is, we want to have people having sufficient confidence in the police that they will co-operate fully with the police and therefore the police can do their job as professionally as they need to do. I would argue very strenuously that the way in which, certainly a number of people that my party would represent, but I believe it is actually quite widespread in the community, that people will see the police as their police when they see the policing responding to them, treating them with respect, listening to their opinions and allowing those people to shape how the police carry out their work. Now, obviously the police have to get on with their job because you have the responsibility and the lawful and the statutory authority and responsibility to enforce the law to protect the public, but it has to be done in a way in which it works with the public. The public are not the servants. We here, whether we are elected representatives or appointees to this Board are servants, the police are servants and we all serve the public. Now, we do that in a responsible and mature way and we have to give leadership and sometimes take hard decisions, but we have to do it in a way in which I have said, the public are our primary responsibility and we need to make sure that the public see that we are at their disposal.

So, in commending the police for their work, I do want to place on record, I am actually concerned at the number of incidents that I have seen reported recently in the press which appear to me to have descended into unnecessary debacles and altercations on the streets. Now, some of those incidents may well be orchestrated and I do not know, maybe one or 2 of them have been. Some of them appear to be more drink fuelled and I just think that people need to have a bit of commonsense as to how they deal with drink. Now, the legislation that you are talking about is obviously going through the process of deliberation at this moment in time and I do not want to have a lengthy

debate here, maybe it is a worthwhile discussion to have but I do not think the Chairman would allow us to indulge too much more on that....

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

I think you are right.

Mr Alex Maskey:

There are very core issues involved in that. Certainly from our point of view, I think we need to be mindful when we are dealing with alcohol, we need to make sure that we are not so much pre-emptive on the night because I am not convinced at all how anybody can say 'well I think there may be trouble in that bar', I think that they are in any of my own direct experiences as a constituency representative, you know where the establishments are where there are problems and if you are dealing with the management, the owner and the proprietors, you can actually pre-empt an awful lot. So, it is about ongoing, sensible management approaches to all these matters.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Mr Maskey, are you nearly there?

Mr Alex Maskey:

Just to finish off Chairman, thank you for your prompting. Again as I say, you will not be surprised Chief Constable that my final remarks from this particular session here will be that, the way in which we will get people saying 'well that is our police service' or 'we are confident in our police' is that when we have a human rights compliant service and when we have a service which actually is the benchmark for public engagement and community engagement and I look forward to the incoming Policing Plan where I think we will have made some considerable success in terms of getting a Community Engagement Strategy that will work.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you Mr Maskey. Chief Constable, do you want to make any comment on that because I have to bring in Basil McCrea now.

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

No, other than to say I would agree with everything. I think we are moving to a place where seeing is believing. I think people see the day to day good quality policing, the policing with the community, the way we treat victims and I think we are really appreciating how incredibly important the routine is in winning confidence, so I would accept that entirely. I think we will all see with the new Policing with the Community Strategy and a huge thank you for the hard work that everybody has put into that, it is a really great move forward. A step change again in the quality of service we provide.

I do think the giving back of professional commonsense to police officers is also working very well. It is being very much shaped by local communities themselves, very, very good feedback and ACC Kerr might be able to give us some update on that later of where we are. I think the issue and I again support entirely, you have to know your local community to know where the problems are coming from, often that it is about dialogue.

I was in Antrim last week with the District Policing Partnership and they had the approach exactly as Mr Maskey was outlining. Know the licensed premises, know the management, know what is happening and that is entirely what I would just like to see replicated across the piece.

Mr Basil McCrea:

Thank you Chairman. First of all Chief Constable, we will probably deal with the issue about the Human Rights launch in the questions that come up, but I have to say that I am very grateful for your comments and I think it was a really excellent event and no doubt we will talk a little bit more.

You did at that conference raise, and this is the one point that I want to bring out because I think it was really important. We did talk about the fact that the police alone cannot tackle the issue of anti social behaviour, and that there are other agencies that might step up to the mark, and that it is something that perhaps we as a Policing Board might help with. So, could you just perhaps expand on that?

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

I would like to see firstly, I think police officers by the very fact they are there, if they are allowed to and are trusted, always demonstrate leadership in bringing people together

to confront a problem. I think that is a very good thing because it is outside of politics. Sometimes it is impartial and I am delighted with the way neighbourhood policing is going and I think we can do more on that still. So, it is the very fact that police officers are trusted is very important by itself and the leadership they show.

I would like to see in time our Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) really focus on some big issues around early intervention. We do know who the young people are that are particularly vulnerable and it is right that the Health Service, the Police Service, the Probation Service and the voluntary sector come together to support the families who are particularly finding it difficult. That is not about punitive and preventing orders, that is about stopping problems.

I would like to see us work on what we are doing on the Community Prioritisation Index with DSD (Department for Social Development) which is, we know where our most deprived neighbourhoods are and the question is, if they are the most deprived for many years, are we focusing sufficiently on those neighbourhoods together and I think there is a lot of work to be done in improving the life opportunities of young people by really getting our act together in some key areas. I would like to see more support given to people coming out of prison because I think it is very easy to get back into reoffending if on day 1 you do not know who your doctor is, you do not know what education opportunities there are, if the beat officer does not know you are coming out of prison either, there are all sorts of things we can do. That I think is where we respect the human rights of people by making sure that those in authority have the right structures to deal with the fundamental issues as well as the day to day problems that emerge.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Trevor Ringland.

Mr Trevor Ringland:

Just 2 questions. At a time of budget restraint Chief Constable, you talk about the partners that we have to work with to get in early active intervention and what know.

Are we and I mean we as the PSNI and the Policing Board, are we keeping a proper eye on the budgets of our partners in that intervention, such as the Probation Board where their funding is being cut. Such is also the cut in the education budget which affected youth workers who actually take active intervention in steering young children away from various crimes, including hate crime and should we take a more active view on that working in partnership with the Board.

The second one is just in relation to burglary and the detection rate in burglary and is there more that we can do on that?

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

I will let probably ACC Jones deal with the burglary detection rate issue because he has been overseeing that for us. In relation to the budget situation faced by others. You know something, I think budget cuts are an opportunity as well as a threat. There is a lot of stuff we do at the moment that may not make sense and I am not going to diminish the problems and the challenge, but I think the issue comes back, "are we focusing on the problems properly and are we really making sure that we share our resources"? You know something, I am not convinced that we are doing that. I am not convinced there is the framework to do that at the moment and I think often agencies operate in a isolation too much, in spite of some excellent work that is done locally. Often it is individual led, it is personality led, it is ad hoc and it only lasts as long as that person is in place, so I think we should step up to the mark here. I think budget cut backs are an opportunity to review what is really important as opposed to what is not. Are we really focusing on the things that matter and also, I think there is a huge potential to use the voluntary sector and people who have great passion and great skills in a way that we are currently not. So, I think the voluntary sector and the volunteerism is something that we certainly work at better,

Maybe I will just invite ACC Kerr to say a few things on that if I might. Thank you.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Will Kerr:

Certainly, thank you Chief Constable. I think the first point Mr Ringland is, that sometimes a lack of money can act as a catalyst for all agencies to work a wee bit smarter together.

The 2 brief observations I would like to make on that firstly, we need to get a more sensible balance between prevention and care when we are dealing with half of these issues. Anti social behaviour is a perfect case in point. We always default the single police solution to deal with the systems of anti social behaviour, when quite often the causes have their roots in social familiar and deprivation, a breakdown in familiar relationships that actually a more joined up response between health and social care, education, probation, local council would give you a far more effective response, so this is about effectiveness as well, not just about money.

But can I give a very specific example in something that we would like strong Board support? It is in relation to Clause 34 which is in the proposed Draft Justice Bill that is being discussed still at Committee stage at the moment. At the minute the amalgam of the DPPs and CSPs into these new Policing and Community Safety Partnerships are going to be responsible for designating other agencies in policing, so it can involve health, education, council, those agencies are going to be collectively responsible for joint Community Safety Plans. But the only agency then held accountable by statute for the delivery of those joint Community Safety Plans is policing, and frankly that is just ridiculous. We have to have joint responsibility by statute if this is going to be effective, because we can talk about it, we can commit our plans to paper, but local accountability, local democratic accountability is about politicians and local representatives also being able to point the finger and having robust conversation with those other agencies as well about what they are doing so we would ask for strong Board support in relation to Clause 34. We see that as the minimum requirement of effective partnership working.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Dave Jones:

Do you want me to answer the question regarding burglary? With the Chairman's permission, there was a question around burglary.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Can we have that in the discussion that.....

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

If you wish Chairman.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Yes, if you do not mind.

Professional Sir Desmond Rea:

Excuse me, sorry I would like to indicate Chairman that there are 2 questions. The Home Office this week has announced an initiative in terms of police mapping or crime mapping. Could you tell us your reflections on that and what our intentions are?

Secondly, the impression that I have in recent months is that the Garda Siochana in the policing of the dissident threat have been most effective and may be you could comment on that please?

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

I will let ACC Kerr fill in the detail, but I think one of the advantages we have here is we can see how other things work before we decide to do it ourselves. We are doing that with neighbourhood policing, we are doing that the Policing Pledge so we make sure it really does meet the needs of communities in Northern Ireland, I think the same will apply with crime mapping. What initially appears as a very good idea and unless you are very careful, can be fear inducing rather than reducing. I am more anxious that perhaps we have accessibility to police officers, so that we can deal with local problems quickly than have something that is a little bit maybe clumsy in the way in which we get the message across to people. But I will let ACC Kerr talk about the progress on that if I might?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Will Kerr:

I think the Chief Constable is quite right Professor Rea, we are looking at this in a number of levels.

It is a very complex issue. What information do you put in these public facing sites, at what level? You put them at geographic level and the Chief Constable talked earlier on about trying to concentrate collectively our resources in areas that are socially and economically deprived to give them a bit of confidence. Now, publishing maps that might undermine that community confidence is not necessarily what we want to be doing at this stage either.

There are a number of choices for this. The GB site is run by the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA). We can go out and construct a local site with the involvement of NISRA (Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency) or we can build one from the ground up. We are looking at probably going with an amalgam of what is going to serve local communities best, and at the minute we are having those conversations around what sort of information is going to add value to local communities' lives. What is it they want to know, why do they want to know it and how can we best that into the public domain. But to be honest, we are not going to rush into this one. I think the worse thing we could do is, undermine property prices in certain areas just because we put the information out without context and without thought, and we are not going to do that.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Apologies to ACC Jones, I did not mean to cut you off on that but there is a section on burglary under the performance.

Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Sorry Chairman, there was a second question that I put to the Chief Constable.

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

I think the answer is, there are being most effective and our relationship and our way of working, again working under European Law, working with exactly the same ambition to keep people safe, has never been better.

Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Thank you.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Can we move to the performance against the Policing Plan and the general highlights if you like. Members have had a copy of this in their packs for some days now and there are one or 2 questions, maybe more than one or 2 questions, and then I hope that ACC Jones will take the opportunity to deal with the response that he had.

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

Chairman, thank you very much. As I said in my introduction, I do hope Board Members and members of the public will find encouragement from these figures. I am going to give the highlights and then obviously invite questions on the specific areas of what we are doing. But just to say, although we are not measuring it at the moment, overall crime up until the 3rd quarter is down by 6.1%. The detection rate has risen to over 26%, and we have the lowest overall crime figures in relation to the areas of the UK we are benchmarked, and I think that is encouraging. I understand and I know we had particularly inclement weather, but you know something, criminals still do operate in spite of snow and last year we had a very low crime level over this period. This year the crime level is the lowest since recorded in this way, so we cannot benchmark ourselves any further back because we are not able to do that, so that is well beyond the 12 year crime low and I think that is very encouraging news.

Seven of the 9 classes of crime that we are currently measuring in the Plan are showing a decrease for the year to date, 7 out of 9. The increases on which we are working harder are those of robbery where there is a slight increase, just up about 4% but again within that that contains many categories of robbery from the school boy robbery to the armed robbery. Robbery of business premises is down which I think is a very important message in terms of the recession and again, an accolade to colleagues who are working hard on that. Remember this time last year, we were very concerned around ATM thefts, enormous hard work went into that and that has become a rarity and we intend to keep it that way.

Sexual offences are up, just over 2%, relatively small numbers but again an awful lot of effort going into making sure that we can deal with, not simply the offending but the causes which are sadly often alcohol related.

In relation to the issues of commonsense that I spoke about earlier, we have been really trying to push hard to reduce the paperwork to make sure that police officers can deal with relatively low level risk crime in a much more speedy way. We have had over a 1,000 uses of discretionary disposals in the past few months so police officers are growing in confidence in using that. I am very pleased to say that well over 94% of the victims that we dealt with under that method, were satisfied or very satisfied with the

service they received. So, that is a more effective way of doing our policing work as well as bringing the victims alongside.

As you say Chairman, 13 of the indicators in the Plan are on target or showing improvement. We have the discussion all the time about target, they are an ambition for us to achieve. Clearly sometimes they are affected by the current level of serious harm or the risks we are facing, but 9 are on target. They are the very real challenge we were set as part of policing with the community to increase the number of police officers involved in response and neighbourhood has now risen to over 600, to 604, that is a welcome figure we have had that validated by Deloitte. Add the work we are doing on Call Management, all fall under Chief Superintendent Alan Todd and ACC Will Kerr, we have more people still to put back onto operational duties. I do not underestimate the impact that has on individuals, but it is necessary. Clearly we may have to adjust that figure in relation to the new Policing Plan, if there are the budgetary cut backs or we have more threat elsewhere, that has to be a moveable feast, but we will be setting in this year's Policing Plan hopefully, a level of neighbourhood policing that we can ask the Board to hold us accountable for and certainly working harder at a measure of extraction. So, 604 is out there but more work to be done.

There has been an increase, a small increase but a very welcome change in the percentage of people confident in the effectiveness of the criminal justice system. Again, I think that is an early sign of success in relation to discretion and the work we are doing to improve the overall speed of the process.

We have had a large reduction in the number of non domestic violence with injury crimes, this is a particular one that I know the Board wants us to concentrate on because of the violence on the street. That is down by nearly 12% in the 3 quarters.

There has been a huge amount of work done, credit to ACC McCausland, credit to Muir Clarke, credit to the GAA and other partners in relation to the reduction of road deaths. I have never seen in my policing service, a 50% reduction in fatalities in a year, I mean that is an enormous example I think of what can be achieved through effective partnership and maybe that is a lesson for Clause 34 as well, if you do this together you can achieve results in this way. That work will carry on and I know ACC McCausland will have some things to say about the safety centres if he is invited to do that, and

there has been a reduction in children killed or seriously injured as well which is a hugely welcome move as well. We are determined to bring this down again, it is too easy to talk about success in relation to something that brings such misery and I would like to see this level dropped again so we do not have families going through the trauma of this particular terrible tragedy.

We have had an increase in sectarian crime detections. I think that is also because of the support we are getting from communities in relation to this. Over 12% rise in those detections, very much based on the willingness of people to support those investigations.

Anti social behaviour, we hit the target, the 3 year target in 2 years, but that is down again by nearly 5% and importantly again in the recession, if colleagues will recall we had a discussion about a year ago about trying to support businesses through the recession. At the moment, nearly 15% reduction in burglary of business premises, which again is enormously welcome.

There are another 5 indicators which are improving but not yet on target, but they are improving. There has been a 2% increase in detections for violence with injury. We have had a 3% increase in domestic violence detections, there has been an increase in serious sexual crime detection which is very welcome and shows real progress and also similar rates in terms of robbery. The reduction in domestic burglary in this reporting period was just under 7%, I suspect that will probably drop actually in the next few months as we get into the new year, at the moment it is on the right direction, so very welcome indeed.

We have a number of performance indicators where we are working hard, some are long term. I think the issue about the level of confidence that the police and others are dealing with anti social behaviour comes back from that Clause 34 issue again, that is certainly the lesson in the rest of the UK with the Crime and Disorder Act legislation and this target. But again, there was I think a 0.7% increase in the last Omnibus Survey which shows that we are starting to have impact on that.

The target for confidence in the criminal justice system, again is a matter for those involved in that system, that is off target by a small percentage and we have had small

drops in the detection rate for racist crime and for homophobic crime. In relation to that, I suspect there will be some questions on that. I just want to say on those, they are relatively small numbers. On the homophobic crime and the racist crime, there has been a significant reduction in offences relating to those categories, so that is very welcome. You do get with that sometimes a slight fall in detection rates, but once again we are working hard to bring those up. The homophobic crime in that 3 quarters number just over 100, so they are not to be taken anything other than seriously, but they are relatively small numbers in relation to detections.

The final one is the increase in the number of interventions directed at criminal finances. I am pretty reassured in relation to that because we actually seized a huge amount of money over the past year, so we are really getting in amongst the organised crime, so that one for me is probably less of a concern because the money we are seizing is great and the UKBA (United Kingdom Border Agency) are working very hard on that at the ports for us.

So that is the overview Chairman, if I might invite some specific questions?

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

ACC Jones.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Dave Jones:

Yes, just in relation to the burglary figures. I think the first thing that has to be said is, that the best form of detection is to prevent the crime happening in the first place, and we have seen a reduction in the number of burglary dwellings across Northern Ireland in the range of 370 less victims of burglary. I do not think we can underestimate the trauma that people suffer when they have their households broken into and I think the efforts that we have been putting into recently is in relation to reducing the number of burglaries that are taking place. In particular, if I could remind the Board around in the first 4 out of the 5 months at the start of the financial year, the recorded number of burglaries were higher than expected and actually sets a real challenge that was talked about a previous performance meeting of the Board in order for us to put things back on track which I think, as the Chief Constable has indicated, is the case.

Also from our perspective, we have just over 0.5% decrease in the amount of crimes we have detected this year compared to the previous year. I am the first to admit and the District Commanders are fully aware of the priority that we are setting around this, that it is a stubborn figure and despite the fact that in the last 3 months, we have arrested more than 370 people for burglary, and of those over 180 have been charged with burglary and 25 reported for burglary and have been targeting, what we would call strategy burglary offenders, the ability for us to actually increase the detection rate does not seem to be following that activity. It is fair to say that we do not have some of the methods of detection that other services in the United Kingdom have. So, it is very much for us a case of, I have instructed that we do a District CID review in particular to see if we are focusing our CID at a local level in the right areas.

As you can image, we are trying to reflect the priorities of all parts of the organisation to the needs of the community, and I think there will probably be lessons there about what we have got our local CID officers spending their time on. I do not want to pre-empt the findings of the report, but it may well be that we are not putting the emphasis into the detection of burglaries to the same degree as we are on other detections. I do have to stress, it is the same individuals who would be delivering the performance in other areas of detection as well, and 5 of the 8 detection figures are actually better than last year or are improving. If you then reflect it, quite rightly, our most skilled Detectives are being put in the areas of serious harm which is terrorist investigations and serious crime. But we really do need to focus and emphasis the initiative we are doing around integrated offender management. As the Chief Constable alluded to, if you are leaving prison, the statistics are very much if you have not got a job, if you have not got a family social network to support you, you will reoffend, and I think this goes back to the point around working with other agencies to ensure that the people we know who carry out such crimes, get a level of support to take them away from the offending.

Mr Trevor Ringland:

Thank you very much and I welcome that focus and your comments and I think there is also many positives in your report as well and we have to recognise that as well.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much. Just for the timing and for information to keep it on the move, we have got 5 Board Members who wish to ask questions on this issue and then

following that we move into the general questions of which we have 10 and we are scheduled for 30 minutes to do all of that. So, I would like as much attention to be paid to that as well.

First of all, Ian McCrea.

Mr Ian McCrea:

Chairman, firstly can I welcome the number of items in the report that are certainly reached and surpassed their targets and it is certainly good to see that.

One question I do have is certainly around the domestic burglaries and the Deputy Chief Constable acknowledged the detection rate for domestic burglary was unacceptably low and that we need to work harder in this particular area before the end of the performance year, I think that was at the 4 November 2010 Board meeting. Can we have an update on what work has been done since then to try and achieve that?

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

I think Chairman, much of that was probably covered by ACC Jones. Just to re-emphasise the point, one of the things we are particularly anxious to do here is to incentivise people to come up with what we call 'taking into consideration offences'. I have noticed since I came here a distinct difference in relation to the willingness of suspects to actually 'clear the decks' if I can put it that way, because there is absolutely no incentive for them to do that. Elsewhere where a reform has been carried out, there is a consistent sentencing policy that does incentivise people clearing the books. I guess it is not to say that unnecessary pressure is applied, but there is an approach that says, if you are prepared to save the victims the trauma of having to come to court, if you are prepared to clear the books and save the forensic budget of having to go back into all of this again, there is a way this is dealt with ethically and with integrity. We do not have that here so that is a matter for the justice system, but there are distinct differences. It is more difficult to secure a high level of detection here because of the way the system operates.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Dave Jones:

Just to add, I mean we do work through what is known as the National Intelligence Model and the chair of that particular group which meets on a monthly basis is Chief

Superintendent Alan Todd and we have a service lead who is Karen Baxter from Burglary, they meet on a regular basis. I monitor the figures on a weekly basis, the District Commanders are held to account on a regular basis around their performance in this area. I think there is some of the wider issues that we need to do and I think again, from a professional judgement point of view, it is far better to prevent it happening in the first place and the emphasis that we placed over the last period is actually to do that. Also, we need to put into context that the actual detection figure, although not where we want it to be is not that significantly different from what it was last year. What it means for us is, that we redouble our efforts to make sure that we can try and exploit some of the opportunities other services have. But also, to some degree, we have to try and educate the public as well because a lot of the burglaries that still take place are what we call 'walk ins' where people have left their premises insecure and we need to educate people to ensure that they are not doing that and they protect their property appropriately.

Mr Ian McCrea:

On the back of that, sorry Chairman, it is a discussion I think that we need to have in more depth, I know it has been ongoing and certainly in and around the percentage increase of targets and what not, sometimes and I suppose this is coming from membership of DPPs previously and having dealt with this whole issue to some extent having differences of opinion about the percentage increases and what not, but sometimes I just wonder is there any point in setting targets on things that we are just going to get a similar figure to the following year. I am of an opinion of yes we need to set targets and yes we need to try and redouble our efforts to try and achieve those targets, but sometimes and certainly the public out there when they look at the red, take any of them for example, homophobic crime for example by 10 percentage points, where from my reckoning minus 13.3 points of achieving that target. How do we actually achieve the 10 percentage rate target and if we decide next year for example to increase that by a further 5% so we are another 5% away from achieving that. How do we actually get to a stage where we can get a reasonable target that is actually achievable?

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

Chairman very briefly. I think firstly and I am not sure colleagues will share with me is, I think primarily our job is to keep people safe and to reduce harm and to prevent it

happening. So, sometimes you cannot really capture that in a target. They tend to be fairly straightforward targets but we deal with the business of risk and I know we share with the Board those risks, but actually sometimes the plan just has to concentrate on the big issues. But our job is not to hit targets. It is to reduce harm and to keep people safe, that is the first thing.

I think for me there are 2 sorts of targets and I would welcome if colleagues want to comment on this. I think there are targets where you take account of budget reduction, the current level of achievement, the amount of crime being reduced and almost that is in evidence in a more scientific way of setting targets. I guess a commercial company would do that based on the last year's profits, how much money is being invested and we could do some of that with policing. I suspect the targets would reduce if we do that because realistically we are currently having a budget reduction, we are currently dealing with a significant problem of terrorism, those issues cannot be captured in targets. So, if you did that the targets probably would be a little more realistic. Or you set us targets that are stretched targets, which are just saying these things are really important to us and we are going to go for it, there is not a huge amount of science around whether they can be achieved to that degree or not. I think the way that gets reported in the press or by the press has to be less pass or fail and more, as we have done today which is, progress is being made, clearly we would like to achieve that. So, that is the sort of a debate for me. If you are going to set targets that are absolutely realistic they have to be based on last year's performance, the budget, the amount of risk otherwise we set targets that are absolutely necessary but are very stretching and not pass or fail.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

That is all going to be dealt with within the next few weeks anyway to say the least, the issue of targets.

I am conscious of time and I am conscious of the number of people who still have to come in. Jimmy Spratt, Martina Anderson, Alex Maskey and Basil McCrea in that order. Jimmy Spratt.

Mr Jimmy Spratt:

Thank you. First of all I welcome the 604 officers out, that has already been done by the Human Resources Committee of the Board and I think that was done in the public domain. But in terms of the 604 figure, it would be helpful and maybe you cannot tell us today, how many trainee officers are within that 604 figure in terms of the neighbourhood and response police.

Secondly, what does frustrate me Chief Constable, is the fact that you mentioned that you are using a consultant to validate the figures, bring Deloittes in to validate the 604 figure. Let me put it this way, most of us are now allergic to consultants. In central Government there has been very clear indications that that needs to stop. There has been a culture within the police service of using consultants as well. I would be keen and you probably cannot tell us today, but could you give us the cost of that consultancy report in relation to that particular incident. You did say that the consultants were brought in to validate that figure.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Chief Constable, could I ask you just to deal with the numbers of officers and maybe that other piece of information could come at a later time.

Deputy Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

We can cover it very quickly now, it is our internal audit, not external consultants who were asked to do that work.

Mr Jimmy Spratt:

I am glad that came across but it just did not come across that way. It sounded in a way Chief Constable and maybe I picked it up wrong that consultants were brought in.

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

Deloittes are our internal audit who are appointed to audit the books and part of the contracts, they are not consultants, well they are consultants, but they are internal auditors that is the thing.

Mr Jimmy Spratt:

Well, can we clearly put a health warning around the use of consultants because it has been done in other areas of central Government ...

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

I agree entirely.

Mr Jimmy Spratt:

There is still a fair bit of spend within the PSNI in relation to that.

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

I agree entirely. Well it depends on what the consultancy is. You have to be justified and relevant. Some areas we do not have the expertise we need, but I agree entirely general consultancy, I think many people's experiences is they ask you what you need and then tell you back what you have already said, so we do not want that.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Can we have something on the numbers please?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Dave Jones:

Yes, just in relation to that. There are officers who are on their tutorship who are actually contained within those figures, but they deliver neighbourhood and response policing. But the breakdown of the figures has previously been agreed with the Board and that information is provided on a District level as to the increase in the number of neighbourhood and response. Just to re-emphasise the point, actually we brought our internal auditors in to make sure that we can stand over those figures.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

If I could just say that I think there is some confusion over where it was said that they were bringing 600 officers out from behind desks. I seem to recall that or maybe I misunderstood that, but I think that what the important issue is, that you are putting 600 additional officers on the street.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Dave Jones:

Just to be absolutely clear, what we agreed when we met with the Board was that we would aim and the aspiration was to have 600 extra officers who would be doing neighbourhood and response work, that meant that we would redistribute some from elsewhere and we would also take people from the back office when we could identify and release them.

Mr Jimmy Spratt:

I know that the figures are coming Chairman to the Board next week, but it would be helpful if we could have the specific trainee figures amongst those figures. They may well be there but certainly it is down here in the brief that has come from officials and I am asking that question on that basis as Chairperson of the Human Resources Committee. So, it is maybe already there, I am not disputing that but the new figures are coming next week so hopefully that figure will be there.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Martina Anderson.

Ms Martina Anderson:

Thank you very much Chief Constable. As a Member of the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee the next thematic we are embarking upon will deal with the LGB&T community and the experience that they have and with the service they receive. So, given that it has been reported in relation to particularly homophobic crime, I would like to ask you, despite the fact that crimes are down and you are saying the knock on effect would be that detection is down, but how do you intend to deal with the reduction in the detection in the homophobic crime in the context of the evidence that is in front of us thus far with regards to the variations of activity that can happen across the service, that there is not at times a standardised approach? Therefore, when we are dealing with a quality of service issue and I know one size does not fit all, but we need to try to approach all of these issues with some kind of standard through which we can also test as well as the rates that are coming in and the targets set.

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

Thanks very much indeed. The numbers are down and I know that is welcomed by everybody. The numbers of hate crime in the first 3 quarters have been 102 which is

still 102 too many, but it is down. I wonder if I could invite ACC Will Kerr to talk about the approach we are taking to this.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Will Kerr:

I think you are quite right Ms Anderson. This is a conversation I was having with John Dougherty, one of the panel members yesterday on exactly this issue and although the numbers might be coming down, this is still an area where there is a significant amount of under reporting and we should not lose sight of that fact either. Part of that under-reporting is due to fear in coming forward. Part of it is due to a lack of trust perhaps in the service and the sensitivity of the service they are going to get and we have been working very hard, particularly with our Independent Advisory Group (IAG) and LGB&T to try and resolve that. I think the point you make about consistency is well made and that has really been the thrust of the work we have been doing with our IAG over the last number of months and in particular, how we get that same structured... *(tape unclear)*...

Mr Basil McCrea:

(tape unclear) ...of people think that the police are dealing properly with anti social behaviour and that less than 40% are confident in our justice system of it being effective and barely 40% of people think the criminal justice system is fair. Look 40% of our population are pretty unhappy about the way things are going and maybe that comes into Clause 34 that you are talking about as well.

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

I do, I think they are the 2 targets. I have spoken in my introduction about people being able to say 'this is our police, this is our District Council working in partnership' and I think the evidence is, if we can make Clause 34 work that will have an impact in confidence because leadership would be shared. We have been bringing together, probably I am being a bit indiscreet, but as a Top Team we have been creating different places where we can have these discussions. We have been bringing criminal justice partners together informally, we have been meeting with a number of partners in how we might improve our service, how we can join things up and we have taken the lead in that and many, many meetings have taken place. So, I agree entirely. I think the big issue for us collectively, Board, PSNI, others is how can we get confidence in our integrity and our leadership and our intent right up to levels. I would be disappointed if

in the next few years those figures do not rise significantly. Confidence in the PSNI, confidence in our approach to anticipate behaviour and certainly confidence in the criminal justice system. That is the big agenda, I think.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

David Rose want a small bit on this.

Mr David Rose:

I would wager that 80% of the population could not agree on what they would mean as anti social behaviour, and I know my MLA colleagues always love it when I bring these things up, but if we could work towards a definition that everyone could work around then it would make, surely your job, would begin to become more rational on how to deal with it, because at the moment I bet you my perception of anti social behaviour will be different to other people. I cannot see how you can achieve real improvements whenever people's actual idea of what it means are going to be so different.

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

You will be pleased to know there is a more sensible definition I think coming down the track. I wonder if ACC Kerr would just say a few words about that.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Will Kerr:

We have talked of this before Mr Rose, I agree entirely. We had and still have up until the end of this reporting year, 14 closing codes in our language a definition for anti social behaviour and they would not resonate quite a few of them with members of the public as to what they would define as anti social behaviour. From 1 April next year, the Home Office recording standard for anti social behaviour is going to capture that under 3 headings. One is environmental, one is community and one is around repeat victims particularly emphasising the vulnerability of repeat people who call us every Friday night for 3 or 4 Friday nights in a row that we actually concentrate on them.

This issue came up at the launch of Children and Young Persons Thematic Report last week as well, because quite often we act 'in loco parentis' for 12, 13, 14 year olds who have been allowed to run about in the streets at 11 or 11:30 at night on a Friday night and consume alcohol as well, and then people defaulted and think it is a policing issue that we are going to manage that, and of course we are not.

There does need to be slightly wider society debate, particularly around young people and the definition of anti social behaviour because we get called frequently. It is a perennial community concern, it is a perennial DPP concern. The term 'youths causing annoyance' a phrase we do not use any more, 'we want you to move these kids on'. Quite often they are not doing anything, so social provision, parental responsibility is a massive issue and we are not going to solve it on our own.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much. Alex Maskey, the final question on this point and then we are going into Committee questions numbers 3, 5, 6 and 7 and I think number 3 starts of with Leslie Cree so he can get warmed up for this. Alex Maskey first.

Mr Alex Maskey:

Could I say, I think it is actually very, very important actually to remind us all that a number of these crime figures have actually gone down and I think that is very, very important and I do appreciate that that has been put on the record. Even though to your own credit in terms of the Senior Officers, you are still saying that there is still an awful lot more to be done. I do appreciate ACC Jones, your own acknowledgement that in terms of burglaries and so on, we are not actually maybe utilising all of the detection means that might have at our disposal.

One of the main concerns that I do have in a range of these things is, I do not think the police are always just spreading good practice across all of the Districts but you have acknowledged that you are going to look at that in more detail.

One of the big figures I think that is probably the most striking and most important that are in front of us, has been the number of deaths prevented on the roads last year, a hugely significant figure. I did speak to Muir Clarke in the last number of days when I met him and in no way is he himself, in any way, and he made it very clear, complacent with the figures because obviously one death on the road is far too many. One of the things I think we all have to be very concerned about and I would want to use this public opportunity today to say that, I think we would all be quite shocked to hear that even with the difficult weather conditions over the Christmas and New Year period, the number of people detected with drink driving offences is actually shocking, despite the fact that we had less people tested for drink driving.

So, could I just make as much an appeal to the general public as well as commending the police and all of the other agencies who have been involved in road safety awareness issues. The fact of the matter that in the past year, even though a lot of people suffered death and bereavement as a result of road traffic incidents, there are statistically more than 50 people alive because of the combined efforts hopefully of all of the respective agencies, so I do think that is a hugely important figure and one that we want to actually build on in the incoming year. So, I would like us all to first of all commend everybody involved in those efforts, to really do appeal to people out there who even now are still considering drinking and driving, but to be mindful that we can still save a lot of people's lives on the roads and also save people from serious injuries.

Could I just in final conclusion Chairman, just make the point that I do want to commend Deputy Chief Constable Gillespie for her decision for remaining in post despite a very attractive offer from Patten severance arrangements, even though it is not something I am terribly enamoured with myself, but nevertheless a very important decision to take at a personal level and I want to commend you for doing that. Thank you.

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

Chairman, if I might perhaps just give a signpost as to where we are in relation to road deaths. There are some important things that are going to happen this year and ACC McCausland who has been leading very ably on that, I would like him to say a few words about that.

But in relation to road deaths, I think it does show 2 things. Again, if you concentrate on the things that really matter, it is something you can achieve. Secondly, if we are allowed to do our job, this is exactly what we can do. So, the message back again to people that our trying to ... the Antrim Road issue, the Lurgan issue is, we are here to protect and save people's lives irrespective of where you are from. I think that is a very important public message that needs to go out there that when we are allowed to do that, we demonstrate significant reductions in misery on behalf of everybody, and I think that is the message.

I just want Chairman if I might, ACC McCausland to say a couple of things around the Safety Centres which I think is going to be a major change.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

Thank you Chief Constable. We did mention last year we planned to bring forward Safety Centres in relation to Northern Ireland. That plan is well advanced. We have a Project Manager now appointed and we have the funding streams identified. So, if people are detected speeding in Northern Ireland they will be funding the Safety Centres. We will be taking the money from speeding detections direct into road safety, so I want to kill immediately any suggestion that we are out generating funding by handing out tickets. We are in effect using the money to effectively keep our roads safer.

There will be 2 Safety Centres, one in the East and one in the West and we hope that by September of this year, those Safety Centres will be open. That will mean that all young people between the ages of 15 to 18 will be able to go through these Safety Centres to actually be given clear indications of the dangers in relation to Roads Policing. As well as, a second part to the Safety Centres where 10 to 12 year olds will also be exposed to the potential dangers in home and the environment and by combining that together and by combining it into the curriculum, we would hope to be able to offer this to every school in this country free.

I want to finish on one final point to back up what Alex Maskey said. Yes, 364 people were detected for drink driving in Northern Ireland during the 5/6 weeks period, but we launched we felt successfully, the "Just a Moment" campaign which was to try and make young people realise the dangers of distraction on the roads, and we launched it earlier last month with Minister Poots.

But I want to report a case, a simple case of how we must keep hammering this message. My Roads Policing officers detected one Sunday morning on the M2 a young man driving at 123mph in the middle of a domestic dispute with the person that was beside him. Now, the officers detected it on a speed camera. What would happen if that car had lost control? It was a 7 year old car, it is not built or designed to go at those speeds and there is an example of people taking their lives and the lives of everyone of us that use the roads into their hands. The reality is, this is something we have got to keep and constantly pushing at and I sent to the Board, which you should all have, the results analysis of last year which clearly points out that there was clear enforcement, education and most important, partnership working across this country

with for example, the GAA, the Young Farmer's Club, All State Technology to actually bring down the road deaths. We are now seen as one of the safest roads or roadways in Europe, let alone not the world. To put it into simple context, in South Africa in December 2010, 1500 people were killed. Now, that must put it in context to what we have achieved but we already have lost 4 people this year already and that ranges from a 60 year old to a 2 year old, so it is something that we have constantly to push at. I fully recognise and acknowledge the support of this Board to continually raising the issue before the media and the press. Thank you.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Jimmy Spratt wants a very brief comment.

Mr Jimmy Spratt:

I just wanted to come in on the issue of detections. We welcome the reductions in road deaths and tremendous work has been done right across the board and that has to be applauded, but what has not to be applauded is the equality of detections across the province. There are certain areas that are not being hit with speed vans and all the rest of it, so whenever you equally do every area of the province, we will say job well and truly done but not until then, because there are certain areas your figures are abysmal for detections.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

Well Chairman, I am quite happy to debate that with the Board, probably not now, but I am quite happy also to show the reasons and why we deploy the cameras, where we deploy the cameras.

It is deployed on specific assessment of the dangers on any particular road to reduce the road deaths. We have just demonstrated that by the fact that we cut by 50% our road deaths last year. We had the debate in this very boardroom about for example, redeploying the Roads Policing officers of the motorway. We did that and we put them into the rural areas where we cut road deaths. We do not deploy the safety cameras unless there is a clear assessment and analysis of where those safety cameras should go and the reasoning for that.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Leslie Cree and your question was deferred from last month and it must come first.

Question 3.

Q3 - To ask the Chief Constable to provide us with further information about the PSNI initiative to tackle drivers who text and speak on their mobile phones whilst driving?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

PSNI have supported the "X the TXT" campaign which we have jointly delivered to 6th form students in schools across Northern Ireland. What this campaign basically Mr Cree is, it involves challenging the young people to drive a computer driving game, first giving it their full concentration and then whilst trying to compose a text also driving, and it shows the very rapid deterioration in their driving ability and that makes it very obvious for everyone to see.

The young drivers then go forward and make a pledge that they will not drive and text at the same time and that is sealed by them actually placing their thumb print on a poster in relation to "X the TXT".

The campaign originated in the USA and it spread across the UK using the social network and Face Book, to appeal to young drivers who are particularly vulnerable to being involved in a collision.

The education message is reinforced by police activity. We have added the offence of 'misuse of a mobile phone' to our priority list for enforcement. But sadly Mr Cree, in the financial 2009/10, we detected 15,000 people who ignored that message and it is not just all young drivers I hesitate to add, people in this room could just be as equally guilty of it. Through the first 6 months of this year, we are seeing a reduction however in the detection of these issues.

What we do want to do, we want to in effect expand our training that if you are detected doing this, rather than getting 3 penalty points you can go into retraining which we found extremely effective with our speeding issue because we now have nearly retrained 15,000 people that we detected through speeding.

Mr Leslie Cree:

I thank the ACC McCausland for that. But it is horrendous to see people texting as they are driving along and because of the random nature of this, does the police have any particular plan to try and increase on the road detections. For example, busy, busy commuter traffic that sort of thing.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

We constantly look to do these issues and where we see people texting. It is not just Roads Policing, but we encourage all officers to pull people over and to exercise their discretion to either warn them, give them a warning or a ticket from that point of view. It is not just an automatic enforcement or penalty, it depends on the circumstances, the uniqueness of the circumstances.

If you are driving at 30mph, you can travel from this Board probably to the M3 and doing a text if you are driving at simply 30mph. For the short time it would take you to open your phone, press the button and read a text. At 30mph you will travel 600/700 yards and that is totally out of control and if you watch the new advertisement that we launched "Just one Moment", it is very clear, and sadly I have dealt with occasions when people have ignored those and have driven across the road and have been involved in collisions where other people have lost their lives, and that changes people's lives for ever, not just the poor people who are killed.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Ian McCrea, very quickly, a supplementary on this.

Mr Ian McCrea:

I agree totally people should not be sending text messages. One thing that concerns me is not so much the detection of people who are driving while texting, there is some speculation over the last few days, that the police are now giving people tickets whilst they are pulled into a lay bye.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

I can answer that very rapidly. I have invited Mr Nolan if he wishes to come out with my Roads Policing officers to actually see what they do and the professional role that they take. This is complete and utter nonsense and I am more than happy to put on record

publicly to him. He has been invited this morning by Muir Clarke and I hope he takes it up and I am sure I can get a yellow jacket to fit him.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much, that is recorded. Question 5, Basil McCrea has been waiting hopefully patiently maybe displaying just a little bit of impatience. Mr McCrea, it is your turn.

Mr Basil McCrea:

Chairman, your razor like antenna is not failing you. Question 5 Chief Constable.

Q5 - Further to the recent launch of the Board's Human Rights Annual Report and the Children and Young People's Thematic Report, could the Chief Constable indicate to what extent he believes human rights compliance to be about meeting its statutory obligation as opposed to improving police practice?

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

I think it is both. I think of course you have to comply with stated cases, you have to comply with European Law. We use that to test all of our practice and operations, but I think continual improvement comes from continual benchmarking against other standards and it comes from the challenge of the Human Rights Committee. I am grateful because the Deputy Chief Constable very kindly has reminded me of a part of your own Annual Report, which I thoroughly agree with, "the application of human rights principles does not impede law enforcement or undermine the work of a police officer". It represents the very essence of what a police service is there to do and I entirely agree with that, I am fundamentally a believer in human rights.

Mr Basil McCrea:

Chief Constable, just as a follow up on this because this is an important point. I would appreciate it if you would just give the Board, because not everybody was at the meeting, what your impression was of the engagement that we had. I do not mind you being frank about the robustness of some of the exchanges or whatever, but it would be valuable I think, for me to hear that and you might even, as I have just heard, ACC Kerr mentioned about the Children and Young People launch which happened the week

before, both of which we tried to do in a more open and transparent way. But I would appreciate your comments for better or worse what you thought about it.

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

I think firstly, those opportunities to have a public debate about people's commitment to human rights, which I think is shared across the peace, there is no distance between anybody in relation to that. But human rights is a constant assessment of balancing people's rights and I think that debate is very, very important as well. So, the day was very successful, it was a good robust one, that journey will continue.

I said at the time, I think sometimes a debate around policing gets trapped in a debate around soft policing or hard policing. The only thing we are interested in is, is it legitimate, is it proportionate, is it necessary, is it practical, that is the test and you can only do that test if you invite people's assessment of the impact of what you are doing whilst you still have cognisance of the course to decisions to be made in the European Courts. So, a very, very good day. A very robust day and one I think that has taken us into a different level of understanding and commitment to human rights.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much. Martina Anderson want have a supplementary question or comment, I am not sure.

Ms Martina Anderson:

Yes, Chief Constable, I attended that event with you yesterday and I think it is just for myself because there was tooing and froing and I agree with you it was a very good worthwhile engagement, even among ourselves and for the public to see that and for the public to engage with us as well.

Just to clarify and get it on record, would you agree that human rights are for all, there are not just for the virtuous? That there is no conflict at all between human rights and policing? That policing is the protection of human rights?

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

I think that the PSNI and what has been done with human rights here is absolutely world leading, I am utterly committed to it. I think there is no conflict, no hierarchy in

human rights. It is a test of those principles, is it right, is it proportionate, is it legitimate, I cannot think of a finer test and I think that is the way policing in the world should be shaped into the future.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much. In another context, one could say we are on borrowed time, we are after 12 o'clock. Question 6 is Martina Anderson's question and whilst you are looking that up, Jimmy Spratt has very kindly given question 7 over to a written answer whoever was down for that from the PSNI. So, question 7 is written but question 6 Martina Anderson's question.

Q6 - Could the Chief Constable provide Members with an update on progress with respect to legacy inquests?

Deputy Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

I will deal with that Chairman if I may. We understand how these legacy issues impact on public confidence today and that is why we are absolutely determined to fulfil our statutory obligations.

We are currently dealing with 34 inquests that might be termed legacy inquests. Full disclosure has been made to the Coroner in 15 of these inquests and disclosure is currently being prepared in a further 7 of these. In the remaining 12, we have not yet been requested to provide disclosure as yet. We continue to dedicate continued resources to this area because, as I say, we are absolutely committed to meeting our obligations to provide information and to protect life and the disclosure is made on foot of the Chief Constable's Section 8 of the Coroner's Act Duty.

The disclosure process can be very complicated and hence it can be lengthy because information has to be first located, then organised and then perused for redactions, that is, to respect our Article 2 – Right to Life obligations and Article 8 – Right to Private Life. Full disclosure of the Stalker-Sampson reports was made to the Coroner on 21 December last year and of course the Board will be aware, that the Attorney General continues to receive requests to direct fresh inquests into historical deaths and that impacts on the resources that we have with these legacy inquests.

I had hoped to share with the Board, a full report on the cost of policing legacy issues. That has been a little bit more protracted than we expected, but I am sure the Board would prefer a detailed and sustainable report rather than one that is based on conjecture. However, the estimates that we gave in previous Board meetings of between £5m and £6m are within the right ballpark but I would just want to be sure that we could stand over the figures that we will provide to the Board and that will take another few days, but I will write to the Board as soon as we have those final figures. I hope that is helpful.

Ms Martina Anderson:

It is helpful and I think whilst we have waited a long time because of all the different reasons, there is no point rehearsing here today for full disclosure. I think it is good news to hear that there has been full disclosure in 15 of the cases. You say there will be further disclosure for another 7. When, what type of a timeframe Deputy Chief Constable are we operating in, could you give an estimate of time when you think that will be completed or the disclosures for all 7 will be completed?

Deputy Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

I cannot give a timeframe. All I can say is, that the Legacy Support Unit are working full out to do this as quickly as possible Ms Anderson, but as soon as I do have a timeframe and estimate, I am happy to let you know that.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much. I have had another couple questions committed to written answers. Can I reassure the public that a question that is not answered in public that was initially down to be answered in public, once it is answered in a written form, that written form will go on the website just as any other question would go on. So, the answer will be there but you may not here it here today.

Professor Sir Desmond Rea, question 8 please.

Q8 - Earlier this year, the Board reflected community concerns about the operation of Neighbourhood Watch (NW) Schemes. Can the Chief Constable outline the PSNI strategy in place for the promotion of NW and encouragement

and support mechanisms in place for communities who wish to establish a scheme?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Will Kerr:

Thank you very much, I am going to take that Chairman. We have been doing a lot to promote Neighbourhood Watch Schemes particularly within groups and amongst communities who previously and historically might not have been involved in them. A couple of examples, our Community Safety Branch that works in my Department, has been holding a number of briefings over the last 6 months with the increased number of new neighbourhood officers to talk about how to promote Neighbourhood Watch Schemes. To explain to them how you go about setting them up so they can advise community groups.

'Meet and Greet' events have taken place across all 8 Districts between the Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators and the DPP/CSP managers, local neighbourhood managers. There has been an update of the Neighbourhood Watch manual on our own website and is going onto the partner websites as well, as you will be aware, this is a tripartite responsibility between ourselves, the Community Safety Unit of the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Policing Board.

We have promoted a number of regional events both last year and coming up this year. The Chinese New Year, the Festival of Colour at the Mela and at the Pride events and to be honest the communication between the Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators and our neighbourhood officers has just got a bit smarter, social media helps, it makes it a wee bit easier to have timely conversations and get as much information out into the public domain as possible.

Some of the figures, April 2009 we had 466 schemes, in December 2010 that had risen to over 600 covering 45,000 households. In some areas, the increase is more proportionate than others. For example, in 'E' District particularly down around Newry and Mourne district council area, in March 2010 'E' District had 113 that has risen now to 141 so we are going in the right direction.

Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Thank you very much, could I say that this question arose simply because I was approached by someone that I did not recognise, did not know at all, but they were basically highly critical of the fact that there was not sufficient encouragement being given. Now, I agree and I am loathed to argue from one case, but it seems to me in terms of policing with the community this should be a critical part. Could I ask you and I note your answer and its constructive nature, but could I ask you and your Communications Department, it seems to me that it is important that the sort of messages that you were seeking to put across, goes right through the service but at the same time, goes out into the community as a whole.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Will Kerr:

Yes it can and I will undertake to do that. Thank you.

Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Thank you very much.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Now question 2 and ACC Harris is back in. Question 2 Chief Constable in the name of Trevor Ringland. We know that you gave some response in private but a public response please.

Q2 - I would be grateful if you could provide me with an update into the investigation into the murder of Damien Gerard Duffy deceased who was killed on the 20 May 2001. I note a number of persons were brought before the court arising out of the incident which led to the death of Mr Duffy.

- 1. Are the police satisfied with the outcome of this case to date?***
- 2. Are the police satisfied with the decisions taken by the PPS in this case?***
- 3. Is there any further action that can be taken at this time which would lead to the conviction for murder of the person/persons who murdered Damien Gerard Duffy?***

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Drew Harris:

Thank you very much. Mr Damien Duffy was only 18 years of age when he was stabbed during a serious disturbance on the Stewartstown Road, he subsequently died then on 4 June and to illustrate the seriousness of this incident, 13 other people were also treated in hospital for injuries. In the ensuing police investigation, 14 people were arrests, searches were conducted and over 380 statements were recorded. One person was charged with murder and another with attempted murder and a further 12 suspects were reported to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP).

In November 2003, 10 defendants were convicted of 17 charges relating to this incident, however no-one was convicted of either murder or attempted murder and this was despite a rigorous and thorough investigation and the investigating officer is still serving and it is disappointing, both to the investigating officer and to the police service, that the family of Mr Damien Duffy did not receive the full justice they deserve which would correspond to the hurt and trauma and to the great grief that has been visited upon them by this crime.

So, it is appropriate now as we approach the 10th anniversary of Mr Duffy's murder, that we would welcome any new information, as there has been prosecution that information would need to be significant, but it is a reality of fact that over time loyalties break down and people who, at the time, may have decided to say nothing or not to give a full account of what happened, could change their mind and could provide new information and new evidence to the investigation and this would be essential if we would have any success and to reopen this investigation and try and actually get to a point where we convict the killers of Mr Duffy.

This investigation would be conducted by my own Serious Crime Branch but again we do need significant new evidence in order to proceed with this, but we would be more than prepared to receive any information from the public to reopen this case.

No matter what happens though, we will subject this case to Serious Case Review to see what more might be done with it though the original investigation is regarded as being rigorous and thorough, but nevertheless forensic opportunities for example, may be now open to us which were not available 10 years ago. So, I thank the Board for bringing this particular case to mind, understand the great hurt and anguish though felt

by the Duffy family and they can be assured of our ongoing interest in this matter and our willingness to take this matter forward.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Trevor Ringland.

Mr Trevor Ringland:

Thank you very ACC Harris and I appreciate your call that you are going to carry out a review of this matter. It has had a devastating impact on the family and they will thank you for having another look at this matter. They appreciate the difficulties but I think there are people out there who could give evidence that could lead to a conviction for murder. I know your officers are highly motivated and that they do not like missing out on opportunities or not succeeding in bringing murderers to justice and so I do welcome your further input.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much. One final question. Sir Desmond Rea has passed over question 13 to the next meeting and we are grateful for that, so the final question is question 11 from Leslie Cree.

Q11 - To ask the Chief Constable, following the growing concerns surrounding the availability of a new "legal" drug called A3A, what steps is he taking to tackle this particular problem and indeed, the wider issue of "legal" highs and would he support a temporary ban on all "legal" highs as they come into the market whilst health issues are considered by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs?

Mr Leslie Cree:

Thank you Chairman.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Drew Harris:

Now, the issue of 'legal highs' obviously continues to be a concern to the police throughout the United Kingdom and also our colleagues in An Garda Síochána.

Criminal gangs really right across Europe, are using backstreet laboratories and technology to stay ahead of the law by modifying the makeup of chemicals which do not

fall under the Control and Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Such substances are then sold in so called 'head shops' and then via the internet. This is closely connected to organised crime in other forms of either drug dealing or other activities an organised crime gang would be involved in. So, we do take it seriously. It is a route into the crime gangs and it is investigated.

Our understanding that the UK Government is considering implementing a 12 month banning order on any such new substance, and that is to allow time to establish its potential harm and to clarify if they have been created for any legitimate purpose. Again, our local Assembly may wish to consider whether such legislation would be appropriate in Northern Ireland and given the public concern there is in respect of this, and there is some very tragic cases there has been around the use of so called 'legal highs', it is something which is worthy of consideration.

These temporary banning orders that are being proposed would make it an offence to import or supply such substances, and again this would be welcomed by the PSNI. By creating a temporary banning order, it allows us then to get in behind that and get to the finances and that is really one of the keys in tackling this trade. If you can take the finance out of it, take the profit out of it, then the motivation then goes in terms of these organised crime groups. But, we are very aware of how dangerous these are and the impact they can have on people's health.

Mr Leslie Cree:

Thanks for that ACC Harris. Well, the difficulty here is that we cannot continually fire fight because they could produce these drugs virtually at will. Since we got rid of methadone a short time ago, in 2010 there were 40 new drugs that we know of came on the market, referred to as 'legal highs'. So, we cannot continually fire fight to treat each one as it comes, so the idea of a ban seems to me to be the solution, that would allow time for the drugs to be tested to see in fact if they were harmful to health or whether in fact they should be classified straightaway. Would the police be prepared to support the suggestion by the Home Secretary, bearing in mind the urgency of the nature, to have all these drugs banned until they are proof to be safe for health? I think we need a national campaign to move this forward otherwise we are going to be dealing with a new drug every other week.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Drew Harris:

I think it is very definitely our position that we would support such a ban. In and around the public harm caused and also then the amount of money which is actually being siphoned off into organised crime and then being used for other purposes around organised crime groups. We see it as a real priority and it is pointless us putting huge effort into other areas of drug enforcement if via a loophole they can skip around us in effect and this is a modern development but it is in and around the availability of the technology just to slightly change or adulterate a drug to put it outside the Control and Misuse of Drugs Act and we need to act then to fill that gap.

Mr Leslie Cree:

Chairman, just as a rider, is ACPO (Association of Chief Police Officers) active in this at all?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Drew Harris:

Yes, the ACPO Committee is active in this and have been very concerned about this and has looked to experience, in Dublin with An Garda Siochana in respect of this as well and across Europe in terms of what are the law enforcement tactics and strategies to take this on.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

That concludes today. Could I thank the Chief Constable and your colleagues, and thanks to everyone here. Thank you.