

INFORMATION BOOKLET ON DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS (DPPs)

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to provide some background information on the role and work of District Policing Partnerships and information on the selection and appointment process for independent members.

Please read this information booklet carefully before completing the application form.

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1. THE ROLE AND WORK OF DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS

WHAT ARE DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS?

District Policing Partnerships were established by District Councils supported by the Policing Board in March 2003 under section 14 (1) of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. There are 26 DPPs in total, one for each council district in Northern Ireland. However, Belfast has one DPP comprising 4 sub-groups, one for each police district.

In practical terms the DPP is a partnership between the local council and the community. Its membership is made up of political members who are councillors nominated to the DPP by the local council and independent members drawn from the local community and appointed to the DPP by the Policing Board. In appointing independent members to a DPP the Board shall so far as is practicable secure that the members of the DPP (taken together) are representative of the community of the district.

THE ROLE OF DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS

The duties and responsibilities of a DPP are set out in section 16 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. Information on how a DPP will carry out its duties is contained in the Code of Practice on functions and responsibilities issued by the Northern Ireland Policing Board that is currently under review. Further details on how to obtain a copy of this Code are provided at the end of this booklet.

In summary, the function of the partnerships is a consultative, explanatory and monitoring one, and their purpose is:

- To articulate community views to the Police District Commander on the policing of their district;
- To contribute to the formulation of policing plans and priorities;
- To monitor police performance at district level; and
- To engage with the community to obtain the co-operation of the public with the police in preventing crime.

THE ROLE OF THE POLICING BOARD IN RELATION TO DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS

The Policing Board undertakes a number of important roles with regard to assisting the DPPs to carry out their duties. Key roles are:

- Appointing independent members to the DPPs.
- Issuing and revising a Code of Practice and Guidance Notes on the Exercise of Functions of a DPP. These set out the range of duties that the DPP has to undertake and how it should do this work.
- Monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of the DPPs in carrying out their duties.
- Assessing the level of public satisfaction with the performance of the DPPs.
- On an annual basis the Policing Board will provide funding to each district council to fund the DPP. This is equal to 75% of the reasonable expenses incurred by the DPP in the financial year with the remaining 25% funded by the district council.
- Facilitation of training for DPPs to enable them to fulfil their statutory role.

THE ROLE OF THE DISTRICT COUNCIL IN RELATION TO DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS

The Council has overall responsibility for establishing and ensuring the effective operation of the DPP.

- Each DPP is made up of political members - elected councillors appointed by the Council - and independent members appointed by the Policing Board.
- The size of a DPP will be decided by each individual district council, but must consist of 15, 17 or 19 members in total. All DPPs have one more political member than they have independent members.
- In making that decision the council must consider the number of councillors it has and should reflect, as far

as practicable, the balance of parties on the district council. Belfast sub groups must have at least six members, including both political and independent members.

- The position of Chairperson of a DPP is held by a political member and the position of Vice Chair of a DPP must be held by an independent member who must be elected by the independent members from among the independent members.

THE ROLE OF THE DISTRICT COMMANDER IN RELATION TO DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS

An important aspect of the DPPs work is to establish an open and transparent process whereby the community are made aware of how policing in the district is being delivered. The police District Commander plays a key role in providing information to the DPP on matters relating to the policing of the district.

MEETINGS OF DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS

The DPP is required to hold six meetings in public each year, four of these meetings should be to monitor police performance against the Local Policing Plan and two should be public meetings to discuss general policing issues in the district.

The primary purpose of the four meetings in public is for the District Commander to present a report to the DPP on the policing of the district and to respond to monitoring questions from the DPP and the members of the public.

These meetings are held in public to demonstrate the openness of the process and to give the community an insight into how policing is planned and delivered within the district.

The two public meetings to discuss general policing issues are an opportunity for the public to engage with the police in meaningful discussion on issues of concern with regard to policing. At these meetings the District Commander opens the meeting by providing a briefing to the DPP and the public on the issue under discussion. The DPP Chairman then invites the public to raise issues, through the Chair, to the District Commander or the DPP.

2. THE ROLE OF AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF A DPP

JOB DESCRIPTION - WHAT DOES THE ROLE INVOLVE?

Members of the DPP will collectively:

- Draw up a work programme;
- Obtain the views of the public about policing in the district;
- Provide views to the local police, to the Policing Board and to the local Council;
- Monitor police performance in carrying out the policing plans and be involved in consultation for the preparation of the plans;
- Obtain the co-operation of the public with the police in preventing crime;
- Act as a forum for discussion of policing issues;
- Produce annual and other reports.

As part of their induction, members will receive training in, and familiarisation with, the powers and functions of the Policing Board, the tripartite policing structure in Northern Ireland, the police organisation and any relevant policing legislation.

PERSON SPECIFICATION – WHAT TYPES OF PEOPLE ARE WE LOOKING TO APPOINT?

Essential Criteria

In order to be considered for the role of independent member of a DPP you must be able to display evidence of the following essential criteria:

- A demonstrable interest in local community, community safety or policing issues.

For Example

I am a voluntary fundraiser on behalf of Age Concern. I organise events such as fairs, car boot sales and street collections. I also promote awareness of Age Concern by assisting with media campaigns and educational awareness evenings in local schools and community centres...

- Being resident in or otherwise able to demonstrate a close connection with the Council area.

For Example

- Being employed within the council area;
- Being a business owner within the council area; or
- Born within the council area with family currently resident in the area.

Desirable Criteria

The following skills and qualities are desirable attributes for independent members and will assist individuals in fully performing their role.

- The ability to think clearly and exercise sound judgement, experience of taking decisions.

For Example

- As a volunteer for a local neighbourhood watch group, I was aware that a particular group of youths were vandalising cars in the area. I had to decide how to go about solving the situation...

- Experience of working in a team.

For Example

- I work as part of a team in a call centre. It is essential that we have regular meetings to share information and update other team members. As a group, we set our objectives and decide how to meet our targets by...

- The ability to present information in a clear and logical way.

For Example

- As a volunteer for a local community group, I was tasked with gathering information on sources of funding. I then had to prepare a summary of this information for other members of the group...

- Experience of working with others and developing and maintaining networks.

For Example

- As a member of the Parent Teachers Association, I organise the school fair. This involves developing a network of contacts by....

- Experience of demonstrating good communication skills.

For Example

- I am a member of the Board of Governors at my son's school. As a committee member, I am often required to present verbal updates to a range of different people at meetings. This involves communicating...

Eligibility Criteria

Before forwarding a completed application form, you should satisfy yourself that you are eligible to apply. Candidates may be allowed to proceed conditionally with their application whilst their eligibility is being confirmed. Invitation to attend an interview should not therefore be taken to imply that you are eligible under the terms of the advertisement. In such circumstances candidates will normally be advised that their application is proceeding conditionally.

A person is not eligible to become an independent member of a DPP if he/she is:

- A police officer;
- A member of police support staff;
- A member of the Policing Board; or
- An employee of the council connected to the DPP for which he/she wishes to apply.

Or

- If they have at any time been convicted in Northern Ireland or elsewhere of any offence and have had passed on them a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not). The provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 apply.

In addition

- Applicants can only apply for and be appointed to one DPP.

All applications will initially be sifted to ensure that the eligibility and essential criteria are fully demonstrated on the application form. Scored shortlisting may then be used to shortlist a large number of candidates down to a more manageable number for interview. Scored shortlisting may be conducted against both the essential and desirable criteria. This will involve assessing the quality of the information provided on the application form, in determining those candidates who have best demonstrated how they meet the essential and desirable criteria.

The onus is on the candidate to provide sufficient information for sifting and shortlisting purposes. Failure to provide this information may result in disqualification at sifting stage.

3. APPLYING TO BECOME AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF A DPP

AVAILABILITY OF APPLICATION FORMS

Application forms can be requested in a number of different ways. These are as follows:

On-line

- By completing on-line or downloading a form from www.districtpolicing.com

Hard Copy

- By telephoning (028) 9041 5200
- By e-mailing pwcni.recruitment@uk.pwc.com
- By writing to Executive Resourcing, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, Waterfront Plaza, 8 Laganbank Road, Belfast, BT1 3LR.

Please provide details of your name, postal address and a contact telephone number quoting reference DPP/05 on all correspondence.

Candidates who require assistance with the completion of the application form should call (028) 9041 5200. Application forms and information booklets can be made available in a range of accessible formats. Candidates are requested to advise of their requirements as promptly as possible allowing for the fact that the closing date for receipt remains the same as noted on the next page.

RETURN OF APPLICATION FORMS

Please note that all application forms must be returned by 5pm (BST) time on **Tuesday 31st May 2005**. Applications will be accepted as follows:

On-line

- By submitting an on-line application form.

Please note that candidates making applications on-line will be required to sign a hard copy of the form at a later stage in the process.

Hard Copy/Downloaded Copy

- By submitting a signed hard copy or a downloaded copy of the form by post or by hand to Executive Resourcing, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, Waterfront Plaza, 8 Laganbank Road, Belfast, BT1 3LR.

CVs or additional pages **will not** be considered.

Faxed application forms **will not** be accepted.

Application forms received after the closing date **will not** be accepted.

The onus for ensuring that an application is adequately stamped, posted in time and received at the above address by the closing date rests with the candidate.

Please note that once the date for the receipt of applications has passed, additional information in support of your application will not be received at any stage in the selection process.

4. HOW ARE INDEPENDENT MEMBERS APPOINTED TO A DPP

The process of appointing independent members to DPPs comprises two distinctive parts:

- the Selection Process by the Councils; and
- the Appointment Process by the Policing Board.

THE SELECTION PROCESS BY THE COUNCILS

Each district council is responsible for selecting individuals who are considered suitable to act as independent members of the DPP. Each council will run a selection process to determine suitable individuals.

The selection process will consist of the following stages

- completion of a competence based application form;
- sifting against eligibility and essential criteria;
- shortlisting against the essential and desirable criteria; and
- a competence based interview.

All applicants will be objectively and consistently assessed to ensure that their abilities, experience and qualities match the needs of the DPP. The Council selection process will be based on the principle of merit.

THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS BY THE POLICING BOARD

Following the selection process, each council will provide the Policing Board with a list of individuals found suitable for appointment. These names will be added to the list of independent DPP members who previously served on the DPP in question, who have a satisfactory performance appraisal and have indicated that they wish to be considered for reappointment. Independent members will be appointed from this list of names. In making their appointments, the panel will take the following steps:

- Firstly they will consider the profile of the political members of the DPP appointed to the DPP by the local council; and
- Secondly, they will select the required number of independent members to complement the political member profile and ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that the total membership of the DPP is representative of the community of the district.
- In addition, the panel will look to balance the skills, expertise and backgrounds on the DPP.

The panel will also consider potential conflicts of interest at this stage, and the extent to which these could cast doubt on the public's confidence in the applicant's ability to fulfil his/her duties as a member of a DPP.

ENSURING INDEPENDENCE

The process to appoint independent members to DPPs involves independent scrutiny at every stage. This is achieved in two ways:

1. The process in its entirety is overseen by a number of impartial assessors who will work to the standard of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.
2. In addition, all short-listing, interview and appointment panels will include one independent panel member.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUALITY

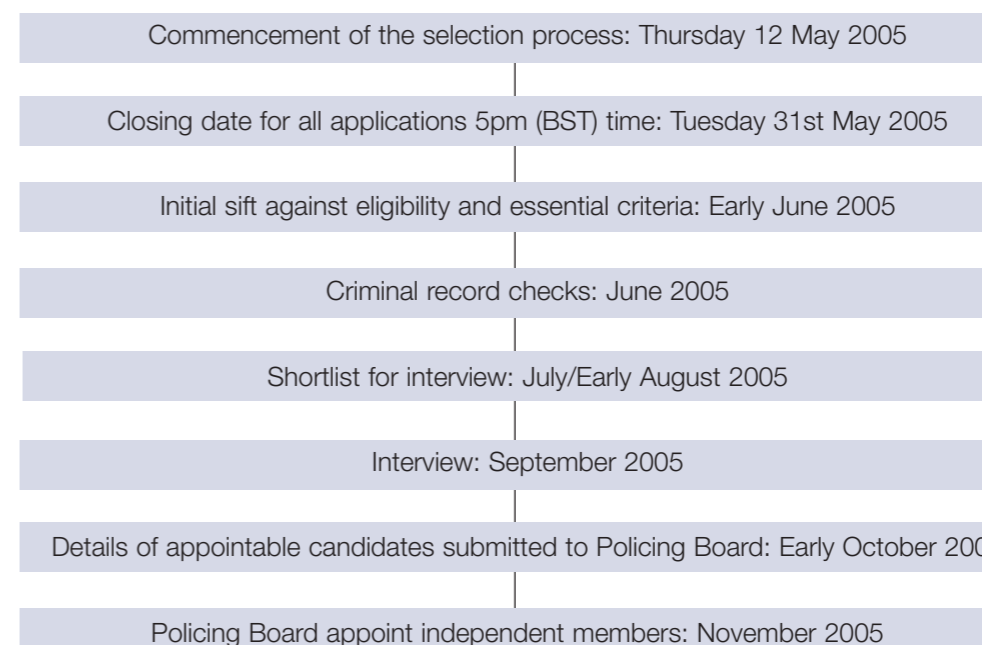
Equality of opportunity will be afforded to all applicants regardless of age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, racial group, community background, religion, political opinion or whether or not they have dependents. One of the Policing Board's objectives is to attract a broad and representative pool of candidates with differing backgrounds and experience. The Policing Board is committed to equality of opportunity in line with the statutory duties of public authorities arising from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The consultants, the Policing Board, Councils, independent panel members and anyone else involved in the process will respect the confidentiality of personal information provided by candidates. It will be necessary, however, to publicise through a press release the names and certain details of those individuals appointed as independent members of DPPs. Information may include summary of experience, political activity of other public appointments held.

TIMETABLE FOR APPOINTMENTS

An overview of the selection process is provided in the diagram below. This also provides key dates for the process.



ADVICE ON THE COMPETENCE-BASED SELECTION PROCESS

Appointment of Independent Members to the District Policing Partnership will involve a competence based selection process. Competence-based selection provides the fairest and most objective method of assessing a pool of candidates with very different backgrounds and experience as it focuses exclusively on the skills and qualities required for successful performance in the role. This offers the best approach for this exercise, as one of our objectives is to attract a broad and representative pool of candidates with differing backgrounds and experience. Some hints and tips on completing a competence-based application form are offered below:

- What is most important is that candidates demonstrate that they have the qualities and skills set out in the person specification. These qualities and skills may have been gained in a variety of ways for example, through previous or current employment, involvement in community or voluntary activities, public appointments, leisure activities or activities undertaken at school or college.
- Choose a clear, relevant and specific example in relation to each of the competences being assessed.
- In your response make sure that you cover the following points –
 - when the example occurred
 - who was involved
 - what was your specific involvement
 - what action did you take
 - what was the outcome

It is anticipated that, following shortlisting of applications, a number of open information sessions will be held to provide candidates with information and advice on how to prepare for a competence-based interview process.

5. TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

TIME COMMITMENT

The time commitment for DPP members outside of Belfast is estimated as approximately 15 hours per month and 25 hours per month for Independent members of the Belfast DPP. Members may have to commit more time for public and private meetings over the initial set-up period.

We expect that meetings are likely to be held in the evening and in council offices, but there may well be a need for meetings at other times and in other places throughout the local community.

ALLOWANCES

Standard Allowance for Members of a DPP

1. Chairman (per annum)	£4800
2. Deputy Chairman (per annum)	£3600
3. Member (per annum)	£2400

Allowances payable to members of the Belfast DPP

1. Chairman (per annum)	£8400
2. Deputy Chairman (per annum)	£6300
3. Chairman of Sub group (per annum)	£4700
4. Deputy Chairman of Sub group (per annum)	£4500
5. Member (per annum)	£4200

In addition to the allowances mentioned above, a travel and subsistence allowance is payable at an agreed rate.

TAX AND NATIONAL INSURANCE

The council will deduct tax and national insurance at source in line with normal practice.

TERMINATION OF APPOINTMENT

The Policing Board, or the council with the approval of the Board, may remove a person from office as an independent member of a DPP if satisfied that:

- He/she failed to make the necessary disclosure in relation to a conviction for a criminal offence in Northern Ireland or elsewhere;
- He/she has been convicted of a criminal offence in Northern Ireland or elsewhere committed after the date of appointment;
- He/she has become bankrupt or made a composition or arrangement with his/her creditors;
- He/she has failed to comply with the terms of appointment; or
- He/she is otherwise unfit or unable to discharge his functions as a member of the DPP.

INTEGRITY

During their appointment, independent members will be asked to ensure that their integrity is beyond question. Members should not take an active part in any matter which could cast doubt on their integrity. Members should not take up any other appointment which is likely to give rise to a conflict of interest with DPP membership.

Whilst the aim of the DPP is to be as open as possible in its work, it is most important that independent members recognise and respect the sensitivity of some of the issues they will be dealing with and of some of the information they will have access to in the course of membership of the DPP.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In line with guidance on appointments to public bodies, candidates will be asked on their application form to declare conflicts of interest or information or connections which may give rise to a potential or perceived conflict. Applicants should also state any activities undertaken during the course of their employment which could be perceived by members of the public as influencing their judgement as a DPP member. Potential conflicts of interest could include:

- Direct or indirect financial or monetary interests which members of the public might reasonably think could influence their judgement as a DPP member; or
- Political affiliations or activities which members of the public might reasonably think could influence their independence as a DPP member.

Please note that these are illustrative examples and not a comprehensive list.

PERSONAL LIABILITY

Members of DPPs will be fully indemnified against legal proceedings arising in relation to the exercise, or proposed exercise, of functions by DPPs to the same extent that members of district councils are protected in relation to the actions of councils.

OWNERSHIP OF ASSETS

All assets provided for the DPP's use are the property of the council.

EQUALITY

All members of DPPs are expected to observe the provisions of the Fair Employment, Race Relations, Disability, Sex Discrimination and Sexual Orientation legislation in their dealings with the staff of the DPPs, colleagues and the public.

6. POLICING BOARD POLICY REGARDING REQUESTS FOR FEEDBACK AND PROCESSING OF COMPLAINTS

INTRODUCTION

The Northern Ireland Policing Board is responsible for the appointment of Independent Members to the District Policing Partnerships as required under Schedule 3 paragraph 14 of the Police (Northern Ireland) 2000, as amended.

CODE OF PRACTICE

In making these appointments the Policing Board is guided by the Code of Practice on the Appointment of Independent Members to the District Policing Partnerships published by the Northern Ireland Office (NIO). You can access the Code on the NIO website at www.nio.gov.uk/index/nio-publication.htm or a copy can be obtained by writing to:

Policing Reforms Division
NIO
Block B
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast BT 4 3BG

In keeping with the requirements of this Code arrangements have been made to provide you with feedback on your performance in the appointments process, if you should request it. A complaints procedure has also been put in place to deal with issues which may arise in relation to the appointments process.

REQUESTS FOR FEEDBACK FROM CANDIDATES SEEKING APPOINTMENT AS INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF THE DPP

If you would like feedback on your performance up to and including the interview stage, this can be obtained by contacting PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP. PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PWC), are the consultants and their contact details are:

Executive Resourcing
PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP
Waterfront Plaza
8 Laganbank Road
Belfast
BT1 3LR

If you would like feedback on the progress of your application following the interview stage up to and including the appointment by the Policing Board of Independent Members to the DPP you should write requesting this to:

The Chief Executive
Northern Ireland Policing Board
Waterside Tower
31 Clarendon Road, Clarendon Dock,
Belfast BT1 3BG

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I ASK THE POLICING BOARD FOR FEEDBACK?

On receipt of your request for feedback this will be acknowledged by the Chief Executive's office within three working days of receiving it. Within 20 working days of the Board receiving your request for feedback you will receive a detailed response. This will be provided by the Director of Community Affairs who is responsible for the management of the appointment process on behalf of the Policing Board.

If there are any delays in providing you with feedback you will be informed of this and provided with another date for a response.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I CONSIDER THAT MY APPLICATION HAS NOT BEEN PROCESSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE ON APPOINTMENTS?

If, after you receive a detailed response from the Policing Board or PWC, you consider that your application has not been dealt with in accordance with the process laid down in the Code of Practice on Appointments, you may complain in writing directly to:

The Independent Complaints Monitor, Freepost PO Box BEL4075, BT1 3BR

In doing this you should, state the nature of your complaint, ask that it be investigated, provide as much information as possible and explain why you remain dissatisfied with the original response. You should clearly state why you consider your application has not been processed in accordance with the Code of Practice on Appointments.

It should be noted that it is only the appointment process that can be considered not the decision as to whether an individual should have been appointed or not appointed.

ROLE OF THE INDEPENDENT COMPLAINTS MONITOR

The Independent Complaints Monitor has been appointed from outside of the Policing Board and will examine the process used to make an appointment or the manner in which an application for appointment was handled and if appropriate will investigate complaints.

The Independent Complaints Monitor will only investigate reasons for non-appointment if it is considered that the Code of Practice on the Appointment of Independent Members has been breached. The Independent Complaints Monitor does not investigate how the Policing Board is run or the actions of its Members.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN THEN?

Within 20 working days of receiving your complaint, the Independent Complaints Monitor will consider and analyse your complaint. You will be advised of the outcome of the investigation into your complaint and the Independent Complaints Monitor will make a recommendation to Policing Board as to how the complaint should be dealt with. If there are any delays in the investigation of your complaint the Independent Complaints Monitor will inform you of this and provide you with a further date for a response.

IF I AM DISSATISFIED WITH THE WAY IN WHICH I HAVE BEEN TREATED, WHAT CAN I DO?

Anyone who is not satisfied with any aspect of the Policing Board's services or actions has the right to have their concerns addressed. This can be done either by contacting the Chief Executive of the Board verbally (by telephone, text phone, or by calling in to the Board's offices – complainants are advised to call to make an appointment in order to ensure that they get to speak to the most appropriate person) or in writing (by letter, fax or e-mail) to the Chief Executive of the Board.

Every effort will be made to deal with concerns raised in an informal way to the satisfaction of all concerned. However, if it is not possible to do this, you can request that the Policing Board's formal complaints procedure be invoked. A copy of the Policing Board's Complaints Policy can be obtained by writing to:

The Chief Executive
Northern Ireland Policing Board
Waterside Tower
31 Clarendon Road, Clarendon Dock,
Belfast BT1 3BG

Or an electronic copy can be obtained from the Policing Board's website at www.nipolicingboard.org.uk and going to the publication section.

7. SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHERE AND WHEN WILL MEETINGS BE HELD?

Each DPP will hold at least six public meetings a year, four of these meetings should be to monitor police performance against the Local Policing Plan and two should be public meetings to discuss general policing issues in the district. Meetings of the DPP should be held in different places and at different times throughout the district to make sure that as many people as possible can take part and be given an opportunity to put questions to the District Commander as part of the process.

HOW WILL THE DPP BENEFIT THE LOCAL COMMUNITY?

The strength of a DPP is that it provides a unique opportunity, through a partnership between elected members and the community, for local people to identify what the communities needs are in relation to policing and to put forward recommendations to the District Commander for consideration in developing the local policing plan for the district. Through its meetings the DPP monitors the police in carrying out the Local Policing Plan. This ensures that the local community are serviced by a police service that listens and responds to its needs. These meetings are held in public to demonstrate the openness of the process and to give the community an insight into how policing is planned and delivered within the District.

HOW WILL THE DPP GAIN THE CO-OPERATION OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY IN PREVENTING CRIME?

One of the functions of a DPP is to gain the co-operation of the public with the police in preventing crime. Undertaking this function requires the DPP in encouraging the community to get involved with the police in planning how specific crime related problems will be resolved. In doing this the DPP's will be identifying the issues, raising awareness as to the opportunities to address those issues in conjunction with the police, encouraging the community to get involved with the police and publicising the good news stories where this approach has worked.

FOR HOW LONG WILL AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER BE APPOINTED?

Independent members are appointed to the DPP until the day before the reconstitution date of the new DPP following the local government election, this is a four year period.

ARE APPOINTMENTS TO DPPS PUBLICISED IN THE PRESS?

The Policing Board must publicise the make up of each DPP through a press release. This will include the names of the councillors and independent members appointed, identifying the Chairman and Vice Chairman and a brief summary of each appointee's career/experience.

THE ROLE OF A DPP MEMBER

Appointment as an independent member of a DPP is a public appointment. It should not be viewed as employment.

8. CONTACT POINTS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information on any aspect of the appointment process can be obtained by calling (028) 9041 5200.

The following codes of practice provide further information on DPPs. We advise that you read these codes of practice to assist you in preparing your application. Copies can be obtained by visiting our website at www.districtpolicing.com

- NIPB Code of Practice on the Exercise of Functions by District Policing Partnerships
- NIO Code of Practice on the Appointment of Independent Members to District Policing Partnerships

The following documents are also available on the website - the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 and 2003. Being resident in or otherwise able to demonstrate a close connection with the Council area.

For Example

Find out more

To find out more about the work of the Northern Ireland Policing Board
and the District Policing Partnerships visit:

www.nipolicingboard.org.uk www.districtpolicing.com