

Chairman's welcome

Reflections on District Policing Partnerships

19 February 2007

Please note that delivery of this speech may have deviated slightly from the following text. For further information please contact the Board's Press and Public Relations Office.

Good evening ladies and gentlemen I have great pleasure in welcoming you to this event which provides an opportunity to reflect on the role that District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) have played in the evolution of policing in Northern Ireland.

Firstly, I need to go through some arrangements with you

- In the event of a fire or other need to evacuate the building please follow the instructions of the Hotel staff
- You may notice some photography being taken throughout the course of this evening's event, which will be used in Policing Board documentation and reports in the future.
- If you do not wish to appear on camera, please make the photographer or a member of Policing Board staff aware of

this so we can make sure you do not feature in any of the photos. Thank you.

- Similarly, Media and photographers may also be present during the Seminar. If you do not wish to appear on camera, again please make the staff aware of this so we can make sure you do not feature in any of the photos/ensure that your image does not appear in any footage broadcast.

Over the next few days we will hear from a number of eminent local, national and international voices on policing, but tonight we start with a focus on local communities – The essential thrust of the Report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland was about policing with the community.

Tonight's event is billed as 'Reflections on DPPs'. As I reflect I see clearly the unique role that these Partnerships have played over the past four years:

- in helping make their communities safer,
- in giving a voice to communities on policing in their area, and
- in influencing the policing priorities for Northern Ireland.

I also reflect how, within a short period of time, DPPs have become, I believe, a model of good practice for involving communities in policing and in the oversight of local policing. Delegations from other countries that visit the Policing Board all want to know about the DPPs – what they do and how they operate. And I see that interest reflected in the audience tonight.

The work that has been undertaken by the DPPs has been very impressive and in many cases innovative. Of course, none of this success would have been possible without the personal commitment by all the Members of the DPPs, some of whom have had to endure, on occasions, intimidation and threats because of their membership. The Board plays particular tribute to the latter.

The police have also been key to this success through their genuine engagement with the Partnerships, which are DPPs, and the community who come along to the meetings in public.

I think that many would agree that when we embarked on this particular journey 4 years ago that we could not have envisaged how successful DPPs would be within a very short period of time.

Tonight from our Panellists we will hear about that journey, and indeed of some of the challenges which have yet to come.

I now have pleasure in handing over to the Vice Chairman of the Board, Barry Gilligan who will set the scene for the discussion tonight. Barry is also the Chairman of the Community and Human Rights Committee of the Board, which has responsibility for DPPs.

Thank you.