

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE 11th MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2004 AT 10:00AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS

Mr Denis Bradley (Chairman)
Viscount Alan Brookeborough (Vice-Chairman)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mr Sam Foster
Mr William Hay
Mr Ian Paisley Jnr
(1) Mr Suneil Sharma
(1) Professor Desmond Rea (Chairman of the Board)

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director of Community Affairs
Director of Communications
Five Board Officials

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND

(2) Mr Duncan McCausland (Assistant Chief Constable, Urban Region)
(2) Three PSNI Officers

- (1) Item numbers 1 - 8
- (2) Item numbers 1 - 3

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Mr Joe Byrne and Mr Brian Dougherty.

2. PRESENTATION BY THE POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND ON THE PEACEBUILDERS PROGRAMME

The Chairman welcomed Assistant Chief Constable McCausland and his colleagues to the meeting and invited the Assistant Chief Constable to give a presentation to the Committee in relation to the Peacebuilders Programme.

Assistant Chief Constable McCausland gave a presentation in relation to the Peacebuilders Programme, during which he highlighted:-

- Details of the evaluation which had taken place of the Peacebuilders Programme.
- The process which was used by PSNI to select Officers to participate in the programme.
- The achievements of the Programme to date which included projects in Ballymac East Belfast, North Belfast, Armagh and Portadown.
- The funding arrangements for the programme.
- The benefits of the programme to the PSNI and the community.

A copy of the slides which were used during the presentation is attached at Annex "A".

Members viewed a short film which had been produced by the Ballymac Youth Project entitled "Hanging On", which had been awarded Young Film Maker of the Year.

During a discussion on the subject the following issues were covered:-

- The oversight and accountability of the programme.
- The funding arrangements for the programme.
- The involvement of District Policing Partnership Members in the Peacebuilders Programme.
- The benefits of holding future Peacebuilders Programmes in Northern Ireland.

- The process which was used for selecting community representatives to participate in the programme.

In response to a question from a Member, ACC McCausland undertook to provide the Committee with an age profile of community representatives who would be participating in the 2004 Peacebuilders Programme.

The Chairman thanked the Assistant Chief Constable for his presentation.

3. PRESENTATION BY THE POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND ON RACIST ATTACKS

Assistant Chief Constable McCausland gave a presentation in relation to racial incidents, during which he highlighted:-

- Details of a Vulnerable Persons Strategy which had been drawn up by the South Belfast District Command Unit.
- The different forms of racial incidents.
- The work which was being carried out by the PSNI to address hate crime and secure and maintain the confidence of vulnerable people in dealing with such incidents.

During a discussion on the subject the following issues were covered:-

- The work which the PSNI was undertaking to meet the needs of victims of hate incidents in NI.
- The effective use of the media in dealing with hate incidents.
- The need for the community to work in partnership with the Police in identifying perpetrators of hate crime.

In response to a question from a Member, ACC McCausland undertook to provide the Committee with an update on the PSNI enquiry into the murder of a young chinese girl in North Belfast.

ACC McCausland also undertook to provide Members with details of a system which PSNI had introduced in South Belfast to monitor racial incidents and information on the United British Alliance.

The Chairman thanked the Assistant Chief Constable for his presentation and he and his colleagues left the meeting.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2004

The minutes of the Community Involvement Committee meeting held on 16 June 2004 were agreed and signed.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING

5.1 Facilitating the Development of District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) (Item 6.1 of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with under item 7.

5.2 Custody Visitors Statistics for April 2004 (Item 10 of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with under item 13.

5.3 Appointment of Independent Members to DPPs following the next Local General Election in 2005. (Item number 17 of Minutes refers)

This matter was dealt with under item 10.

6. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Chairman outlined details of meetings which he had attended in connection with the involvement of Members of DPP in the Peacebuilders Programme.

7. INVOLVEMENT OF DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS IN THE PEACEBUILDERS PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a paper regarding the realignment of the Peacebuilders Programme and the potential for DPP Members to be involved.

Members discussed the issue and before reaching a decision agreed that the Board should participate in a joint PSNI/University of Ulster visit to Colombia University and the University of Georgia in Ontario with a view to identifying the most appropriate way in which to ensure that DPPs are able to benefit from joint working with the PSNI and the community.

8. ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS DURING THE YEAR 2003/04

The Committee considered a paper regarding an assessment which had been undertaken on the effectiveness of DPPs during the year 2003/04.

The Committee discussed the performance of DPPs and the training which Members of DPPs had received during the year 2003/04.

The Committee agreed that a letter should be sent to DPPs giving an overview of the general findings of the assessment of the effectiveness of performance of DPPs and also details as it related to their DPP.

9. REVIEW OF DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS DURING THE YEAR 2003/04

The Committee noted the contents of a paper regarding the progress which had been made in reviewing the work of DPPs during their first year in office. It was expected that the review would be completed by 31 December 2004.

10. DRAFT CODE OF PRACTICE ISSUED BY THE NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE ON THE APPOINTMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS

The Committee considered a paper which outlined a number of issues in relation to the NIO Code of Practice on the Appointment of Independent Members.

The Committee agreed that amendments to the Code of Practice which were outlined in the paper should be forwarded to NIO for inclusion in the final version of the Code.

11. COSTS ARISING FROM THE APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS TO THE DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS

The Committee noted the contents of a paper which outlined details of the costs incurred in the process of appointing Independent Members to DPPs in March 2003.

12. CUSTODY VISITORS STATISTICS FOR MAY, JUNE AND JULY 2004

The Committee noted the contents of a paper which provided information on visits which had been carried out by Custody Visitors during May – July 2004.

13. POWER OF CUSTODY VISITORS TO OBSERVE INTERVIEWS ON CAMERA

The Committee considered a paper which outlined options for custody visitors to be given the power to observe interviews on camera.

Members discussed the options outlined in the paper and agreed that the Northern Ireland Office should be asked to amend the report making power in section 73(3) of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000.

14. REPORT FROM REFUGEE ACTION GROUP EXAMINING THE DETENTION OF ASYLUM SEEKERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The Committee considered a paper regarding a report from a Refugee Action Group which had examined the detention of Asylum Seekers in prison in Northern

Ireland.

Members agreed that the Board should seek the PSNI's response to the report, given the potential impact on detention in police custody.

15. COMMUNITY OUTREACH STRATEGY FOR NEW PUBLIC PROSECUTION SERVICE

The Committee considered a paper regarding a Community Outreach Strategy for the Public Prosecution Service.

Members agreed that the comments outlined in the paper should be included in the Board's response to the Director of Public Prosecutions on the contents of the strategy.

16. LEADERSHIP FOR LIFE PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a paper regarding a Leadership for Life Programme known as the Leadership Grid Programme which was organised by the PSNI College.

The Chairman asked any Member who was interested in attending the Programme to advise Officials as soon as possible.

17. EXTENSION OF HATE CRIME LEGISLATION TO INCLUDE DISABILITY

The Committee noted details of a response which had been received from the PSNI to the Board's letter to the Minister of State welcoming the extension of hate crime legislation to include people with disabilities.

Members agreed that PSNI should be asked to provide a six monthly update to the Committee on crime motivated by hatred of disability.

18. INFORMATION PAPERS

18.1 Custody Officer Training

The Committee noted the contents of a paper which outlined details of training which had been given to Custody Officers on drug and alcohol awareness.

18.2 Independent Commissioner for Detained Terrorist Suspects Annual Report

The Committee noted the contents of a paper which outlined the key issues which were contained in the Independent Commissioner for Detained Terrorist Suspects Annual Report.

18.3 Eleventh Annual Report of the Independent Military Complaints Procedures in NI

The Committee noted the contents of a paper which outlined the key issues which were contained in the Eleventh Annual Report of the Independent Assessor of Military Complaints Procedures in NI.

19. MATTERS TO BE RAISED WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE AT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING

The Committee agreed that they had no matters to raise with the Chief Constable at the next Board meeting.

20. PRESS ISSUES

The Committee agreed that they had no matters arising from the meeting that should be released to the Press.

21. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

21.1 DPP Members

Officials reminded Members that it had been agreed at the last meeting of the Board that a few cases involving Members of DPPs should be referred to the Community Involvement Committee for consideration.

The Committee discussed the issue and asked to be provided with the following:-

- Reports on the three cases involving the Members of DPPs.
- Details of trigger points which could be used when considering such cases.

21.2 Appointment of Independent DPP Members in Omagh and Fermanagh DPPs

The Committee considered a paper regarding vacancies in Omagh and Fermanagh DPPs which had occurred as a result of resignations, unconnected to any threat or intimidation.

The Committee agreed that since the Reserve Lists which had been created by the Board's Appointment Panels for Omagh and Fermanagh DPPs had been exhausted it would be necessary for the Appointment Panels to consider the matter.

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would be held on 13 October 2004 at 10:00 am.

(Meeting closed at 13:10hours)

SECRETARIAT

September 2004

CHAIRMAN