

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY, 3 APRIL 2008 AT 11:30AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Chairman)
Mr Barry Gilligan (Vice Chairman)
Ms Martina Anderson
Mr Tom Buchanan
Mr Alex Maskey
Mr Basil McCrea
Ms Mary McKee
Mrs Rosaleen Moore
Mr Ian Paisley Jnr
Mr Brian Rea
Mr Trevor Ringland
Mr David Rose
Mr Suneil Sharma
Mr David Simpson

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

Sir Hugh Orde (Chief Constable)
Mr Paul Leighton (Deputy Chief Constable)
Mr Alistair Finlay (ACC Crime Support)
Mrs Judith Gillespie (ACC Rural Region)
Mr Drew Harris (ACC Operational Support)
Mr Duncan McCausland (ACC Urban Region)
Mr Peter Sheridan (ACC Crime Operations)
Mr Joe Stewart (Director of Human
Resources)
Ms Liz Young (Head of Media &
Communications)
Chief Inspector Paul McClean (Community
Safety Branch)
T/Acting Head of Command Secretariat
1 PSNI Personnel

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Trevor Reaney (Chief Executive)
Dr Debbie Donnelly (Deputy Chief Executive)
Mr David Jackson (Director of Community
Engagement)
Mr Sam Hagen (Director of Corporate
Services)
Mr David Wilson (Director of Planning)
Mr Peter Gilleece (Director of Policy)
2 Board Officials

APOLOGIES:

Mr Leslie Cree
Mrs Dolores Kelly
Mr Gearóid Ó hÉara

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Good morning Chief Constable, Senior Officers, members of the public and media. You are very welcome to this meeting in public of the Northern Ireland Policing Board and we apologise for the fact that the private session went on longer than expected.

Chief Constable I have a few comments before we start the session.

Today the Board publishes its new Corporate Plan for 2008 - 2011. The new Plan sets out the strategic direction and work programme for the Board over the next 3 years. It contains in summary, introductions and in addition to the introductions, it looks at the role of the Policing Board. It is the role of the Board to secure the delivery of an effective, efficient and impartial police service for the entire community in Northern Ireland. It outlines the corporate vision and core values of the Board. It poses the challenges ahead, not simply for the Board, but for the PSNI. For example, future resourcing, confidence in policing, a strategic partnership working, the devolution of policing and justice, a shared future, the Review of Public Administration, policing the past, present and future, etc. It then moves on to the corporate objectives and performance indicators. In respect of the 3 key corporate objectives, in the area of Police Performance, to enhance and strength the Board's oversight role in order to achieve continued improvement in police performance and service delivery. In the area of Community Engagement, to increase community support and confidence in policing and to increase the responsiveness of the police. In the area of Confidence and Service Delivery, to ensure the most effective and efficient delivery of services and functions of the Board. Those objectives are broken down into sub-objectives and finally you will find some comments on funding before the organisation chart of the Board. I am assuming that copies of this will be available to everyone.

In developing the Plan, the Board has critically reviewed its legislative responsibilities, it has considered the challenges ahead and, as I have said, endeavoured to develop a Plan which will enable the Board to fulfil its statutory functions

As we approach the 10th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, obviously this is a time for thought on the journey that has been travelled by this community and the immense progress that has been made in a relatively short space of time. Policing of course formed a critical part of the Good Friday Agreement with a commitment to delivery of a police service that is professional, effective and efficient, fair and impartial and free from partisan control. Accountable both under the law for its actions and to the community it serves. Representative of the society it polices and operates within a coherent and co-operative criminal justice system which conforms with human rights norms. There is no question of the progress that has been made in delivering on all of these areas, but there is of course, still work to do.

This week a further step was taken with reconstitution of District Policing Partnerships. Now fully representative of the community they serve, the wide range of applicants from all sections of our community reflects the desire to achieve a police service which is fully responsive to the community it serves. I think we all recognise and realise the responsibility, necessity and importance of building on the peace settlement, whether that be in politics, in policing or in wider society. This is particularly true of course at this time of year as we enter the marching season. In the past number of years the hard work of many people throughout the communities of Northern Ireland has ensured a peaceful period. On behalf of the Board I would urge community leaders and members of the public to continue in the positive and constructive dialogue of the last 2 years, that has been such an important factor in ensuring a peaceful marching season. I am sure the Chief Constable will concur in terms of the best use of his resources.

Finally, ACC Sheridan, on behalf of Board Members, I would like to wish you well in your future role as Chief Executive of Co-operation Ireland. You have brought to the role of ACC Crime Operations considerable professional skills and you have made the most significant of contributions to the PSNI and to the work of serving this community. There are a few more Board meetings to go before you escape, so these contributions are not quite finished just yet, but you have our best wishes.

Chief Constable, could I ask you to address the meeting?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

It has been another busy month since we last month Chairman. Ongoing change and, indeed, continuing progress. I think the bit that has impressed me most recently has been the number of local initiatives. Recently Deputy Chief Constable Leighton and many of my colleagues around this table, and indeed, Members of the Policing Board, have been looking at the Community Policing awards. I think if there is one key indicator of the commitment to community policing at a local level, local initiatives which vary widely across the Districts, I think that is a very good indicator. Of course, the awards will be announced fairly shortly, so that does give me a great satisfaction that we are sort of getting the job done at the front end.

A snapshot Chairman of some of the things that have been going on. Very importantly, this week our Public Protection Units came on stream in each of our 8 Districts. That in my view marks a significant boost to services in the local communities by providing protection to some of the most vulnerable people in society. These units will tackle child abuse, domestic violence, they will respond to vulnerable and missing people and will help manage violent and sexual offenders in the community which is, of course, a fairly new piece of police business, our responsibility to deal with people post sentence when they are back in our communities. For the first time, we will draw together a team of specially trained officers managed at the local level to deal with these areas of crime. They will do exactly as the name suggests. They do exist to protect some of the most vulnerable people in society. They exist to protect victims and they exist to protect broader communities. Chief Inspector McClean to give you a short presentation after the first part of this meeting.

Chairman, on another matter I do wish to raise. The police service is not and should not be immune to criticism. We are determined to do everything we can to make Northern Ireland a safer place. The key to that is recognising it is not the sole responsibility of the police and anyone, but in particular, some commentators who should know better who suggest that this is the case, fails to understand the essential need of the collective effort to delivering crime reduction and increasing community safety.

The question I would ask is, can I be assured and my officers be assured, that others are prepared to accept their own responsibility and indeed contribute to the shared effort?

I think it would be right to say Chairman, that whilst it is unfortunate that some significant progresses have been made, we have had, in my judgement, some somewhat unfair criticism in the recent past. It is important that criticism is constructive, it is motivated from a desire to support law and order and seen to benefit the whole community. If that is the case we can learn from it. I was only at a District Policing Partnership last week where I thought an extremely good delivery, North Down on diversity, where presentations were made by many speakers representing particular groups. I certainly left not only better informed but understanding that we clearly have some way to go to build confidence in some of our minority communities and more work needs to be done. But if it is in that constructive environment, it can be fed into our planning systems and into our engagements with communities at all levels.

Chairman, it is interesting to note the debate in London, which I am sure many colleagues around this table would have been watching; 11 teenagers have been murdered this year in the Metropolitan police district. The response to that is very much a local community stakeholders, victims' families, elective representatives and police working together with many other departments to deal and identify the key problem, which is of course, sadly not the awful crime but the body of disenfranchised young people affiliating themselves to gangs, getting alienated from the main community, involved in drugs and that sense of hopelessness. In that debate what does not feature, is unexpected criticism or public condemnation of any particular department and blaming of each other for these crimes, or the collective failure to protect these young people from themselves, and I think that is a key issue. My difficulty is here, and the perception of many of my officers is, that some of the criticisms we have received from a small number of politicians and commentators in some of the media, are directed directly at the police in recent weeks, does not seem to be rooted in a desire to actually solve the overall issues and the clear problems we are facing. At best it is maximum manipulation on the issue of policing for whatever reason, at worse it is simply anti police and I do not think it can continue.

As you said, it is 10 years since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement and political and societal change has been massive and I think the police service has contributed substantially to that substantial change.

Chairman, recently there have been 3 dreadful murders, that of Martin Mongan, and Frank McGreevy in West Belfast and indeed, Sean Fitzpatrick more recently in Dungannon. It is important to report as you will know, that in all cases people have been arrested, charged and brought before the courts. People have rightly been shocked and horrified at these murders and have co-operated fully with the police investigations providing valuable support and information. It is worth noting in relation to our murder rates, our murders this year Chairman, there have been 19 murder investigations excluding the Omagh fire and that awful tragedy in which 6 people were killed. But of those, 16 investigations have now people charged and reported or the offender has actually died. Of the 6 manslaughters reported this year, 6 people have been charged and reported, or the offender has died. If you include the Omagh fire, Lorraine McGovern and her 5 children, that will push the figure to 25 murdered and 22 cleared. If that is not a record of our commitment and determination to work with others to bring the most serious offenders to justice, I am not sure what is.

It is right to report also the attempted murders of the 2 police officers are yet to be solved.

However Chairman, it is also the fact that many serious incidents are still happening where we are not getting that co-operation. I have been here before. I have been in exactly the situation in London in the late 1990s where we had a major problem, what was then called "the black on black murders" often linked to the crack cocaine trade and the Jamaican drug smuggling route. Our clear-up rate in the Metropolitan police was below 35% for murders committed in relation to those crimes and it was clearly the case where everyone at that stage was blaming everyone else. We started something called Operation Trident which I had the privilege to lead for a small period of time where it was very much at the beginning, a very difficult birth, but it meant everyone started to work together, local politicians, community leaders, churches, nightclub owners, NGOs and the police all taking responsibility to solve the problem. The problem frankly is still there but it is a determined effort and I spoke to a good friend of mine and colleague, Assistant Commissioner Tim Gobbin yesterday, who tells me the

murder clear-up rate now for those crimes is between 80 and 85% and it shows what can be achieved I think through partnership.

It certainly was not a friendly relationship. There were some extremely tough meetings and that is the way we move these things forward. I think if there is to be criticism, it must be grounded in fact. It must be motivated by a commitment to policing and a genuine desire to make things better. It should, in my judgement, mean mature conversations between my local police commanders and my local community leaders. The megaphone frankly has a means of communication is truly out of date. My door Chairman and the door of my Senior Management Team are always open and many people around this table, from this particular Policing Board and the ones before this, can bear witness to that fact. I am more than happy for us to have those difficult conversations and I am happy to meet to anybody wherever it suits them rather than wherever it suits me.

I know the Secretary of State has raised some of my concerns with Mr Adams and he is pleased and is happy and prepared to meet me in the near future and I think that meeting needs to take place as soon as it possibly can.

Chairman, I have spoken about the importance of the constructive support of politicians, I think my officers deserve no less and I think the community deserves no less. I do not intend to talk in detail on recent media coverage, but I do think a broad analysis of what has been said is that we all have to work together to move Northern Ireland on.

Chairman, on another matter, we had some appalling scenes of disturbance in Belfast a couple of weekends ago. This is a live investigation into the violence around the football. A team of detectives under the leadership of a Detective Chief Inspector is in place and we are determined to bring those responsible to justice. There has been some criticism of police action in relation to that particular issue.

Can I be entirely clear on this, local police were on the scene within minutes. We did not have any prior intelligence. Had we had any prior intelligence we would have acted on it, let me be absolutely clear about that. In fact the first 2 officers on the scene did not wait for backup despite the level of the violence. When they saw a man on the

ground they went in at great risk to themselves to protect him. I have read the statements from the officers, they rendered invaluable medical assistance until the ambulance crew arrived. It was fortunate that one of the officers had advanced trauma training and life support from an earlier career and she worked on the most seriously injured man until the paramedics got there. The TSG were there within I think 5 minutes and I think that shows not only were we prepared for any violence, we were prepared to deal with it and ACC McCausland has briefed the Board in the private session on the progress to date in what is a live investigation.

On the broader front Chairman, local police and Drugs Squad officers have had a number of successes in recent days. In Dunmurry they recovered 1.3 kilos of cocaine, a man has been arrested and charged. In Coleraine they uncovered a cannabis factory with nearly 270 plants and on Tuesday this week a similar operation in South Armagh revealed several hundred more cannabis plants with a value we estimate at £200,000. This is a growing trend in Northern Ireland, the cultivation of cannabis, quite strong cannabis within the island of Ireland rather than it being imported in. The operations from this police action would have seriously disrupted the local illegal drugs trade.

On another front Chairman, the Independent Youth Advisory Group set up by the police in Armagh, Down and Fermanagh and Foyle, have now completed their 12 month pilot stage. This initiative has received praise from the Children's Commissioner who says she sees us as a beacon of best practice and suggests other organisations follow our lead.

In Omagh, community workers and police have met with their opposite numbers in Sligo to discuss anti social behaviour, a key issue for the Board. The northern approach has impressed Members and An Garda Siochana and community workers from the city are coming to Omagh to see how we tackle this problem. My local Sergeant, David McFaul says, this was our community selling our type of policing to other areas which I think speaks for itself and I think it does. Again, it is one of the initiatives I have touched on earlier.

On the subject of anti social behaviour, Newtownabbey now has secured 5 ASBOs in relation to certain individuals and 20 Anti Social Behaviour Contracts. Personally Chairman, Anti Social Behaviour Contracts are what I prefer because it prevents people

getting to the ultimate stage of an Anti Social Behaviour Order, but on occasions sadly we have to resort to this legislation. They cover a range of areas such as sectarian disorder, assaults and criminal damage.

An off duty officer in Belfast reported a fire and evacuated residents to a place of safety again only last week. An elderly man in a wheelchair was experiencing some substantial difficulty and was assisted by the Constable to escape the fire, that man called at Grosvenor Road police station the following day to thank the officer concerned.

Chairman, we had the Royal Visit which you will be fully aware of. I think from a policing perspective that was seen as a major success. In fact, I received yesterday a letter of thanks from Her Majesty's Private Secretary thanking all police officers for their operation. The important part of it was that it was as low profile as it possibly could be so it was seen as an ordinary event, rather than a high profile event and I think we just about pulled that off and all credit to certainly my Senior Command Team and all the officers engaged on that operation.

Chairman, if I could just finish really, it is just to reinforce the point around partnership which is a quote from the Irish News of 24 March 2008 which said, "anti social elements are still out there in force, as the recent appalling events in West Belfast and Dungannon have demonstrated, and they can only be confronted through a partnership approach between the police and community leaders. It would be foolish for one side in this relationship to simply blame the other for deficiencies that will inevitably occur along the way. Police are entitled to expect that they will receive, not only active support, but a steady flow of co-operation and information as they go about their difficult duties. Politicians are equally entitled to expect that a modern, professional and effective service will be delivered in return and any issues arising should be considered through the proper channels".

Chairman, that is all I am asking for. I fully accept my organisation still has some way to go and we will, without doubt, continue to get things wrong on occasions. For me the more informed and mature the debate is, the more I think we have got a chance of moving Northern Ireland on more quickly. Thank you very much.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Alex Maskey.

Mr Alex Maskey:

Chairman thank you very much. I spoke very very briefly to the Chief Constable upstairs when I read this speaking note, which for the most part the Chief Constable has actually read out, but some of it he has omitted but this document is in circulation. I found this document patronising on the one hand, very arrogant and I am not sure whether Chief Constable you have your head in the sand, or whether this document is a smoke screen for the ineffectiveness of your service in many respects, particularly in recent cases. I do not come here as a public representative to be chided by the Chief Constable or anybody else for that matter, for raising matters of serious public concern in the public, whether that involves criticism of your officers where that is required. As I said to ACC Sheridan last week when I met him privately after a vigil that I spoke at in honour of Frank McGreevy who was murdered in the Falls Road. The criticisms that we as a party levelled were very very balanced, because I made the point personally that I regretted having to criticise the PSNI in the manner in which I had to do in a very public way, but I also said in the same remarks, that all of us, including ourselves, had to ask the very deep soul searching questions "are we doing enough" to tackle these problems in the area and all of these areas in relation to crime, anti social behaviour and so on, particularly when it results in the death and the murder of people like Frank McGreevy or Harry Hanna, both who were very good friends of my own. So, I actually think that this document is actually quite disgraceful and I do not come here to listen to this type of thing.

As I have said, I want the Chief Constable to either spell out the type of criticism that he cannot accept or does not seem to understand, and like him perhaps if he wanted to, maybe elaborate to this meeting publicly the nature and the extent of the engagement you have had with my party, including with Gerry Adams. You know as you sit there that you have a meeting scheduled with Gerry Adams and other senior party colleagues in the very near future. So, why you are trying to bring into the public domain in some serious implication that you are not getting wholesome support from my party, including the party President, that you are not getting wholesome support from our party representatives at all levels and in every constituency where we have representatives? I actually think it is quite disgraceful and I am very very angry to have to listen to these

remarks from the Chief Constable here this afternoon and I do not intend to listen to them without a very direct and robust challenge, because we are all entitled to receive criticism and we all have to live with it and more importantly, deal with it. If you do not understand that there is widespread concern about the lack of an effective service and that is not to say that many of your officers are not doing a very good job, they are and we have acknowledged that and acknowledged it very publicly and repeatedly and I will do so here on the record this afternoon at this Board meeting. I accept entirely that many of your officers are extremely genuine and committed to providing a public service, but I am also saying, that very often that service is not joined up. It certainly has not at all times responded in the way in which it should have responded, in a timely, effective and an efficient manner and you can go to any retailer and any person who has been the victim of a burglary and they will tell you that they are not happy. So whether you accept that or not is a matter for you, but I am telling you, as a Member of this Board, that I do not accept that criticism implied and directly contained in your remarks here this morning, and I would like you to apologise for some of those remarks because I do not accept them and take great personal offence to it and a party offence to it.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr Maskey could you frame a question though, that you want addressed?

Mr Alex Maskey:

I would like the Chief Constable to address the point that I am making here, is that criticisms have been levelled at the police in recent weeks by myself and other party colleagues. On the other side of that, myself and other party colleagues have accepted that we all have a fundamental and vitally important contribution to make to tackling crime in our communities. I would like the Chief Constable and he has not acknowledged here, that that is being done by my party colleagues. He also knows, he sits here today, that he has a meeting scheduled with my party President and other senior party colleagues, not only at one meeting but at several meetings throughout his organisations. So, the implication in this press release and this commentary this morning, seems to me to suggest that my party colleagues, at least in some instances, appear to be anti police or criticising the police or manipulating. That is factually incorrect, and I think it is grossly offensive and I would have to say, it is very very unhelpful in terms of trying to build the kind of working relationships that the Chief

Constable knows that we have been very very proactively and intensively engaged in, particularly in the past 12 months.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Chief Constable.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Chairman, I did not bring this matter into the public domain. The matter was brought into public domain very publicly and without any warning whatsoever. The whole point I am making, and that is why I used the examples, is that it seems to me that the sensible way to raise these concerns is not through some public shouting match but through some constructive meetings. The only meeting I have scheduled was at my request, I asked the Secretary of State who happen to be meeting Mr Adams, if he would consider having that private meeting, which he has readily, as I have reported, readily agreed to do. That was at my initiative.

I was frankly taken back by some of the comments which came out of the blue around our commitment to policing. I spent some considerable time with my District Commander covering response for West Belfast and likewise asking how much engagement are we getting, and it is mixed and I think that does not surprise me one bit. But the way we move on, I have been here before, is by having a sensible engagement without some shouting match. I choose my words very carefully. There are some people who are engaging and some people who are not and like Mr Maskey's point, some of my officers are more committed to community policing than others and I note his recognition of some of the work we are doing.

It is difficult to break Chairman. I do not intend to withdraw my remarks because I stand by them. They are not lightly made.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr.

Mr Alex Maskey:

Sorry Chairman, just to come back in on that on a supplementary basis.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Just concentrate on the question Mr Maskey.

Mr Alex Maskey:

The Chief Constable is aware that the engagements that my party has been having with your service and your senior management, is not always at your request, far from it. We have had a series of engagements with yourselves and your local management teams from last year which involved PowerPoint presentations and some very challenging debates as you well know. They did not come from yourself, they came from our request. Now, it is not a matter of just trying to say you made more requests than we did. The point I am making here, and I do not think the Chief Constable is giving proper public acknowledgement to this. Our party is giving intensive focus to this very important issue of building trust and of building a working relationship with his officers at all levels and I do not think the Chief Constable is acknowledging that and to say here that he is getting a patchy response, there has not been one of our representatives who has not engaged with their officers.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Do you want to respond to that last point Chief Constable? Okay. Ian Paisley Jnr.

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr:

Mr Chairman, I must say I find the comments today and the straight talk actually refreshing. I actually think it shows a maturity that we are now able to take this across the table and if there are issues which bother the Chief Constable, he has the right to put them to this meeting in a forthright manner. If there are matters then which Members feel they have to hit back on, either as independents or as political representatives, then we can do it. I will tell you one thing, it is a heck of an improvement upon throwing stones at each other and I think that there is some maturity.

Now there are issues which clearly have bothered the Chief of Police and his officers. I do not think if that was not the case they would not have been raised here today in this manner. There are issues, I think if there is unfair criticism he is right to tell this meeting there is unfair criticism. If there is fair criticism, then let us take it on the chin and let us address it. But if there are areas, specific areas of this province, where there is not the fulsome support for policing that there has to be, that there is not the coming forward of witnesses and the coming forwarding and reporting of crimes, then they are weaknesses and gaps that we must address and we have a responsibility to the community out there that they are addressed. I hope that maybe we can go away and sort this out and see those issues addressed. I hope that the Chief Constable agrees, that not only do we need the co-operation between politicians, community leaders and the police service, but we also need to see that co-operation in terms of the courts and judges co-operating fully in that circle. Because Chairman, let us get one thing clear, this is not about them and us, we are all in this together and if anyone breaks that chain, then there is a failure. Whilst there has been a lot of 'talking the talk' of supporting the police, I think we need to send out a clear message that this Board and its Members and the people we represent are going to 'walk the walk'.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Any other questions from Members on the statement by the Chief Constable?

Ms Martina Anderson and then Mr David Rose.

Ms Martina Anderson:

Obviously I come in on the back and support fully everything that Mr Maskey is saying. The role and responsibility of this Board to deliver effective, efficient policing and to hold the Chief Constable to account allows us to be able to criticise you in a way publicly where you are saying megaphone and the use of the megaphone is out of date and should not be used. There will be unhealthy tensions between ourselves, or healthy tensions, whatever way one wants to describe them, but we will be doing it within the context of our statutory responsibility and that is to hold you publicly to account. Therefore, I think that all that you have said here in the suggestions underlining what you are saying, that you need to reflect on that, because across the north there are areas which are not getting effective, efficient policing. That is something that within our areas, as we have been encouraging people to go to you and pick up the phone and try to get a response, we are hearing it and we are also hearing it that it is

happening within working class unionist areas as well. It is not just confined to our areas, but particularly in our areas there has been a culture there of bad policing and, therefore, you too have a responsibility to build up that confidence and you must hear what we are saying, because in order to deliver that effective, efficient policing, that we are all trying to achieve, that will at times require us and necessitate us to respond in the way that we have done over the last weeks and we will continue to do that in order to get that effective, efficient policing.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Chairman, I have no difficulty with any of that, but it does not mean I cannot reply. I have no problem with being held to account. I have a great problem with being told I cannot make my observations. I reflected very carefully on what I said and I could not agree more that we need to have those debates, there needs to be a healthy tension. For me the best way forward is that there are no surprises on either side so that things do not come out of the blue which we do not expect and we do not quite understand.

I also have an absolute right I think to rebut allegations that are simply inaccurate when they are printed in the papers or quoted in the media, and there have been a number of suggestions that we failed to act on intelligence which I take extremely seriously and take a considerably amount of my time digging right into to see if you did or did not do that. In relation to the football, I have advised the Board this morning. In relation to some of the other far more serious crimes, suggestions that we did not act on information was frankly wrong. I do think it is important, not only that it is debated in the public, I am happy for that, but also my officers will be looking to their Chief Constable when they know they have done the right thing and the allegation is they have done the wrong thing, that someone stands up for them and that is also very much part of my role. I have no difficulty being held to account by this Board; that is exactly why I am here.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

David Rose.

Mr David Rose:

Chief Constable, I think all your comments are to be commended. I want to make a couple of personal remarks around it. I think there is very little to compare the PSNI to in that people do not just see what happens within Northern Ireland. In my work abroad, and post conflict areas, I have seen policing that is to say the least, very poor. The PSNI and the RUC before never went to those low levels and I think the more that people should actually compare how the police have conducted themselves here as compared with elsewhere faced with similar situations, we should be offering our thanks and praise towards the police.

It is a very simple question. You have officers I am sure who can give some insight into experiences in other places and other countries and I think it would be welcomed if the Board could hear some of those experiences and insights because I personally hold the opinion, that the PSNI has set very high standards in moving towards civic policing out of the troubles, conflict, call it whatever you will and would you support any of your officers or former officers ever being able to come in front of the Board and give us some insight into the situations abroad and how, in their opinion, the PSNI have measured up to far higher standards.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Chairman, I am happy to do it if it is an advantage to the Board. The Board obviously know where we send people because we have to consult the Board quite properly. The only reason we send officers abroad is because we are asked to go abroad to deliver the best practice of policing in Northern Ireland to other jurisdictions. I am happy to do that. The bit that I cut out of my speech was the point that when we were in America only this time, I met a number of police chiefs who look at our clear-up rates and look at our competence figures and are somewhat envious of what has been achieved. That is not to say we get everything right, without doubt, there is still more we can do and I could not agree more with the observations that we do not get everything right all the time, but I am happy to do it if it is of help and of value.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr Barry Gilligan and Mr David Simpson. Mr Gilligan, Vice Chairman of the Board.

Vice Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:

I think it is important that we do not lose sight of the problem which has stimulated this interaction, and specifically that is the problem with anti social behaviour and particularly in West Belfast, and we know from surveys that that is an issue which is of great concern to all communities there. So I suppose my question is, going to the problem rather than the interaction that it has caused. Maybe yourself Chief Constable or ACC McCausland could give us some assessment of the extent of the problem and how you are going about addressing it, and taking on board the issue of partnership as well of course.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Happy to, I will ask ACC McCausland to deal with it, and if it would help, I am sure Chief Superintendent Gary White would come and give chapter and verse on what he is doing, but ACC McCausland can cover it today.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

Thank you Mr Chairman. If we deal first of all with the Upper Springfield situation. As Mr Maskey would know, we have had extensive contact with Sinn Fein and all the other government and non-government groups that have got together in terms of, in effect, trying to make the community safer and deal with anti social behaviour here.

If you remember, over a year ago, I reported and I had spent in excess of an additional £1m trying to bring stability to the community in that area, and with the help of politicians and with the community working with the police, we have begun to stabilise the situation in that area and I hope Mr Maskey would recognise that. There has been active contact between ourselves and various parties and as well, the DPP has been involved in terms of taking that forward. The problem that has materialised recently has been the lower Springfield Road area, the lower Falls area which has always been an issue and an ongoing issue and there has been working groups that have been there and taking forward and attempts to in effect address anti social behaviour.

You may well be aware Chairman, that I have talked before about a group of individuals known as 'the Divis hoods'. These are young people who, to a certain extent, have formed a gang and are behaving in an anti social way and the police have taken action on a number of occasions to potentially bring people before the courts. In fact, it is now

in the public domain that we have arrested over 30 people and have laid over 250 charges in the last 12 months. But, we can only solve to a certain extent, the symptoms, we cannot solve the overall problem without the community engagement. Now what I have tried to do in the last few weeks, with Chief Superintendent Gary White, who has my full support in relation to the policing of West and North Belfast, is that we have created additional resourcing for that particular area, and we are working with the community to potentially try and create a stable situation where then groups together can come and try and create a long term solution to the problems that exist there.

We have for example, in the last few days, arrested if I give you the simple figures, over 10 people for particularly anti social behaviour. We have done a large amount of activity in that area, and in fact, we have got a number of phone calls from residents thanking us for in effect taking effective action to potentially deal with the problem that was there, and this was as a result of the public speaking at public events which Mr Maskey referred to in relation to asking for police action.

My only issue and the simple issue is this, in support of what the Chief Constable has said and I am sure and I hope all politicians round the table here would agree with us. Rather than doing it publicly, please come and speak to us and we can get together as we have done successfully in the Upper Springfield Safer Neighbourhood Forum, and we can start to look at, not just in West Belfast, but in other working class areas across Northern Ireland, where people are crying out, not just for additional policing, but they are crying out for a better quality of life which we the police can help deliver but it needs all the other statutory bodies to get involved as well.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Thank you.

Mr Trevor Ringland:

Just really picking up on the Vice Chairman's comment, that a problem in any area in Northern Ireland is a problem for all of us and we all can have concerns about the problems that West Belfast are facing. I think, would you agree, that the sharing of good practice from what is successful in other areas in Northern Ireland, and bringing those that manage that good practice in those areas into West Belfast and talking to the

people there, would be a good idea for the police and the other representatives in that area.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I am happy to but an interesting point is that an awful lot of good practice is coming out of West Belfast. If you look at the Safer Neighbourhood Forum which has been going for some time now, and I understand there are some issues, local issues, around the politics between different parties around what is a model for everywhere else and all of that, it has made a significant difference. I have no difficulty with that, but it is back to my initial point. If we can deal with these issues as ACC McCausland said, sensible, rational, challenging debate that is constructive. But broader statements saying my organisation is not up to it does not take us anywhere and merits, quite properly, a response from me, because I think the PSNI is up to it. It does not mean we are going to get it right all the time, but we are up for the challenge and we will do our level best but we do need that collective effort which ACC McCausland is referring to.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr David Simpson and then Mr Basil McCrea and then Mr Brian Rea and I am going to then conclude it at that stage.

Mr David Simpson:

Thank you Mr Chairman. I think it is important to say, just at the very outset, that a lot of the decisions that the PSNI have to make, they are damned if they do and they are damned if they do not, that is the bottom line. But I have listened to the rant from Mr Maskey and Ms Anderson today in relation to areas that proper policing is not being conducted. Well, I think he said that republicans have come a long way, I accept that, they have come some distance and it makes a big difference that republicans now are not blowing the brains out of police officers or blowing them to pieces by bombing them. So, I think there is a difference of course when they are sitting around this table, so we have got them to that stage of accepting some kind of policing. But, will the Chief Constable agree with me that it is very difficult for the PSNI to deliver a proper service in certain areas when there is still a significant threat from republicans or elements from the republican organisations?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Chairman, I think the short answer is, it makes it more challenging. The reality is we are talking about a very small, very marginalised group, who have a disproportionate impact on how we police which is what makes it so tiresome, dissident republicans remain a threat, there is no doubt about that. There is a determination amongst them to kill police officers and I refer to the 2 unsolved attempted murders.

I will ask ACC McCausland and ACC Gillespie to touch briefly on their perceptions, but my perception over the last few years has been a really encouraging across the divide actually, there are areas where, certainly after the September 2005 we were not that welcome within loyalist areas but by continual effort at the front end of driving policing forward in an empowered way and I touched again on some of the initiatives in neighbourhood policing and community policing we have been looking at this week with Members of the Board, is the way forward and it does not mean, just because there is a threat from a few sad disenfranchised people, that we are not going to keep doing it. My officers will keep doing it. It would be an awful lot easier if they all went away and as my soon to retire colleague pointed out, got proper jobs for themselves, but the reality is, until that happens we will keep delivering. It may be that ACC McCausland and ACC Gillespie may just want to touch on some of things that have gone on.

Assistant Chief Constable Judith Gillespie:

Certainly, just very quickly following the shooting of Constable Dogherty in Derry, the following day police officers were still out on patrol in the city centre on bicycles. Now, it is very heartening to see the determination of Neighbourhood Policing Teams to continue to rollout, single officer patrolling, beat patrolling and cycle patrolling even in those areas where there is a significant dissident republican threat. Now obviously that needs to be very very carefully managed from the point of view of officer confidence, and from the point of view of protecting my officers from what is a very significant threat, but nonetheless, that has not undermined in any way, our determination to move forward on neighbourhood policing. I think incidents like the District Policing Partnership meeting taking place in Crossmaglen for example, and other significant arrests that have happened of dissident republican suspects which have, undoubtedly, undermined their thrust and as the Chief Constable says, it is a small marginalised group, but nonetheless, a significant threat but we are very very determined to continue with our

plan to rollout neighbourhood policing and to deliver policing with the community across Rural Region.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

Chairman, just adding on to what I said previously. I have visited all but one of my DPPs in Urban Region in the last few weeks before they were reconstituted, and not one of them has told me that PSNI are a failing force. In fact, they are critical at times of us, we accept that, and some of the meetings have been challenging, but the reality is that they are supportive of what we are fundamentally trying to do, and that is both in unionist and in nationalist areas. But what I am highlighting here is, in terms of that criticism, that criticism is couched in a fashion that is challenging but it does not add to the fear of crime. The fear of crime that is out on the streets and that we all have to deal with. When people make statements that the police are a failing organisation, without putting it into context, in my opinion, it exacerbates that fear that is out there and I think it is encumbered upon us all to address that together as a community. Yes, we have learning, there is no question about that and there is no question we can improve and will continue to improve, because an organisation such as the police, constantly changes and improves.

ACC Gillespie has said some of the examples in some of the areas in Belfast, for example, you may have noticed police having to go back into body armour and wear body armour due to the potential dissident threat that has existed. But we continue to provide a response to the community 24 hours a day. We are here to do our utmost best no matter what community we are serving is, because we consider everyone exactly the same. That is the point that my officers are making to me, that to help us do our job, it needs us all to contribute together in a positive, constructive and challenging way.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Could I say just to Board Members, I do not mind robust exchanges but I think that it is important that we temper our language and to be careful.

Basil McCrea and Brian Rea.

Mr Basil McCrea:

Chairman, well there is no doubt Chief Constable we know what will be reported on the news today. It will be a fight between Sinn Fein and PSNI and I have to say to you that I am a little surprised that it came up because I was unsighted as to your speech before you came on and I think it is important that we actually deal with this issue properly on both sides. The whole purpose of this Policing Board was to enable Sinn Fein to actually understand how policing works. The trials and tribulations that your officers have to work on ,and actually understand the process that is going on, and I am not sure that that is working. I also have to say, that part of this process was that those of us that were not in Sinn Fein would be able to make an assessment as to whether Sinn Fein where actually fully involved in policing, whether they are actually getting committed to it. It is not for me to make a judgement on whether that is the case at this stage or not, because I have heard what colleagues have had to say, but there is no doubt, that this entire debacle will have set us back somewhat. The confidence that we were trying to build on policing in the community will be set back by today's events. The specific question I have for you is, how do you think we will actually resolve this? Is it , for example, when you have actually met and you have spoken with Mr Adams, will you make public what was the content of those discussions? Will we all join in having a joint press communication? It is not just you and Sinn Fein or you and the DUP, it is all of us to sit and say, the community wants us to get policing sorted out and we need to demonstrate that this is just but a spat, but the long term project is on course, because until we can do that, the prospect of the devolution of policing and justice is receding further and further.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

How it is interpreted is a matter for the media. In fact one of my observations today was the fact that some of the media information has been simply wrong. I see it as a robust debate rather than any sort of fallout between any particular party and I think that has already been referred to by Ian Paisley Jnr.

In terms of how it works, well you know, I repeat my offer and the offers of colleagues around this table which we have made ad nauseam for many Policing Boards. If anyone on the Policing Board is interested, from any party or independent Members interested in looking at any facet of my organisation, through visits, through conversations with the key people, I will facilitate any of that. Indeed, an offer was

made I know at the last Policing Board by Joe Stewart, in relation to some of the training issues which were coming, and we will continue to make those. I know Chief Superintendent Gary White has made exactly the same offer to members of a District Policing Partnership. It does not mean it is not going to be a rocky road. We accept that and the purpose of this debate is to raise these issues. I think that is a positive and constructive thing. Success for me is, that we do sit down, not just with one party but with all parties, as I have said in my opening. My willingness to meet, and people around this table can bear witness to that, I will go anywhere to meet anybody at any stage if they want to make a difference and a contribution to policing.

In terms of meetings with individual parties, I have no difficulty with people who take part in those meetings from whichever party and say whatever they want afterwards, that is how it has always worked. I meet all political parties and I do not seek to fetter what they say in any way, shape or form.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr Brian Rea.

Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you Chairman. I would concur with the comments made by David Rose concerning policing. It is widely recognised that the PSNI and the RUC before them, have a worldwide reputation of very sound policing. I am not so much interested in the terms that are being used, "good policing and bad policing". We know it has been good policing, it has been very difficult policing and very difficult policing in areas where policing and law abiding or any sort was a 'no no'. But, what I would like the Chief Constable to assure us of today is this, that he and his officers will continue to develop community policing and continue to bring, and I know they have been largely successful. I want to commend, having sat on an awards panel, I want to commend the officers in the PSNI, the Chief Constable and his Senior Team and his officers right down to, and I am not demeaning them in any one way, Part-Time Reserve Officers, for the work that they have done and continue to do in very difficult circumstances. So I would like the Chief Constable to assure us that his efforts in community policing will be continued.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I can give that assurance and community policing is, as Patten clearly said, the preferred and indeed the only style of policing that is right for Northern Ireland. Of course, there are other jobs we have to do, but that is the preferred style of frontline policing. I think if you look back and I can only look back 5½ years now, if you look at the step change in frontline community policing, even in that short period of time, I think it is significant and the points you make reflect the points I made at the beginning. We recognise we are an organisation in transition and communities are in transition but by going through that difficult transition together, you are far more likely to be effective in policing terms than you are if you do it or try and do it as individuals or in silos.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Chief Constable, could you we take now at this stage, Chief Inspector Paul McClean's presentation on Public Protection please.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I will ask ACC Drew Harris to introduce this item.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Drew Harris:

Thank you. Our ongoing commitment to protect people and particularly the most vulnerable people in our society, I think is shown today by the introduction of Public Protection Units. They have been introduced on Monday of this week through all the Districts of the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

The Districts structure has allowed us to pull resources and create this specialism and this expertise at a local level. It has also allowed us to concentrate on rape investigation within Crime Operations. The idea of a Public Protection Unit really stems from the Victoria Climbié Inquiry and the recommendations that came from that, not only for the police service but for other agencies, and particularly in the ACPO and HMIC standards that have flowed from that.

With the introduction of Public Protection Units, we are well placed within the United Kingdom in terms of how we will protect the most vulnerable and how, most importantly as well, that we can work with other agencies. This is very much a society problem. Child Abuse, Domestic Abuse and we must be seen to play our full part in solving this

problem. Undoubtedly in Northern Ireland, where we do have a lot of domestic abuse and we have a lot of child abuse, that can only then spill out onto our streets in terms of teenagers and others in anti social behaviour. It is well known through studies, that children who live in a home where there is domestic abuse or who are the subject of child abuse, are very very likely then themselves to become involved in breaking the law, get criminal records and their whole lives actually become disadvantaged through schooling and through their life chances. So this is a very important area. We have taken the initiative in terms of developing our response to that and as I say, really we will be at the forefront in the response to public protection issues and this has commenced on Monday.

I will hand over to Chief Inspector McClean for some of the detail around this.

Chief Inspector Paul McClean:

Thank you Sir. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I am Paul McClean a Chief Inspector with Community Safety Branch, Headquarters.

For the past 12 months, I have been developing and implementing a Public Protection Model for the PSNI. I have looked at best practice across the United Kingdom and I have also sought advice from Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary.

Through the Senior Responsible Officer for the project, who is ACC Harris, the PP Project Board, Crime Operations Branch and the DCUs themselves, PSNI have implemented Public Protection Units in every DCU and this is a brief summary of what we have achieved so far.

Public Protection covers 4 key areas of police business; that is child protection, sex and violent offender management, domestic abuse and missing and vulnerable people. PSNI have always delivered a service in these areas but the approach might be described as somewhat siloed. The risks of such an approach, might mean repeat offenders might escape justice, repeat victims are not protected and the links between missing persons and child and domestic abuse and sex offenders could be missed with tragic consequences.

Within the context of a Public Protection Unit, 4 interlinked strands of business are pulled together; to stop offending early; to identify links between offenders and victims and maximise intelligence and make the best use of finite resources.

Following submission of a Public Protection research paper in May 2007 to the CORE Steering Group, the group opted to introduce PPUs based on the model before you. PPUs would be implemented in every DCU and would be under the control of the District Commander. Each PPU would be lead by a Detective Inspector who would report to the Detective Chief Inspector, one Detective Sergeant would lead the Child Protection Team while another Sergeant would lead on sex offender management, domestic abuse and missing and vulnerable people and as ACC Harris has outlined, we have gone live with that model from 31 March 2008.

Leadership is a critical issue and a critical success factor for PPUs and a closer look at this structure shows what this will look like. Previously, there were probably weak linkages between Crime Operations and DCUs that maximised intelligence to these kind of investigations. Serious cases were investigated in DCUs by Care Units, but officers from the DCUs did not have a lot of input into those kind of investigations, and indeed, despite patrolling the areas 24 hours a day, local police had little focus on reducing offending in the area of public protection as child issues were seen as the problem of Care Units and were not being connected to other areas such as domestic abuse and missing persons. Consequently, there was a risk that we were missing links between missing people, domestic abuse and child abuse.

We were in a strong position to conduct serious crimes against children, but we probably were not maximising every opportunity to stop it getting serious in the first place. PPUs will change this by being an integral part of the DCU and by becoming more fully involved in the DCU National Intelligence Model.

There are a number of critical success factors upon which the success of Public Protection Units will hinge, and one is an issue around perception that I just want to touch on.

It is highly important that the allocation of Crime Operations Branch resources and child abuse investigations to DCUs is not viewed as treating these crimes in any way less serious than what we did before. In fact, the contrary is true.

Investigators will attain exactly the same skills they had before, but they will work more closely to the community and this will be an essential element in how they operate within the Districts. This will provide the benefit that they can draw on and the knowledge and experience of frontline officers, and I am heartened to hear such support for community policing because community policing in terms of public protection also have a vital role to play to provide information, intelligence and support to public protection and the community.

In terms of rapes, we are separating how we dealt with rapes in terms of adult and children. Rape of adults will still be investigated by Crime Operations Branch by a dedicated team of highly trained officers who are trained to ACPO standards. Another important aspect of public protection will be how we deal with missing people. Missing people go missing for lots of reasons, particularly vulnerable people and young children. We want to know what those reasons are. We have specially trained officers who will interview those people to find out why they have gone missing and if we identify or suspect crimes in relation to those individuals, we will thoroughly investigate them.

There are other critical success factors not least of which of course, are resources. In 2001 the police service were faced with similar challenges when we moved from Divisions to DCUs and we learned from that experience, that while the number of resources can be an issue, it is how those resources are used that is the most important consideration.

With finite resources, PSNI need to learn to do things differently and we have done. PPU's provide an opportunity to use skills, abilities and intelligence in a more proactive way in order to support victims of repeat offending and to identify potential serious offenders at an earlier stage.

As in other areas of policing, PSNI will move from reactive investigative approach to one that is proactive, preventative and includes multi agency problem solving. Training will be a vital aspect. Up until yesterday we had training programme running between December of last year and June of this year. We have extended that programme and that will run to the end of this year, and we will train not only officers within Public Protection Units, but officers within DCUs.

Leadership is critical, I have touched on the leadership issue when we looked at the DCU structure and the PPU structure, but it is absolutely critical that the Detective Inspector within the Unit gives the leadership and that the Sergeants do the same and that the strands of the Unit are pulled together and we are confident that the structure in place will allow us and enable us to do that. Of course, the issue of intelligence, in terms of sex offending and protection of children, it does not just happen at a local level, it happens at an international level as well. We have created a post of A Sexual Offences Intelligence Officer who will sit at Headquarters and that officer will deal with intelligence that comes from the rest of the United Kingdom or any other part of the world threatens vulnerable people or children in this country we would be able to pass that information down. Similarly, if we have people who are offending and presenting a risk in other areas, we have the means to make sure that that information is passed quickly throughout the country and that it is accessible by people who need it when they need it.

Because we are separating issues of dealing with adult sexual offences and child sexual offences, we need to make sure that we have a strong Service Level Agreement between the departments involved. We work very closely with Crime Operations Branch, the District Command Units and my own department, Criminal Justice to make sure that that is in place. That is currently in place and it is working effectively. It means that we do not have a member of the public standing in a Police Enquiry Office while police officers decide who conducts that investigation; that will not happen.

It is all underpinned by a strong policy that provides the framework upon which DCUs, while operating within their own framework, can build upon a PPU that provides corporacy throughout the organisation.

Finally, we need to communicate what we are doing. This is part of that message. We are here today to spread what we are doing in terms of public protection. We will also do that nationally through the press here in Northern Ireland and we will do it locally through local press outlets. We will also do it internally. It is critical that our police officers on the ground understand what they can do for Public Protection Units and equally, the other way around.

There are challenges ahead, not least of which is the extent of the task facing the Public Protection Units which you can see on the screen. These figures represent the significant workload. We need to have of our partners to make a difference and that includes the community. All frontline officers have a role to play in providing public protection. It is not the sole preserve of the Public Protection Units. Many cases are straightforward and require prompt, effective policing and we can deliver that. These cases can be investigated by uniformed frontline officers leaving the most vulnerable persons and more serious offenders to be dealt with by the Public Protection Unit.

We will review our performance in this area in 6 months time to see what we have learned and to see what we can improve. In parallel to the work that I have been involved in, PSNI have conducted a best value review in relation to vulnerable people. The recommendations from this review will copper fasten and complement the work of the PPU project and will act to ensure no opportunities to deliver an effective service are missed.

PSNI have taken a significant step in order to improve our service delivery to vulnerable people by establishing Public Protection Units. However, this is just the beginning and we intend to build on what we have achieved so far with further training and partnership development after adjustment where necessary.

I appreciate it is a brief summary of what has been achieved so far over the past 12 months and I am happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Thank you very much indeed Chief Inspector McClean. Mr David Simpson.

Mr David Simpson:

Thank you Mr Chairman and I would like to thank Chief Inspector McClean for his presentation. Some horrific figures there and when we look at the 3,000 figure in relation to offences against children. I noticed yesterday in the London press when I was across at Westminster that the computer activity of paedophiles has increased substantially, it is at an all time high at this stage and through Bebo or through whatever, and the press were indicating that parents really do not know the threat and the risk when they are allowing their children to go onto these sites, whether it be Bebo or chat rooms or whatever. What more can be done in relation to that to try and catch these guys who are going through these websites to attack vulnerable children.

Chief Inspector Paul McClean:

Well, PSNI does have an on line investigation team and that team will remain in Crime Operations Branch and will be able to conduct investigations. We have been involved in a number of operations and detected a number of offenders in that area.

We also work very closely with CEOP (Child Exploitation On Line Protection Agency) and we use their training package to educate people. We have also engaged with a couple of multi national companies here in Northern Ireland who have supported us through education packages and I think that is pretty much the key here. I think the message we want to get out to parents is, learn what your children are doing on the internet. Do not have the internet perhaps away in a room where you cannot monitor it, have it in an open place, ask questions and check. There are very good education facilities from CEOP. We also work very closely with children in schools through our case programme and we have just recently developed an education package to help children understand the kind of risks. Because the truth of the matter is, I am afraid whether we want to accept it or not, there is a gap between us as adults and what we see computers can do and what children know they can do and it is important that we try to close that gap.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr Alex Maskey.

Mr Alex Maskey:

Thank you Chairman. Could I thank again Chief Inspector McClean for your presentation and commend this particular initiative and the structure that has been developed there to see it forward and obviously just wish you well in terms of the success of this and hopefully any support that any of us can give, we will be there to do that. I am particularly struck by the way in which you felt the need to highlight and the comments there about the need to eradicate any suggestion that dealing with crime against children would be somehow less than others and you have obviously felt the need to highlight that and that is very much appreciated.

I think as David Simpson said earlier, there are some scary figures there, actually quite disgusting when you see the number of incidents of abuse.

I am wondering Chief Inspector McClean, would you have any light you could maybe shed. Just recently, I have been involved in a bit of debate around a recent report called "Making the Grade" which was developed by a number of organisations, like Women's Aid, some members of Trade Unions and so on, which dealt with domestic abuse, sex abuse and human trafficking. There is also the policy of the current Department of Health here which I think emanated in 2005, I think that is referred to as tackling violence at home. I am wondering, would you have any observations to make on either the success or otherwise of the Health Department strategy or some of the comments in the "Making the Grade" report which seems to suggest that a lot yet still needs to be done by all of the various departments and agencies.

Chief Inspector Paul McClean:

I think we have come a long way in dealing with domestic abuse and particularly recognising the problems that domestic abuse has. We in Criminal Justice Department lead on the policy and we certainly work with our partners to make sure that the policies that are in place are promulgated down to our officers. It takes time for those policies to be working on the ground and that is always the challenge. Where we need to perhaps be critical of ourselves is in looking at the policies, checking those policies and making sure that they are working. Certainly the figures in terms of domestic abuse, 23,000 figures of incidents relates to about 10,000 crimes. I would say that our success rate in clearing those crimes is reasonably good in comparison to other areas, we are sitting at about 44% so I would say that we are doing quite well, but it is an area that is grossly

under-reported and whether we talk about policies or not, it is something that we need to encourage people to do, that if they are victims of domestic abuse in any relationship they need to make sure they are reporting that to the police and giving us every opportunity to investigate it.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

I am going to take 3 more questions on this report, Mr Ian Paisley Jnr, Mr Suneil Sharma and Mr Basil McCrea. Mr Ian Paisley Jnr.

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr:

Thank you Chairman. Again, thank you for the report. It is really building on that last question. You indicated that in terms of repeat offences there are some people evading justice in this area, could you maybe give us some indication how much more could be done in terms of trying to get people punished appropriately. Are the courts failing us in terms of bail issues or what is happening in terms of trying to prevent these repeat offences?

The other issue was, the perception about domestic violence in particular, using the public eye is about females being seriously abused and beaten up, however, I have noticed on some of your poster work and some of your publicity work, that you are also addressing the issue of abuse against males. Could you say something about the extent in terms of abuse on males in terms of domestic violence and what is the uptake in terms of reporting, given your poster campaign in that regard.

Chief Inspector Paul McClean:

We are certainly dealing with the second issue. I do not have figures that breaks that down, but certainly I think we are very conscious of acknowledging the fact that the domestic abuse issue is not just about women as victims, it is men as victims and we certainly acknowledge that.

In terms of repeat offending, I think what we are trying to get at there is, it is repeat offending that in far too many cases we actually do not know about. For example, there is some research that has been done that indicates that a victim of domestic abuse is a victim 35 times before they come anywhere near the police and that is research that has been done internationally, and those are the kind of things we are trying to

challenge. We are trying to set up a place that gives people confidence that if they are being subjected to abuse, whether it is domestic violence or child abuse or whatever, that they come to the police at a much much early stage, so when we talk about issues around repeat offending that is what we mean. We mean repeat offending that we want people to report it to the police at a much earlier stage.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr Suneil Sharma.

Mr Suneil Sharma:

Thank you Chief Inspector McClean for that presentation. It is a quick question about the phrase multi agency problem solving. Could you tell me what structures are in place to ensure that other agencies are stitched into the PPU model, which is a welcome change on how we deal with child abuse and domestic violence?

Chief Inspector Paul McClean:

There are a number of models. We are certainly looking at one in relation to domestic abuse which we are calling MARAC which is a multi agency approach to work with our partners, to deal with offenders and to deal with the victims to make sure they get the proper support. That is in its early stages, we are still developing it. We have run it as a model and some of our agencies prove to be very successful. In terms of other statutory agencies, we do have joint protocol arrangements in terms of dealing with child protection issues, so we are working very closely with well established models with a number of agencies. That does not only just apply to child protection issues, it also applies to vulnerable adults, so those processes are actually very very deeply embedded in what we are doing. What we are simply trying to do is shape things, that we take more advantage of that, but where we see perhaps opportunities to develop that further, then we will do that.

Mr Suneil Sharma:

Just a supplementary. Are you absolutely sure that you have taken all the learning from the cases that have happened, for example the Victoria Climbié case and subsequently, that all that knowledge has been put into this new model, all those lessons have been thoroughly and properly learned.

Chief Inspector Paul McClean:

I think we have tried to. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. We have launched this on Monday, we are going to move forward, we are going to monitor it to make sure that we have covered those lessons. Certainly the lessons out of the Victoria Climbié inquiry are very obvious in terms of a victim of crime is not given the kind of quality of service that they needed in the first place, and that has been central to what we have been trying to do with PPU's. What we are trying to say is, look if there is a victim of crime coming to you and saying it is a public protection issue, then deal with it as a public protection issue, do not wait until it becomes a serious crime, and I think that is one of the points that I made here was that, we were perhaps in the past, too geared towards dealing with something that was a serious crime, therefore, a serious crime occurred. What we are trying to do now is make sure we have structures in place to catch those issues early and the kind of issues we are talking about are exactly the kind of cases that relate to Victoria Climbié.

Mr Suneil Sharma:

(tape unclear)..... procedures in multi agency problem solving hugely in that area.

Chief Inspector Paul McClean:

They were.

Mr Suneil Sharma:

That is okay.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr Basil McCrea.

Mr Basil McCrea:

Thank you for the presentation. Can you tell me how the new Units will interact with the community in terms of managing sex offenders in the community? You mentioned that there is an issue about communication and a lot of people get worried whenever they hear that, so I would like to know about that.

Just on a related point, I welcome the emphasis on children, but one of the big issues and I am sure it is not quite in your area, but there must be linkages in terms of underage drinking and how we need to manage that, because alcohol would lie at the root of many of the crimes that we see against children, domestic abuse and whatever, so where is the joined up bit?

Chief Inspector Paul McClean:

In terms of the sex offender management, we will continue with the process we have at the minute with the MASRAM process. We will work with all our statutory partners, we will develop that to a higher level scrutiny panel if you like, that will sit across Northern Ireland and will look at, what we refer to as the critical view, that people who create the biggest risk. But in terms of that process, and in terms of working with the public, the MASRAM process that is in place at the moment, is the one that will pretty much stay, so we would not be changing that significantly.

The reason we would not be doing that is because, to be quite honest, it works. By and large we find that is what is being successful.

In terms of dealing with children and underage drinking, we will have the Public Protection Teams looking after particular aspects of young people in terms of physical and sexual abuse, but we will still have our Community Safety Teams and those Community Safety Teams through their Neighbourhood Policing efforts will be looking at issues of why people are in places that are making them vulnerable. If that becomes an issue of child protection, that can be referred across and how we will do that is through our National Intelligence Model. We have what we call, Tactical Co-ordinating Group meetings within the Districts and that is where we share our information and from those meetings comes our tasking, and if that tasking is about “let us look at this area in terms of why are there children in this area”, that has probably quite rightly gone to the Community Safety Team, if there is an issue of a child in there who is very very young, not receiving probably the right kind of parenting as vulnerable, that is something we can then bring across to our Public Protection Team.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

Mr Chairman, we will be bringing forward a policy, as you will be aware and as Dr Donnelly knows, to the Board in the forthcoming months in relation to tackling a year long campaign in relation to alcohol and alcohol in society which we would hope the Board would be prepared to support and champion that.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

There was one other question whom I overlooked, Ms Anderson.

Ms Martina Anderson:

Thank you Chief Inspector McClean. Maybe you could come back later to the 2 reports that Mr Maskey referred to about tackling the greed and tackling violence at home from the Health Department just to see what you feel about its impact. I share the alarm that is being expressed here with regards to the child abuse and also domestic abuse, but I want to look at that other area that is covering with regards to persons reported missing and that statistic of 635.

I hope the Chairman does not mind me saying this, because I know he has a question around the circumstances surrounding the death of Harry Jack in Derry, but that led to an internal review in the city and the Derry DCU looked at the whole culture that had actually existed around, maybe a complacency culture with regards to the filling in of the forms around missing people. I am just wondering, picking up on some of the conversations that people have had earlier, Mr Sharma talked about learning the lessons and you talked about the training and communication that will go on around the success that is needed for the PPU's to become effective. So, in that context, I am just looking at maybe confirmation from you, that what was discovered from the internal review in Derry, would be taken into account in order to make the training and communication elements of the PPU's successful, because the city was quite alarmed when it discovered, that as a result of that missing person who had subsequently died, that there was some kind of complacency around the filling of the forms around missing people.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Drew Harris:

The reason that missing persons are included within the Public Protection Unit is, setting aside the tragic circumstances of Mr Jack, a lot of the missing persons that we

report are around children and young people, particularly those who have left residential homes. Often they are the subject of abuse, be it physical or sexual abuse and the symptom of that is actually going missing. Same as a home where there is domestic abuse. Often those children will go missing and that is where we want to make the connections and actually trying to get into the massive under-reporting that we feel there is around domestic abuse. Specifically then within the Unit, there will be an officer responsible for chasing up on missing persons, keeping investigations live and then the Detective Inspector there will also be responsible for reviewing investigations, and making sure all the appropriate actions have been taken in terms of the long term missing, those who have been missing over a month, and we will periodically revisit investigations to make sure there are no other actions that can be taken.

So, it has moved very much on from what the Ombudsman recommended, indeed, we have gone far beyond the recommendations made by the Ombudsman in terms of having specific responsibility and supervisors having a specific responsibility as well for the overview of this. The other area which assists us is the development of NICHE because NICHE allows us then to connect missing person investigations, people who are continuing to go missing, and also then to keep it on record and keep it on file and join it up with other investigations around vulnerability, be it either child abuse or domestic abuse. So, NICHE is a very strong facilitator in developing the whole Public Protection Unit side of this and it facilitates communication because we are able to flag incidents, flag people and even flag suspects on NICHE around public protection, so it really does assist in facilitating this through.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Thank you very much indeed Chief Inspector McClean for an excellent presentation and for the way in which you took our questions.

I am going to move now to the questions that come in from Committees and Members, question 2 from Human Resources Committee, Mrs Moore.

Mrs Rosaleen Moore:

Chief Constable, this question arose from the Human Resources Committee and it was in relation to the concern about the professional development agenda for individual

officers being given as much primacy as possible in a changing environment that was seen as incredibly important that it is kept upfront. While training is mandatory and will go on anyway, the two are inter-related, so this is the background to this question.

Q2 - Members are aware that while PSNI has accepted the establishment of Professional Development Units as a model to deliver training and development at District level, the responsibility for their establishment has been handed over to the Area Commanders and their heads of HR. Could the Chief Constable provide the Board with an update on the progress that has been made and his views on the urgency that has been placed on their establishment by Commanders?

Director of Human Resources, Mr Joe Stewart:

The creation of Professional Development Units (PDUs) is part of a 2 year plan and part of some of the devolvement and responsibility that Chief Inspector McClean has already referred to but a different aspect, so it was envisaged that it would take 2 years to establish these Units within the Districts, but I am pleased to report, that notwithstanding pressures, substantial progress has in fact been made well within that timescale. Seven out of the 8 Districts already have Professional Development Units in place, and the eighth is on its way. Eight of the Districts have District Training Units in place and those follow on from the previous District training provisions, and 6 DCUs have established fully functioned Tutor Units and 2 more are on the way, and I am particularly pleased about that because I believe that is the best way of developing our Probationer Constables in the initial phase of their training post college.

The role of the Professional Development Manager is mixed within the Districts and in some Districts it is being performed by an Inspector and in others it is performed and highlighted by a Staff Officer, which is in line with the CORE model which agreed this structure. There is always the issue of resources and where Districts find the resources to deploy people, but they are working on this and bringing this forward.

I think Members next week will have the opportunity to explore this very issue should they so wish with the Heads of HR at a meeting that is taking place I think on the 10 April 2008 in this very building.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question which has already been referred to by Ms Anderson, question 3 to be put by Mr McCrea in his capacity as Chair of the Human Rights Committee.

Mr Basil McCrea:

Chairman, it is probably not necessary to go through it in any great detail, it is up on the screen. It has to do with Mr Jack, the point was already brought up and the Ombudsman recommended certain views, so could you just bring us up to date on it. I know you have already done it ACC Harris but could I say to you, just to address the issue about NICHE, although I have not got the chance to take up, I still hear worries that people have about its over complicated and if we were relying upon it, it may not be put in, but I am just saying it is an issue to revisit.

Q3 - The Ombudsman's report into the circumstances surrounding the death of Mr Harry Jack at Rushall Road, Londonderry on 3 November 2006, completely exonerated the PSNI of any blame for failing to attend a sighting of Mr Jack prior to his death. However, an internal review by Foyle DCU of missing person procedures identified a complacent culture concerning completion of Form 57, and poor supervision in accordance with Force Orders. The Ombudsman recommended that similar reviews of missing person procedures be conducted by all PSNI District Command Units. Can the Chief Constable provide an update on the progress of these reviews and the implementation of positive action plans as recommended by the Ombudsman?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Drew Harris:

Thank you. I have covered a lot of this, but I think the main points are. We have a Public Protection Unit now, specifically officers will have an ongoing responsibility for the investigation and management and supervision of missing person enquiries, and also then, making connections around other vulnerabilities. The National Intelligence Model will be applied to the work of the Public Protection Unit and that will include the work around missing persons. We will be conducting longer term case management reviews at 28 days, 3 months, 6 months and then annually and, unfortunately, people do go missing and actually we never hear of them again. As part of the recommendations of the Ombudsman, we are at present reviewing all of our outstanding missing person files and the DCUs will report to my Regional colleagues on

that within the next 4 to 6 weeks. When that is done, all of those missing person files can then be put onto NICHE. Now NICHE is a record management system and the strength of NICHE is, that it joins up all the information that we the police know.

One of the great failings that have been flagged up by public inquiry after public inquiry was, that if organisations had pooled all the information that they had known and that they had in their possession, they could have acted far more promptly in a far more effective manner and really that is the essence of Public Protection Units, it is maximising what we know as quickly as we can to ensure early intervention to protect the vulnerable. Again, particularly around missing persons, we have gone further than the Ombudsman's recommendations in what we have set up here and we will be changing our policy to ensure that we are fully compliant with the ACPO guidance and the PPU's allow us to do that.

Overall, the recommendations have been accepted and acted upon and, indeed, surpassed.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Consequential upon the recent Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), there are 2 questions, question 4 Mr David Simpson.

Mr David Simpson:

Q4 - To ask the Chief Constable for his assessment of the impact on community policing of not introducing Police Community Support Officers in Northern Ireland?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I will ask ACC Harris to deal with that, thank you.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Drew Harris:

Thank you. Obviously, the Police Service is very disappointed that whilst working within the constraints of CSR08, we have been unable to take forward our stated desire to introduce Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs).

The Board and ourselves have put a lot of time and effort into the PCSO project and what it would deliver for policing in Northern Ireland. As we do not have PCSOs at the moment, it is difficult to quantify what the local impact would be, but looking at England and Wales, we know that we have lost a lot in terms of visibility. This would have been 400 PCSOs who would have been out on the ground. They would not be doing night duty, so visible and increasing the visibility during the day and into the evening. They would have been dedicated to a neighbourhood, but yet there would not have been the extraction issues around ongoing training, courses, court attendance and the various extractions there is around sworn officers. They can have an impact around the relationship that we have with the community in terms of increased communication, the increased intelligence flow into the police organisation around anti social behaviour and low level crime problems. Also, they can bring great benefits in terms of diversity in that people who may not have considered a career in the police service before, are interested in becoming PCSOs and, indeed, once they do become PCSOs a lot of them are very interested then and have applied and been successful in England and Wales in becoming police officers.

Also, it is would have been another string to our bow in terms of the skills match because not every problem requires the solution of a warranted officer. Certainly, PCSOs would have given us another tactic in which to meet problems in local communities. They would have been known to the local communities and very much a constant and visible presence in them, so we do feel we have lost a lot. It is a great disappointment to us and I am sure to the Board, but we have to live within a balanced budget.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr David Simpson, supplementary.

Mr David Simpson:

Thank you. I would agree Mr Chairman with everything ACC Harris has said and I think through the Policing Plan we will see consistently confidence in community policing, visibility the word that ACC Harris has used and it is vey disappointing that the budget was not adequate enough to cover this. We have waited a long time for this project and it is very disappointing. Maybe something can be done in the future at the next round of funding to look at it again, but I think the pressure from the PSNI's point of view, I think

that pressure should be kept on to see if something can be delivered in the future for that.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question relating to Part-Time Officers, it is a question that has come in from a member of the public, it is question 5 Mr Trevor Ringland.

Mr Trevor Ringland:

Q5 - Could the Chief Constable brief the Board on his vision and views on the use of part time police officers and their contribution to overall policing policy?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I will ask ACC McCausland and ACC Gillespie to deal with that. It is, of course, linked very much to the question David Simpson has just asked.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

Thank you. Police Officers Part-Time bring a valuable and valued blend of experience, life skills and in particular, local knowledge to the table in support of neighbourhood policing. In Rural Region they are especially valued and I would just point to a couple of examples I just want to talk about.

In 'F' District which is the Fermanagh area, 3 Police Officers Part-Time perform duty consistently with the mobile police station. That is their duties and they go out and patrol with that every day, and having been out on patrol with them in the last few weeks, I can say that their local knowledge is outstanding and they bring that to the table from the point of view of supporting their full-time colleagues on neighbourhood policing.

Constable Rhonda Adams from Coleraine in 'H' District last year won the Police Officer Part-Time of the Year Award and her contribution to neighbourhood policing was particularly significant in supporting the development of Neighbourhood Watch Teams in that area.

In 'G' District, officers are also attached to Neighbour Policing Teams and perform duty on Operation Nightlife, on beat patrol in the city centre in Derry in support of their full-

time colleagues, so in answer to the question on the vision of where we see part-time policing in the future, it will continue to be in support of Neighbourhood Policing Teams attached to geographical neighbourhood areas and in support of their full-time colleagues in delivering neighbourhood policing.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

Mr Chairman, in Urban Region, adding on to what ACC Gillespie has said, Part-Time Police Officers are fundamentally involved in neighbourhood policing. In fact, it is pleasing to report, that areas of Belfast where Part-Time Police Officers had not in the past been deployed, are now seeing Part-Time Police Officers starting to be prepared to work in those areas, and I refer specifically to West Belfast.

No Part-Time Police Officer is now involved in any sort of security element in relation to PSNI, which was their role previously in the past on occasions. They are now fundamentally involved totally in neighbourhood policing and the functions of neighbourhood policing. I had the privilege this year, with Brian Rea as he mentioned earlier, to assess the Community Policing Award for Part-Time Police Officers, and I think it is fair to say, and Brian Rea would agree with me, it was extremely difficult to choose a winner. In fact, in my opinion, they were all winners and I think that indicates the dedication that people who take this role on in relation to this community should be commended for. So please be assured that we make full use of them. I think as any Senior Officer would say, we have not got enough of them, but I will not go into that area because it may open for a further debate which I do not particularly want to go there.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

I am very pleased at that ACC McCausland.

Question 8 relates to the response times of Crimes Scene Investigators, Ms Anderson standing in for Daithí McKay.

Ms Martina Anderson:

Q8 - What is the average response time for CSI members when they are called to a crime scene?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Peter Sheridan:

Thank you Chairman. The Crime Scene Investigators' response times were independently examined in what was called the Lanner Review of Scientific Detection Processes back in June 2006. That review measured the time, as the number of days lapsed between when the offence report happened and the date of the arrival of the CSI (Crime Scene Investigator) at the scene. But response times for their very nature depend on a number of things. For example, the distance the Crime Scene Investigator has to travel, the time at which the incident is reported, the availability of CSIs on shift, whether the householder particularly in the likes of burglaries, is available that day or have to go to their work and so on, so there are a number of issues that impact on response times.

But the review found that 90% of crimes are attended either the same day on which they were reported, or on the day following when they were reported and that review found that that compared favourably with a cross force average of 31 other forces which is determined at 80% where we were at 90% on the following day or on the same day.

So, for example, the average time taken to attend a domestic burglary is just 4 hours, the average time taken to attend a burglary at commercial premises is 3 hours and some of that is to do with that at commercial premises obviously people are available when they may not necessarily be available in their own homes.

The theft of a motor vehicle, just over 3 days was the response time and that again is dependent on when the theft of the motor vehicle was reported and how it is brought back to the police station for examination.

There is a new Socrates IT system which has been put in place, this will be able to give a much more comprehensive understanding of response times and very much more individualised, at the minute, the last report was the Lanner Report in 2006.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Thank you very much. Question 9 relates to parading, Mr David Simpson.

Mr David Simpson:

Q9 - To ask the Chief Constable how many, and which parades over the Easter period failed to comply with the requirements for advance notification by way of Form 11/1?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

In relation to parades at the Easter season, there were 43 parades in total across Rural Region between Good Friday and East Tuesday. There was one parade in Coalisland which was subject to late notification, but that was due to the illness of the person organising it and was accepted by both police and the Parades Commission as not an issue.

Of the remainder, there were 3 parades which took place without any notification. On Saturday, 22 March 2008 in Lurgan, a parade took place at the North Circular Road around 3 o'clock and we have got video footage of that to identify possible offenders and follow up action. On Sunday, 23 March 2008, there was a parade in Strabane at the head of the town, it is believed it did not attract any opposition in the area and there was no notification received in relation to it. Realistically, it is unlikely that anyone will be made amenable for that parade but it is understood that it was organised by the National Graves Association. Then on Monday 24 March there was a parade at Iniscarn Crescent in Ballymagauran, Londonderry and there was no notification received in relation to that parade. The police attempted to approach the parade organisers to warn them that it was an illegal parade and there was public disorder ensued. We did make 2 arrests at the time and further prosecutions are expected in relation to that parade. The Parades Commission has been notified in relation to the parades in Lurgan and in Derry in line with the agreed protocols, but I think it is fair to say, that the overwhelming majority of all of the parades across the Easter period were in compliance with legislation and passed off without any incident.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

Mr Chairman, in Urban Region I have no notification of any parades that did not or failed to comply with the regulations.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Supplementary?

Mr David Simpson:

ACC Gillespie, you may not be able to give me the figures now, but can you recollect on any occasion, where Easter parades took place, there was no 11/1s filled out and prosecution followed at any stage over the past 2 or 3 years.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

I will have to come back to you, I cannot give you details to that answer right now.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

You said there were 2 questions relating to the implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), we have already had the first one, the second relates to the implications for the New Police College. Mr Ian Paisley Jnr, standing in for Peter Weir.

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr:

Chief Constable, are there any implications for the creation of a new college given the tightness of the spending round for 2007?

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton:

The CSR as we are all aware, had some shortfalls in what we had bid for but these did not apply to the college project. The college project is now named the Desertcreat College, as it is a joint college as you are aware with Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and the Prison Service. So there are no implications for the capital funding of the college, what we are looking at at the moment and the college project goes ahead, is that the £90m that was promised by the Government for the police side of it is still there and we are still trying to move it on.

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr:

I appreciate your confidence in the Desertcreat project, but I must say I liked the earlier straight talking that we are getting and I think we have to be straight on this. I no longer believe there is going to be a college at Desertcreat. I believe the public have lost confidence in that and I say that out of regret, but I think it is a fact and I think whilst the capital issue is there, DCC Leighton, I believe that the non-capital issue is something which should concern us. I think the fact that there are going to be pressures in terms of the numbers of recruits, pressures in terms of the numbers even of officers, I think that all has to be taken into consideration. Is there any way you think that we need to

sit down and just look afresh at this issue? Maybe tie it in with a new Headquarters project or something and see is there a way of making the College a real meaningful project again to the public, because at the moment, I must say I have lost confidence and do not believe that we will see a college at Desertcreat.

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton:

I understand your concerns Mr Paisley and you are right to say that the capital issue is not the only issue there, and we are looking very carefully at the revenue issues that will be involved and CSR will have an impact on those. But it is far from the stage yet where we are saying we cannot go ahead with this and we do have to look at other innovative ways. I mean for a start, we have got Fire and Rescue and Prisons involved, so it is a joint college. That was never envisaged when we started out, that was one way that we overcame a difficulty, there may be other ways that we can overcome difficulties by bringing other things onto the site, but those are things we have to explore.

The revenue issues are real and we do have to face those, but we have not got exact figures yet as to what those revenue issues are going to be for the running of the college because of the nature of bringing it all together. At the minute, delays in moving things forward are purely the fact that we have two funding streams. We have one which is a devolved funding stream and one which is a non-devolved funding stream and getting the two business cases approved and through Government processes has actually taken longer than we had hoped, but there will be a meeting of the Steering Group in the near future at which revenue costs and everything else are going to be raised so I am not trying to dodge issues, we just have not got to the final figures yet.

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr:

I admire your optimism.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Chief Constable, at the beginning of the meeting it was remiss of me not to welcome Liz Young, the new Head of Media and PR. Would you stand up Liz so that people recognise you? You are very welcome and we wish you every success in your new role.

I would remind Board Members that we have one more item of business and that relates to the closure of a police station. We will take that immediately after lunch which I would hope will be at 2pm. Thank you.