

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY, 7 MAY 2009 AT 12:00 NOON IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Chairman)
Mr Barry Gilligan (Vice Chairman)
Mrs Dolores Kelly
Mr Alex Maskey
Mr Basil McCrea
Mr Daithí McKay
Ms Mary McKee
Mrs Rosaleen Moore
Mr Gearóid Ó hEára
Mr Ian Paisley Jnr
Mr Brian Rea
Mr Trevor Ringland
Mr David Rose
Mr Jimmy Spratt
Mr Peter Weir

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

Sir Hugh Orde (Chief Constable)
Mr Paul Leighton (Deputy Chief Constable)
Mr Alistair Finlay (ACC Urban Region)
Mr Drew Harris (ACC Crime Operations)
Mr Roy Toner (ACC Operational Support)
Mr Duncan McCausland (ACC Criminal
Justice)
Mr Joe Stewart (Director of Human
Resources)
Ms Gail McGreevy, Media & PR
2 PSNI Personnel, Command Secretariat

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Adrian Donaldson (Chief Executive)
Dr Debbie Donnelly (D/Chief Executive)
Mr David Jackson (Director of Community
Engagement)
Mr Sam Hagen (Director of Corporate
Services)
Mr Peter Gilleece (Director of Policy)
Mr David Wilson (Director of Planning)
2 Board Officials

APOLOGIES:

Ms Martina Anderson
Mr Leslie Cree

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Good morning Chief Constable, Senior Officers, members of the public and media. Special welcome goes to a number of PSNI staff who are visiting today. You are all very welcome to this meeting in public of the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

Since our last meeting, Chief Constable you have been elected as the new President of the Association of Chief Police Officers. Not that I wish to cause you any embarrassment, but your appointment to this role by your peers is not only testimony to the high esteem in which you are held, but also to your considerable skills and professional experience. As a Board we are of course sorry that you will be leaving, fortunately you will not be leaving until the end of August 2009, you have agreed to stay until that period and the Board will be discussing and has discussed this morning and agreed the process for moving forward with respect to the appointment of your successor.

Deputy Chief Constable, this is of course your last meeting and you will be leaving at the end of the month. On behalf of the Board I would wish you well in the future; and thank you on behalf of the PSNI, thank you on behalf of this Board, also on behalf of the wider community for your contribution to policing, not simply in Northern Ireland because you have served elsewhere in the United Kingdom, but your contribution to policing over a career which stretches back I think 29 years and so we wish you well, you and your family and God's blessing in the years ahead.

There has been significant commentary around the gap in terms of experience at top level Chief Constable. I believe that we have been very fortunate as a Board to have had a stable senior officer team, I think for 4 or 5 years, which is as some people tell me quite unique in policing, but we have been fortunate in that and we are fortunate still to retain a wealth of experience in the remaining command team. The Board is, as the wider community know, and I have already alluded to earlier in this statement, moving to fill the vacant appointments and the plans are now in place.

Turning then to the business of the day Chief Constable. There have been a number of incidents over the last few weeks which I am sure that you will touch on in your report, but the Templepatrick murder has raised a number of concerns. There have also been a number of successful convictions in murder cases over the last few weeks. I would like to pass on the congratulations to your officers who were involved in a successful prosecution of those involved in the McIlveen case, and also the investigation of the murder of Harry Holland. I notice the complimentary remarks by the Prosecution Service to your officers in respect of the Harry Holland murder in particular. These were both cases that generated serious concern in the community, and I am pleased that justice has been delivered in the convictions that have been secured in the cases so far.

We are, of course, due to receive a presentation today on the issue of hate crime. Hate crime in any form is an issue that this community must not tolerate. There have been too many victims of hate crime and there are issues in our community which must be tackled. This requires effort right across the community if we are truly to achieve a shared future.

We are Chief Constable, of course approaching the marching season. In recent years the hard work of many community and political leaders has delivered a peaceful period, but this is not something that must be taken for granted. It has been widely reported that the dissidents are trying to raise tensions. Everyone in a position of influence must do all they can to ensure that calm is maintained. Chief Constable, we would welcome your assessment in respect of this. Over to you Chief Constable.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Thank you Chairman. A number of matters have arisen since we last met and you rightly touched on some of the most serious crimes, those of murder.

In April 2009 there were 4 new homicide investigations. Officers from Crime Operations Group have been deployed in relation to all of them and supported by our local police, have investigated all of those to the point where charges are now laid in every single case, therefore I must keep my comments obviously very general.

You touched on the murder of Geoffrey Kerr. A man has been charged in relation to that murder but the investigation has some way to go yet.

In Cookstown, a man has been charged with manslaughter in connection with the death of Conner McCusker on the 19 April 2009.

In Bangor, a man has been charged with the murder of Katie Hughes on the 14 April 2009 and in Omagh, a 16 year old has been charged in connection with the murder of Francis O'Neill on the 11 April 2009. It was a very busy month for the Crime Operations Group.

Chairman, you also talked about the convictions. I do think it is important to reflect on these in slightly more detail. On 3 March 2009, 7 people were convicted in relation to the murder of Michael McIlveen as you are aware. Sentences have now been passed and 4 have received life sentences. I fully understand, as do my senior colleagues, a family concern in relation to the tariff which I understand is being examined by the Public Prosecution Service. I am writing to the Director to seek an assessment as to whether the matter should be raised with the Attorney General in relation to a review of the length of sentence in some of those matters. Of course the decision is entirely a matter for the Director, but I am very clear that in such a brutal and violent and unprovoked attack that leads to the death of an innocent young man, should receive an appropriate and indeed a severe sentence.

Chairman, a man has pleaded guilty to the murder of Mr Holland which you touched on, and the Public Prosecution Service kindly commented on the work put in by my organisation and my officers in relation to that difficult enquiry. It was a major police investigation and substantial effort was put in to preparing for what we thought was going to be a full 6 week trial. I note a plea of guilty at the last moment, and I also note that under current case law, a person who pleads guilty in the final hour should not expect a discount of sentence for entering a plea of guilty. Two other persons are also charged I understand, with lesser offences and that matter progresses.

The murder of Wendy McAteer in 2007 has now also been dealt with since we last met and Terence Whiting has received a sentence of 14 years.

Chairman, in relation to the murders of Robb and McIlwaine, the sentence has now been set on 3 April 2009 for Steven Brown at 30 years. That clearly reflects the seriousness of the crime and it is highly likely that Steven Brown will not leave prison and I hope the community can take some comfort from that.

Chairman, that case used new legislation, the Serious and Organised Crime and Police Act legislation. It was subject to tremendous challenge and abuse of process applications throughout and before the trial, and I would like to place on record my thanks to my officers who persisted in such a determined way to bring this killer to justice and the outstanding support and advice from the Public Prosecution Service throughout that difficult, difficult case. The judgement in that matter runs to 93 pages which clearly illustrates how complex the investigation was and is, in fact, a judgement well worth reading. I would commend it to the Board.

In relation to that legislation Chairman, I think there is considerable potential for using that legislation in the most serious of cases and we are looking at every opportunity to use it where it is appropriate and subject to the very careful guidelines, and indeed constraints and requirements within that piece of law.

Chairman, I think those results are an indication of all the hard work over the last 7 years, and indeed the discussion with the Board and the creation of the Crime Operations Group all those years ago. Whilst they lead on all serious crime, they receive outstanding support from colleagues across the PSNI, but the structure which was created with the support of this Board, puts us in the best position to secure the convictions you have heard about and the charges in relation to the most recent crimes.

Chairman, in relation to the murders of Constable Carroll and Sappers Azimkar and Quinsey, those investigations continue. In relation to Constable Carroll, 2 people have been charged with murder, in relation to our military colleagues, a 41 year old has also been charged with 8 offences including 2 counts of murder; that is still a major enquiry taking a major amount of resource from this organisation. I am very grateful to the Secretary of State and the Prime Minister for providing us with extra funding which will enable those cases to be investigated and pursued to destruction.

Chairman, in relation to the case at Massereene, there has been some press reporting in relation to a letter we sent to a journalist seeking help from a journalist in relation to this appalling crime. Freedom of press as a basic statement is essential to any democracy, equally as a community expects us to do they look at us to be diligent and pursue every possible and reasonable line of investigation in a proportionate and legal way, and that is what we are doing in this case. It is not appropriate to comment in detail but we are investigating some very serious crimes, including murder. These legal means are available to us and we will use them where we can. There are clearly going to be tensions at times between journalists, which I fully understand and the police and we would have to very carefully consider how we progress those lines of enquiry in strict compliance of the law. We will, of course, fully comply with any judicial decision in relation to that regard, but I think the public expect us to pursue it to that point.

Chairman, in relation to other matters, drugs remains at the top of our agenda for obvious reasons and whilst we are continuing to be successful in our dealings with drug dealers. We have recently been recognised by the Home Office at an awards ceremony for tackling drugs supply as we had been identified as having the best practice in relation to the commercial cultivation of cannabis. We are one of 5 forces to receive an award for, and I quote, “exemplary work in cracking down on drug dealers”. This relates to, as Members will be fully aware, Operation Mazurka where Crime Squad officers and Territorial Support Group officers and local officers carried out a 6 month operation against the so-called cannabis factories. This has led to the seizure of many thousands of cannabis plants, 240 kilos of cannabis worth in the region of £15m, that work continues.

Chairman, if I could move on to some internal matters that have recently been receiving some inaccurate reporting within the media and I am referring of course to the recent promotion processes in my organisation. You touched Chairman in your opening remarks on the experience of this Senior Command Team and that we have been together 4 years. In fact, just thinking about it, DCC Leighton, myself, ACC McCausland and ACC Toner have been together for nearly 7 years and I can assure you it is a truly unique experience working with people like ACC McCausland for 7years. But it shows it as a very stable team. Let me be clear, I have absolute confidence in the quality of my staff and this service has some of the most experienced middle ranking officers in the country. There is no lack of experience in this

organisation amongst my senior ranks. If there was policing would not have moved in the leaps and bounds that it has and the clear and visible changes in policing in Northern Ireland. We would not have reduced crime by a quarter in 7 years if we had that gap in the middle ranks, because Chief Inspectors and Superintendents are the leaders that drive this organisation and drive the front end of the business and they are doing it extremely well and I reflected that to my Superintendents' Association at their conference yesterday Chairman where you were also kindly present in the evening.

In relation to the Chief Superintendent process, the media reported that and I quote, "the lack of experience in senior ranks was vividly demonstrated in the latest rounds of promotion. In February, 6 out of 24 Superintendents were promoted to Chief Superintendent". That is, I have to say, a stunning insight into our organisation. The media forgot to mention I only had 5 vacancies. I would have been delighted to have appointed more, but quite properly the Human Resource Committee of this Board would have wanted to know why I was promoting people into jobs that simply did not exist. The real story here is, that 24 Superintendents were prepared to stand up, step up to the mark and seek promotion to even more challenging and even more demanding jobs of a unique environment in which we ask them to operate.

If I can go now to the Chief Inspector to Superintendent process, it is right we did not fill all our vacancies. Two people were successful, I needed more than that, I would like to have seen 7 or 8. I was disappointed but that does not mean we do not lack experience, it means they failed a process, an open, challenging and transparent process which we expect to have in terms of people seeking senior ranks. Indeed, as I said in the private session, I failed many promotion boards in my time, you may wish to comment on that later and if everybody passed these things it would simply mean the process was a waste of time, they need to be challenging, they need to be testing.

On the day, it is really how people perform against their peers, against a very rigorously set of criteria and professional expectations, the appointment is made on merit and it should be. I am absolutely confident that many who were unsuccessful, who are quite frankly outstanding officers will succeed in the next round and this organisation without doubt has the resilience to deal with the small number of vacancies that currently remain.

Chairman, as you mentioned DCC Leighton retires this month and I wish to place on record, my thanks to him for his outstanding support to me personally throughout his time here and his contribution to the leadership of this organisation. It has been substantial and he will be severely missed. This team as you said has been together for a long time. It is inevitable when a team has been together for so long that the changes to come are more noticeable perhaps and more dramatic. Your Board will appoint a new Deputy Chief Constable this month leaving ample time for a seamless transfer before I leave in September 2009 and I know the Board intends to advertise my position this month.

Chairman, uninformed comments about experience in policing do little to build confidence. I can say with authority, that the leadership of this organisation is without doubt 'fit for purpose' and resilient. We are a large service, one of the largest in the country and probably I have the most experienced Command Team in the country. There is no need for alarm.

At the bottom end of the organisation Chairman, in terms of recruitment, policing continues to be the career choice of many, notwithstanding the issues that we face on a daily basis. In our most recent competition we have attracted the highest number of applications ever, that is to say over 8,000 people have applied for 440 places. I think that reflects perhaps the confidence in policing and confidence that communities have in policing and wanting to contribute to protecting their communities.

In a recent profile of our college, Chief Inspector Sam Donaldson our Head of Training said and I quote, "these student officers are here because they want to make a difference to people's lives and that is just what they will be doing when they leave here, the training school". I can think of no better endorsement than that.

Chairman, in relation to the terrorist threat, as you are aware the threat remains at a severe level and huge amounts of resource now fully funded with the support of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State, are going on to disrupt and prevent activity on a daily basis. The recent dissident republican incidents around Rosslea and Fermanagh turned out to be hoaxes but people must remain vigilant in the face of a continued determination by dissident republican criminals to disrupt and target local communities. They have, it is right to say, been shown a complete disdain by local

people for these sorts of crimes and its complete disregard by the terrorists for the safety of local communities. Some of the attacks have been very real, others have been hoaxes but all will be treated seriously by the police service. We have to be cautious and understand on occasions minor amounts of disruption will occur on the basis of us keeping people safe.

Chairman, you touched on the marching season. Frankly, huge amounts of work are going on as you would expect and have gone on since July last year. It is a bit early I think to form a rational assessment of how the season is going to go. I know a huge amount of people within the community and within my organisation are working tirelessly to try and keep the issues on an even keel and I am confident we are more than capable of doing that. Determined efforts by small numbers of people to disrupt it will be robustly dealt with and I think with community support we will be okay, but much work to do between now and the start of the season.

Chairman, the road safety issues continue to concern us and you will be aware that 3 people have died in the last few days. We have a written question which we will be replying to in relation to our work to improve our response to road safety, and I am pleased to report that that work is on target. Fully trained investigators from my Roads Traffic Policing Department will be trained and are being worked up in the immediate future. But road safety is everyone's responsibility. Sadly, one could say, some of these accidents could not be prevented by police action, it is the collective action of the police, the community, education, enforcement and of course, engineering that helps prevents these sorts of crimes and we will continue to work tirelessly to contribute to the Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy and particularly in relation to offences speeding, drink driving and seat belt wearing.

Chairman, finally, this is your last Board as Chair, could I place on record my thanks and that of my organisation for your leadership, direction and assistance over the last 7½ plus years. The Board has, to some extent, I think been a roller coaster but it has continued through very challenging times and it has ensured that highly visible challenging structure of accountability has remained in place since its creation. The Board has existed throughout the many turbulent issues that it has had to face. I think that is no mean feat and I congratulate you on your stewardship of this vital institution.

Chairman, there is a presentation, but I am happy to take questions first if that would be helpful.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Dolores Kelly has a question.

Mrs Dolores Kelly:

No, it is a few questions Chairman and I think it would be remiss if I did not say on behalf of the SDLP to both the Chief Constable and to the Deputy Chief Constable, to put on record our thanks and appreciation for their hard work over the last number of years and indeed, much of the responsibility for the implementation of Patten rested on your shoulders and I would like to thank you for your hard work and dedication.

Perhaps just one remark, I do not know whether the Chief Constable had to look quite so ecstatic at his press release when he was saying he was going, but he looked particularly happy.

I want to congratulate too, the officers involved in all of the murder investigations and bringing successful convictions about and I would want to welcome and support the Chief Constable in his discussions with the Director of Public Prosecutions in relation to the leniency of the sentencing of the murderers of Michael McIlveen. A strong message has to go out across this community that sectarianism and sectarian murders in particular will be harshly and severely dealt with by the courts. Could I also say that in relation to the investigation of the murders of David McIlwaine and Andrew Robb, that it brings some comfort to the family that at least one of the murderers is going to face a considerable time behind bars. But would the Chief Constable acknowledge the role that the Crimewatch reconstruction had in relation to the resolution of the murders as well as the dedication of his officers, and in fact, might he acknowledge that at a meeting that I attended along with party colleagues, were the reconstruction was proposed by ourselves and the British/Irish Rights Watch, that they did have a role to play and it may be used perhaps in future investigations, that type of model?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Drew Harris:

I very much acknowledge the suggestions put forward when the whole murder investigation was being reviewed by Detective Superintendent Hanley and one of that was obviously the Crimewatch, and we have approached Crimewatch since then and have used Crimewatch in other murder investigations. It is not every investigation that the Crimewatch approach is appropriate, but where it is a good investigative tactic obviously that would be used and we would acknowledge very much the support that we were given in respect of this particular murder as well.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Could I ask Members if they could make their questions concise please? Any other questions, Basil McCrea?

Mr Basil McCrea:

Thank you Chairman. I suppose I should join Dolores Kelly in actually thanking you Chief Constable for your contribution. Certainly, I did say to you earlier on we will miss your pithy comments and of course the Chairman is going as well and it has been an interesting experience. I have just got used to the style of both of you actually and now I am going to have to try and work something different out I guess.

Can I say, thank you for the update on the murder of my party colleague. Certainly you were kind enough to fill us in with some more detail on the way forward and I commend you and your officers for the progress that you are making on that. Can I place on record that I also share your concern about sentencing for those that commit the most heinous of crimes, it is something that we really have to look at.

You mentioned, and this is where you went into the point about being challenging. You mentioned about the experience of the Command Team in the force and the strength of your gang of 4, but of course 3 of you are not going to be here much longer and it is an issue. I think it is a right question to ask and to give people the opportunity to explain how the continuity goes along in a police force, and where there are questions coming up I have to say that I like you was somewhat disappointed in the Chief Inspector/Superintendent issue, that many of the people that I have seen present here are excellent officers and I do hope that there is an opportunity that those officers will come forward in the future.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

If I can deal with the Senior Command Team first. It is not ideal to lose a number of people at any one time, but it is a large command team, one of the largest command teams in the country for obvious and understandable reasons, so there is a huge strength in depth. The Deputy Chief Constable will be appointed by the end of this month, so that movement will be seamless hopefully and I see no reason why it should not be. So we can easily cope with the churn at this low level in essence of people moving around.

The other point is, the Board will remember, that a little while ago I came to the Board and asked for an increase in one (ACC) which you very kindly gave me and which is reflected in the minutes of that particular meeting. That was to deal with historic issues, the Public Inquiries in particular. We are now at a position where those Inquiries are running to a point where we no longer need that additional resilience, so we can afford to lose one officer at ACC rank in the near future anyway, so we are more than capable of delivering on that. If you look at the number of Chief Superintendents we would roughly reflect the national average and that we have a full complement and we have no vacancies. Indeed, I have one individual who is waiting for a post because that was the right way to deal with that particular competition.

At the lower level, Chief Inspector/Superintendent, as I have said we have a small number of vacancies that remain, that is not unusual in an organisation certainly one of our size, and I would be unsurprised if other forces of a similar size do not have some vacancies being held, it is not a precise science. We do a huge amount, or Mr Stewart's department do a huge amount of work trying to do predictive analysis of how many people we need and most of the time it is pretty much bang on, but you cannot judge everything. People can retire for all sorts of reasons, maybe urgently, sadly people may die, people move on, so you can never manage it entirely but I am confident, absolutely confident we have the skills and just because someone failed a process, does not mean they are not fit in every regard to have that job. You have to have quite properly, a fair, testing and transparent process so all our officers feel they get an equal shot at these jobs when they come up in vacancies, providing they have the skills to do them and just because you are an Inspector does not mean you would make a good Chief Inspector and the logic applies up the chain. So, I have no personal concerns at all around our ability to deliver and the notion that this organisation is not

experienced is a fairly ridiculous one, you have only to look at the performance. This organisation is delivering against a very difficult backdrop and will continue to do so.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr and then Peter Weir.

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr:

Yes, just again to place on record, our congratulations to you Chief Constable on your election to the Head of the Association of Chief Officers, I know you are still with us a little while longer and I am sure you will endure that well, if not enjoy. Could I however, at this point, thank Paul Leighton for the outstanding leadership that he has given to the service over the years that he has been here as its Deputy Chief Constable and of course, his long service to policing not just here but across the UK generally and would thank him for that.

Could I also thank and congratulate ACC Toner on his recent success in a competition for appointment to a senior officer post on the mainland. I just think it is important that we put that on the record.

Chief Constable, you did mention the recent increase in budget that you have received from the Secretary of State. Could you maybe indicate to us how you intend to deploy that and where that resource will actually go?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I am happy to deal with that. First of all when we went to Government and we briefed indeed the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State, we said we would need additional funding to deal with the specific threat we were now facing. The bid we put in was to deal with just that, so the money we have got I have guaranteed will only be used to deal with the current issues around the threat. The money is in relation to overtime for my Districts to carry out high profile reassurance work within communities. It is to deal with Crime Operations so the investigations can be dealt with fully funded. Forensic support so we can explore every single forensic opportunity available to us and you will be aware there are substantial forensic opportunities in both of those appalling crimes. Additional money for air support we have, as the Board will be aware, a plan for another helicopter which is ordered and being made. These things have a long lead in time so

we have an additional £3.3m I think it is, to fill the gap by hiring or renting a helicopter and appropriate equipment to make sure our officers and communities have the confidence we have enough air cover. Certainly, more money to make sure our armoured fleet is maintained at the right level to give our officers reassurance they are in the proper equipment, and station security to make sure that our officers feel safe in their buildings and that they are properly protected. Additional money also, should it be necessary, for protection matters and indeed things for example, like the visit we have today. So, that is £28.7m this year and I will write to the Board with the detailed breakdown.

We also have an additional amount of money which we will be getting next year, subject to ratification, which is in the region of £30m so it is a 2 year funding programme. It will be fully accounted for by David Best and as I have said, we have guaranteed to the Board that will be done so they have reassurance, it is not being used for anything other than what it was specifically allocated for.

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr:

You are utterly convinced it is not an accounting trick by the Treasury that it is additional new money?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

This is new money from the Treasury.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr Peter Weir.

Mr Peter Weir:

Thank you Chairman and I would also concur with the remarks earlier in relation to both the Chief Constable, to DCC Leighton and ACC Toner and wish them all the best and thank them for their service. Also, you mention specifically about the tragic murder in Bangor of Katie Hughes and I would certainly congratulate the local police on the very swift response on those very tragic circumstances.

Chief Constable, you mention in relation to, what has been I think at times, to be a speculative and sometimes irresponsible media reporting in terms of promotion and

recruitment issues. You dealt in a certain level of detail on the Superintendents issue on the promotion side, but in terms of recruitment obviously one of the aims if you like of the dissident republicans, particularly in the murder of Constable Carroll, was to intimidate the public and particularly to send a message to try and intimidate I believe, people from the Catholic community to try and act as a discouragement to turn people from that community seeking recruitment to the police. I appreciate you have obviously made reference to the general recruitment, but can you confirm that in terms of the patterns of applications and indeed the patterns of recruitment, that dissident republicans in terms of their aims have failed and indeed there are people from both sides of the community, indeed every section of the community, coming forward and indeed that they have not succeeded in terms of the pattern. I think it is important to put that on the public record.

Director of Human Resources, Mr Joe Stewart:

I will take that if I may Mr Weir. We have not completed the final analysis yet as we are still counting through the applications, but we expect that we will not see any significant difference in the applications coming from the minority community and I expect that to come in around 40%. It tends to vary per competition, with anywhere between 38 and 42.5% per competition and I expect this one to come about 40%. I would simply say, just to add to what the Chief Constable has already said, that in counting the final application forms, we found that we have a total of nearly 10,000 applications because, not only were there 8,500 applications placed on line, which I think is interesting in terms of a media recruitment, but there were another 1,300 applications came in on paper, so if anything our application flow was increased and of course, 40% from a minority point of view of almost 10,000 applications was in fact more applications than 40% of 8,000 which had been the number heretofore.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Chief Constable, if we could take the presentation now please.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Thank you Chairman, Sergeant Cheryl Ross is kindly going to do a presentation on hate crime. Thank you.

Sergeant Cheryl Ross:

Good afternoon Chairman, Vice Chairman and Members of the Board. My name is Cheryl Ross and I am a Sergeant in the Community Safety Department of the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

One of my roles relates to hate crime and I would like to present a thematic report on the issue of hate crime in Northern Ireland.

I will start with the definition of hate crime. The hate crime definition is prescribed by the Association of Chief Police Officers, as any incident which may or may not constitute a criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate. Whilst the term 'hate incident' is used, this term incorporates hate crime that is a hate incident with an associated crime. As you will note by definition, the incidents need only be perception based, that is all that is required. It must be clearly understood that to report, record, respond to and investigate a hate incident, evidence is not required, evidence is not the test.

It is encouraged that incidents which police do not have a statutory power to deal with, that they are also reported and subsequently recorded and dealt with appropriately. For example, that would be reports to the Equality Commission. Examples of any other person, that could include the victims neighbourhood, a family member, an elected representative or, indeed, the police officer who actually attends the initial report.

The hate crime areas that are currently monitored are racist, homophobic, faith/religion, sectarian, disability and trans-phobic. Just to give you a bit of history and background as to why we record these various areas, the racial monitoring commenced in January 1997. There was a General Order issued at the time and that refers to collation of racial incident statistics. It also introduced a form to record those incidents and it was known as a Race 1 form. The General Order also gave information in relation to our Minority Liaison Officers or more recently you may know and refer to them as HIMLOs or Hate Incident Minority Liaison Officers. The role of the HIMLO is to make contact with local minority groups, to maintain regular contact and attend meetings with minority groups and to visit, support victims of motivated hate crime and also to collate, maintain the records in relation to the statistics.

Homophobic monitoring commenced in 2000. Again we had a General Order issued in relation to that, the incidents were recorded on a Form 80. Then in 2004 we had, what is commonly referred to as the hate crime legislation in Northern Ireland, we had the Criminal Justice Northern Ireland Order 2004. It gave details of the 4 main categories of hate crime which were racial, homophobic, religion and disability.

For monitoring purposes, the Police Service of Northern Ireland created an additional sectarian category and that was to specifically record hate incidents perpetrated between the Catholic and Protestant communities.

2004 and 2005 established the baseline measure of crimes with the racial and homophobic motivation. Then accordingly to more ACPO guidelines that came in 2005, we also included the trans-phobic hate incidents.

All types of hate crime are now recorded on the one and same occurrence management form so that makes it slightly easier for the officers on the ground. It may also be worthy to mention here that the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry 10 years on, which was issued in February of this year, the 2 main recommendations that I would take out of this report, they would relate to reduction of prejudice and fairness in all aspects of policing.

Our current policy directive in relation to hate crime is entitled "Police response to hate incidents", it was issued in March 2006 and that would be reviewed and updated where necessary on an annual basis. It reinforces consistency, effectiveness, supervision, satisfaction and support.

A hate incident and crime requires a full and comprehensive investigation with a view to maintaining the confidence of the victim and detecting and prosecuting the offender. The emphasis is on the victim and the impact that that can have on the victim. It is recognised that because one victim who is a member of a community, it can impact on them so much that that can have repercussions for other members of that one community and this is why it is taken seriously. It could raise the fear of crime in that community and also raise tensions, so it is something that we are very aware of and do take seriously.

However, it is recognised and acknowledged that not all incidents are reported to the police. Some examples of why this is the case are listed and they, maybe as you can see here, are incidents that are perceived to be minor. There is the possibility that the victim may become a repeat victim. There may be lack of confidence in police and the wider criminal justice system. Incidents may be seen as routine or private matters. It is also interesting to note that these examples are alluded to in a recent research report undertaken by the Institute of Conflict Research on disability hate crime, and we are hoping that will be available for wider consumption in the next couple of weeks.

These are some of the initiatives that we are doing in order to encourage the reporting of hate crime and engaging with the community. You will see we have posters and I have samples of the posters that are displayed around the community. These relate to the areas that I have mentioned before in relation to hate crime. We have the racist, religious, homophobic, sectarian and disability. We have also leaflets, we have recently also done a DVD with particular reference to our travelling community. If anybody would like to see a copy of that, I can get one to you, there will be no problem in that respect. Primarily, it was aimed for student officers and is entitled "Challenging the Myths" so it was a training tool, but also it has been circulated to many of our community representatives.

We also have Independent Advisors Groups (IAG) and you will know that we had a recent joint meeting with yourselves and your reference group and members of our Disability Independent Advisory Group and the feedback was very, very good. Our LGBT (which are lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender) IAG, we would meet with all of these groups on a quarterly basis and there is very, very good interaction and feedback and they would act as our critical friends, so it is very worthwhile meetings with those people.

We also have the translation and interpretation service. As everybody is well aware, Northern Ireland has become quite a diverse community with nationalities from all over the world now living and working in Northern Ireland, and in order to communicate and engage with these individuals, we have these services provided both in a telephone and face to face. We would have our current contract is with the Royal National

Institute for the Deaf and they would come and do our face to face sign language interpreting for us if necessary.

We would also attend and fund different festivals, for example the Pride Parade which is due to be held again in August of this year. They also have the Méla, the Polish Picnic, we have the Chinese New Year that we would attend and ongoing throughout the year we would engage with various community groups.

We also have the Hate Incident Practical Action Scheme. That is another partnership initiative with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive where victims of hate crime can have security measures given to themselves and to protect their property to avoid becoming a victim of hate crime again. As I have showed you this is an example of one of our bespoke posters to raise awareness and the reporting of all hate crime.

Hate crime statistics, what this bar chart shows you here is our baseline 2004/05 as I have mentioned earlier, they were our baseline figures that we work for the racist and homophobic areas. There are a couple of years that are not actually mentioned there just for space reasons on the bar chart, but it is every year up until 2008 and 2009 that is represented there. In real term figures you will note, that until January 2009 for racist crime we had 689 reports, homophobic 134, faith/religion 28, sectarian 973, disability 30 and trans-phobic 1.

The police objectives for 2008/09, these are the objectives compared with the baseline 2007/08 and the change in percentage points. It was to increase the clearance rate for sectarian crimes which is actually down 0.4%, to increase the clearance rate for racist crime which is up 2.3% and to increase the clearance rate for homophobic crime 4.7%.

Thank you.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Questions.

(Interruption from a member of the public)

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

... and also she has in terms of questions, the questions come from members of the Board, they come Committees of the Board and they also come in from Members of the

public and Charlotte Vij has very kindly written to us and indeed there is a question from you which is on the order paper and it will be the first that I will call at that time.

(Interruption from a member of the public)

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Any other questions to Sergeant Ross? Thank you very much indeed for a very excellent presentation and we found it very useful. It was a very good summary of the things we have been interested in in recent years.

As you know, on the Board in terms of community engagement, we too have been relating to some of the groupings that you have been relating to and, indeed, there has been cross over in respect of that. Thank you Chief Constable and through you to Sergeant Ross for the presentation today.

Could we move to the questions? Question 1 is, as I have said, is on Charlotte Vij's behalf, question 1 and it relates to progress since September 2002 as regards race relations. In part it has been answered by Sergeant Ross but Chief Constable you might wish to say something.

Q1 - What changes does the Chief Constable think the PSNI have made since September 2002 as regards race relations in Northern Ireland?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

It is a very interesting and strategic question. I will ask ACC McCausland to touch on the key areas but as you say, it is a wide ranging question and if Charlotte Vij requires any other particular information, I am sure ACC McCausland can impart it afterwards.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

Chairman, as you have already said, Sergeant Ross has already answered the vast majority of this question, but the key themes really are, we have been driving engagement, inclusiveness and trust. I think it has to be remembered that, in terms of the offences that were reported there, some of those offences are committed by people who offend across the various groups, it is not just one person committing a racist crime, they may commit a sectarian crime and a homophobic crime because there

tends to be a trend pattern in relation to that. The key message is we have been driving engagement, inclusiveness and trust.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Thank you very much. Question 2 is a question from Basil McCrea and it comes from the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee and it is to do with disciplinary matters.

Q2 - The Board is aware that there has been a recent change to misconduct proceedings for Police Officers in England and Wales consistent with the Taylor Review of Police Disciplinary Arrangements. Can the Chief Constable comment on what he sees as the key differences contained within Taylor that are not currently employed by the PSNI and the potential benefits were the PSNI to adopt all or some of these changes?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I will ask DCC Leighton to deal with that one.

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton:

Chairman, we recently had a very constructive meeting with the Professional Standards Committee.

The Taylor report was a report produced by Bill Taylor formerly the Commissioner of the City of London Police and then the Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland, and what he was looking at was a system which would change police discipline away from one of blame and punishment to one of development and learning.

The report was adopted in England and Wales and implemented with effect from 1 December last year, however, some forces had moved ahead of that and had implemented it slightly early. We have been monitoring very closely the effectiveness and how the Taylor report has actually panned out, and recently as you are aware, we had a meeting with yourselves and the Northern Ireland Office with regard to the current position of Taylor in the mainland and just what exactly that might mean for us and what parts of it we might wish to adopt.

There are very few exceptions in Northern Ireland to awaiting the outcome of a criminal case, and that includes appeal against conviction or sentence before misconduct proceedings can take place. In practice what this means in Northern Ireland is, that misconduct proceedings can take quite some time, in some cases years, to conclude for matters that may be relatively straightforward and simple. Under the Taylor reforms if an officer is detected for a criminal matter, the regulations allow for this to be dealt with within 30 working days from the commencement of the criminal investigation, so there are significant benefits in terms of cost savings and effective resolution to the matter.

The Board are on record, and Members have commented in the media, about the cost and the nature of having officers suspended on full pay and we have responded in the past that of course the law states very clearly, that we have no option but to suspend on full pay except on 2 occasions, that is where the officer's whereabouts are not known or where they are sentenced to an imprisonable term. So, we agree with the Board that obviously it is not a wise use of money to be paying a lot of officers full money when they are on suspension. Taylor would shorten the period of time that officers are on suspension, and in the discussions we had with the Committee, we got into quite some depth about just what this would mean to officers and just exactly how it would affect officers if we could shorten the period of suspension and deal with them more quickly. I think there was general agreement that although it may not be what Members thought as a correct way forward to accept resignations, accepting resignations is something that Taylor recommends and something that we must look at as a manner of dealing with things more quickly.

So, Professional Standards Department are currently leading a Taylor Review Working Group which the Board will be represented on. I understand there is a meeting scheduled for next week, and hopefully we will be able to move forward on some of the Taylor reforms in Northern Ireland, those that we wish to adopt. We did have some concerns about Taylor with regard to 2 matters. One was recording, it seems that Taylor did not place a lot of store by recording of individual incidents in stations which were dealt with just by senior officers at the time. Dealt with quickly, dealt with effectively, but not perhaps recorded so there was no record of that officer's behaviour for the future. We have come up with a way of perhaps dealing with that and hopefully it could be done through the PDRs (Personal Development Reviews) of officers, and

the other issue that we have concerns about was consistency, making sure that if one officer in one District applied one standard that that same standard would be applied in another District which again Taylor seems to be silent on. So, we have to work through that and I hope the working group can get to grips with that very soon.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Basil McCrea.

Mr Basil McCrea:

Thank you Chairman. Can I thank DCC Leighton for his contribution over the years and I will say it has taken a while but he has done what I have seen nobody else do, he has managed to get the entire Board to change its mind on an issue and I congratulate him on that.

It is an important issue and we had a very frank and I thought very positive engagement, largely down to the attitude with which the Deputy Chief Constable approached the matter, and I think it is an interesting issue that people should be aware about a lot of the work that goes on in the background. DCC Leighton you might just take the opportunity given that you are now going, and you can say what you think and maybe I am going to regret saying this, but I am interested in your view about how the Board and the Deputy Chief Constable should interact in terms of giving the public confidence on the way forward whenever we look after the small minority of officers that actually, for one reason or another, let the side down.

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton:

Discipline quite properly remains for the service to administer and to deal with. I think it is right and proper that we explain and account for our actions with regard to that, and I hope that the constructive discussion that we have had with the Committee Mr McCrea, is a sign of the way forward because I thought that was one of the better Committee meetings I have been to. I have been to many good ones but that was one of the best ones in fact because it did allow an open and frank discussion around some issues which we all find unpalatable, we all find it unpalatable but nonetheless, we have to come to a conclusion that is both logical and economic.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

The questions as I said earlier Chief Constable come from all different sources, but a week or so ago we met at the request of Carrickfergus DPP and the next question follows on from that meeting. Maybe the Vice Chairman would read the question because it is a long question and he could read it out so that the members of the public know exactly what is involved.

Vice Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:

Okay Chairman. As the Chairman says it is from the Community Engagement Committee.

Q3 - Would the Chief Constable outline the detailed rationale behind the recent decision to transfer ALL response officers from Carrickfergus to Newtownabbey and in responding could you please indicate why no consultation or engagement on this important issue took place with Carrickfergus DPP and I think that is the nub of the question Chief Constable. When did the process start, what it involved and who made the submissions?

Carrickfergus DPP have highlighted a number of issues, important issues to them and they want to know what consideration was given to these 5 factors.

- 1 The simmering Intra Loyalist tensions in Carrickfergus;***
- 2. Co-terminocity issues regarding the new arrangements under RPA and the fact that Carrickfergus, post RPA, will not be in the same council district as Newtownabbey, but will be in a district with Larne and Ballymena;***
- 3. The difficulty in accessing Carrickfergus from Newtownabbey, as at peak traffic flow times it can take up to 45 minutes to go from Newtownabbey Police Station to Carrickfergus;***
- 4. Following the closures of Greenisland and Whitehead police stations, the entire 40,000 population of Carrickfergus Borough Council has currently only got 1 full time operational police station;***

5. *The inevitable reduction in public confidence in policing that will follow Carrickfergus police station losing the majority of its officers?*
(Mr Alex Maskey)

Do you want to deal with the follow-on questions on that as well?

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Yes you can do that.

Vice Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:

Following on from that:-

Q4 - Will you suspend the implementation of this decision pending discussions with Carrickfergus DPP and

Q5 - will you ensure that the written submissions the local Chief Inspectors provided on the issue setting out options for future arrangements are discussed with Carrickfergus DPP?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I will ask ACC Finlay to do the detail. The first point I will make is the police have not left Carrickfergus. Reading these it would suggest that we have actually uproots and gone, nothing could be further from the truth. Indeed I have met and had a discussion with Carrickfergus, not on this matter. I visited their DPP and found them to be very interested and concerned people who were doing a very good job in holding us to account, but I will ask ACC Finlay to deal with the detail.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Alistair Finlay:

Thank you Chairman. I think firstly I should say, there is certainly no intention to close Carrickfergus police office. Carrickfergus police office remains a key operational mode for the delivery of policing in 'D' District. It contains and will continue to contain the neighbourhood policing team, it continues to be an area command and the Chief Inspector and the resources associated with running policing in that area command will remain there.

A decision has been made but not yet implemented in relation to the centralisation of 2 units of response policing. That decision was made on the back of resourcing and resilience and the review of resources right across 'D' District and that examination of options started in the late autumn/winter of last year and has continued and has resulted in a number of changes within 'D' District in centralising a number of different functions. There is no intention of reducing the level of policing in Carrickfergus. Their operational base is proposed to change and the purpose of that change is to provide the resilience because many of the officers that are in response policing, as Members of the Board will know, are young officers and are required for other training and there is a number of abstraction issues in response policing. We spend a considerable amount of resource backfilling response policing. By pulling together these 2 units, we are able to resource response policing in a way that provides the best possible resilience, particularly in supervisory resilience and to ensure the quality of service that is being delivered from that area.

The District Commander and the District Command Team have a fully considered plan where the issues roundabout the perception of this, what will be the operational impact, were considered and indeed did consider issues such as the travelling time between these 2 different areas. I should point out that we are not the Fire Service and they are not going to respond from Newtownabbey. There will be a deployment into default patrol areas and there will be patrol vehicles in Carrick. As it is, the patrol vehicles in Carrick respond to requests for assistance across the whole of 'D' District. This is a District resource, it is not an area resource and those resources are at present responding to calls quite far away from Carrickfergus. You will find them in Ballyclare and you will find them in Templepatrick, you will find them across in Glengormley so the actual pattern of dealing with the demand will not change. What we will get is increased resources, centralised to provide a better level of supervision and hopefully a better level of service.

In terms of those key factors that the DPP have asked about specifically to the Board, the current situation with regard to perceived simmering tensions in the loyalist community was not considered to be an obstacle to this decision. We will continue to police as per the particular policing need and deploy resources as per necessary and that will involve the full use of resources, not only of the District but beyond in the Operational Support Department as is necessary to a particular policing problem.

In relation to co-terminosity, 'D' District and all the Districts are duty bound to manage current resources in an efficient and effective manner and what we are seeking to do, is provide effectiveness and efficiency through some degree of rationalisation of pulling people together.

The issue of travelling back and forward and the roads, well there are a number of roads that actually go back and forward across the District, but the vehicles do not deploy from Carrickfergus at all times. There will be times when these vehicles, even when they have moved to Newtownabbey, will be at Carrickfergus for reporting purposes or a whole host of policing purposes as that is an operational policing mode, but at any one time currently when police are sought in Carrickfergus, it does not mean the resource comes from Carrickfergus. That resource will come from wherever is nearest available free resource is able to deal with that particular issue. We still have response times that we are held to and monitored on, and that is a key factor in the decision making. So, we will be continuing to monitor throughout this to ensure there is no diminution in the level of service that is provided to the communities of Carrickfergus by this decision.

In terms of the outcome being inevitable, the patrol of Carrickfergus will continue on a 24/7 basis, there will always be policing in and around Carrickfergus and there has been, I think, some issue or an emerging issue roundabout communication between ourselves and District Policing Partnerships and I do not think this is unique to Carrickfergus. I think there is a growing difference in view as to what are operational decisions and what requires more community based and DPP..... **(recording inaudible)** The District Commander has offered to meet with the Area Commander, the Area Commander has already met with the Districting Policing Partnership and the District Commander has offered to meet with them and fully discuss rationale, the research process, the options that were available to the team and the way that they worked out the potential impact of this move and all the necessary mitigation that required to be put in place to ensure there is no diminution of service to the people of Carrickfergus, in fact, if anything the aspiration is to increase that level of service by better supervision and more consistency of resilience of response policing.

Neighbourhood policing is unaffected, it remains and Carrickfergus remains a key mode within our delivery of policing in 'D' District.

Vice Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:

Thanks for that ACC Finlay, you have dealt with the issues that have been raised. It seems to me what has not been dealt with is the issue raised at the start and why you have offered consultation and discussion after the event. I think Alex Maskey will want to talk on this as well, but one of the big problems that we had from the delegation was the lack of consultation. I did not get a sense that they wanted to get involved in operational decisions, but I did get a sense that they were being told about this after the event and did not even have the opportunity, that you have outlined there in a 4 or 5 minute period, which in a sense I think would have defused a lot of the anger that is emanating from Carrickfergus DPP.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Alistair Finlay:

I think if that is the case, then we need to learn from that and need to re-engage. I think there is an issue about at what level and what degree we consult with the changes of business processes that are going on in the background.

This is not the only part of 'D' District or any District that has been moved about as a result of CORE and this is coming through as the rationalisation with having the bigger Districts and bringing together pools of specialism, it is giving us the opportunity to provide a better service through doing that. But if we are not communicating that in the right way with the District Policing Partnerships, and I do sense that there is something of a mismatch between what we understand or some of the Commanders maybe understand as appropriate items for discussion within District Policing Partnerships and what District Policing Partnerships understand that they wish to have more information on and to what degree that consultation about what maybe we perceive as operational decisions and they do not perceive as operational decisions, I think there is some degree of mismatch. In recent work that has been done in following the CORE changes to Districts, District Policing Partnerships have been engaged in a post implementation review and it is coming through and is seen that District Policing Partnerships do not feel they are consulted enough roundabout some of the decisions which we are making. I think it is an area that we will have to revisit in order to get guidelines that we both understand as to what is within the domain of DPP consultation, and what of those parts are operational decisions for the Commanders to make, because it is the Commander that we hold to account in respect of coming in on budget and delivering policing performance and this is about delivering policing performance

and coming in on budget. A budget that has got a significantly reduced overtime basis, a budget which has increased demands because the number of Full Time Reserve officers has reduced for example, we have to reconfigure and we have to get the effectiveness and efficiency, but I accept communication, when we communicate, how we communicate and what the expectations are of the 2 parties roundabout that is something that, not just here, maybe elsewhere in other District Policing Partnerships, is not working as well as it could and it is something we will have to take forward in the future.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Alex Maskey.

Mr Alex Maskey:

Thank you Chairman. Thanks ACC Finlay for your responses. I just wanted to reinforce, and I very much appreciate your own comments on this, because I think therein lies the issue here which needs to be addressed, not just today but from hereon in. There is a mismatch on people's understanding and expectations of what they can expect when they are members of DPPs and indeed, working with your own organisation. We felt it was very important that we reflected the anger which was actually expressed by the members of that particular DPP, because the issue of people's idea of consultation is when you get a phone call and obviously I appreciate it was a request for a meeting, but when people are actually being told after the effect, after decisions have been taken and they may well be the right decisions, they may not be, but say even if they are, but for people to be told after the decisions are taken is simply not good enough. I think that PSNI and more officers appear to be I think, coming on board on this.

But people need to understand that DPPs are your partners, they are not somebody that you just go along and talk to and when people then restrict themselves to the fine definition of the legal reference, then you have been entirely missing the point. These people are your partners, they are your allies, they are your friends, people who have a job to do and I think when people are constantly treated by being told after the effect, it just completely undermines the whole process and I think there needs to be a fundamental reappraisal if that is required. When people are raising these complaints, and it is not only in that particular DPP, it has happened elsewhere, people feel that

they are being treated quite badly and I think that the police need to get a handle on that. So, we are expressing that in as diplomatic terms as they expressed it to us let me say, but they were quite angry about it and rightly so I think.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr David Rose and then Mr Basil McCrea.

Mr David Rose:

I was at the meeting whenever the Carrickfergus DPP came up and I think that a lot of their concerns were justified. From their perception, if you were a member of the public and you heard all response officers were being withdrawn from Carrickfergus, what would be your reaction to that and your understanding of it? Your explanation helps me get a greater understanding and there was obviously a lack of explanation around that whenever the announcement was made. Even today, I am wondering what a police office is. It is these little things that count for an awful lot. The DPP is really the confidence builder and the confidence maintainer, and I think that whenever change comes as it very often is needed and is necessary and can be beneficial, it is still that difficult period whenever the change takes place and the better the information, the Carrick DPP I think will deliver on maintaining the confidence as long as they have that confidence themselves.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Alistair Finlay:

Yes, I think that is a very valid point and I say again, I think there is something for us and the DPPs generally to grow in what and how this communication and what role consultation actually has because, in this position for example, if the consultation came up with a scenario where the view of the DPP was that they thought these officers should not be moved, that they did not agree with the analysis, that it would provide a more effective and efficient service, then we are into a difficult position in terms of, they are not the Board of Directors that are supporting the company but we have to make the business decisions roundabout this. I would hope that we can convince them that it is the right business decisions throughout communication process and maybe and I am prepared to accept we have not got that right, certainly on this occasion, and that we could have done better. But there are sometimes going to be decisions that people do not like and we have to grow in maturity in understanding that.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

I will take 2 more questions in respect of this question. Mr Basil McCrea, Mr Jimmy Spratt.

Mr Basil McCrea:

Thank you Chairman. 'D' District, my constituency is a fair chunk of it, and I have to say that whilst there may be operational issues, there maybe a fully considered plan, there may even be good rationale, I simply cannot understand why a senior officer would not think that removing all response officers from Carrickfergus would not be of interest to Carrickfergus DPP, and to do it on the week when they were going to launch the Policing Plan, it just staggers me. The reason why I wanted to speak on this is that I spoke to you about this issue at this Board 2 months ago when another DPP in 'D' District in Lisburn actually had a similar experience where decisions were just made against any form of consultation. The idea frankly that this Senior Command Team does not understand what the relationship is between the DPP, the Policing Plan and our Estate Strategy frankly ACC Finlay it staggers me, and what I am asking you directly, because you are the leader, you are the Commander, are you going to give leadership to your Commanders and tell them that they must engage with DPPs before they go and do substantive change?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Alistair Finlay:

Commanders will engage with District Policing Partnerships, we then end up to an interpretation of what substantial change is. I accept that communication in this has not been of the best. I know that what you were referring to was the decision to close a police office on a previous occasion and there had been a full consultation process before that where there had been engagement, and yes, the decision was made at the conclusion of that, we would have liked more time to do it. Yes, maybe we have got something to learn about how we communicate and maybe there is a issue that we have to address in particular to that District in how they communicate roundabout that and I am prepared to take that on.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr Jimmy Spratt.

Mr Jimmy Spratt:

There is another shining example in relation to Dundonald. The Enquiry Office there was closed down and the DPP was being consulted the following day, I mean that just gets off to a wrong start. Now, that has been raised on a number of occasions and obviously the lesson has not been learned. That happened what 3, 4 or 5 months ago so there is a problem there ACC Finlay that does really need to be sorted out, because DPPs just feel what is the point.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Alistair Finlay:

I take the point.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question 7 is in the name of Mr Basil McCrea.

Q7 - During our recent visit to New York our American colleagues suggested that litigation with compensation was a more appropriate route for ensuring the highest professional standards in policing as opposed to institutions such as the Ombudsman and the many other oversight bodies we have, would the Chief Constable agree with this analysis?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Chairman I will deal with it very briefly, I think the short answer is that it is a crazy notion in the context of where we are, but I will ask DCC Leighton who deals on discipline to deal with it.

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton:

Civil litigation as Members are well aware is currently available and availed of by complainants in the jurisdiction, so there is no question of this being an additional availability. What we have here of course is the Ombudsman's Office and the independent investigation of complaints and our own Professional Standards Department which look at discipline matters. Both of which I would contend have added considerably to the confidence in policing by members of the public from all different parts of our community. The establishment of the Ombudsman's Office has helped greatly to secure public confidence and I have spoken to many people who feel that the Ombudsman's Office has given them more confidence to actually deal with the

police and to make complaints where they feel that is correct. Personally, I feel that the Ombudsman's Office, if it were to be done away with which is what the implication of the New York system would be, would be a detrimental impact on the confidence on policing in Northern Ireland.

Mr Basil McCrea:

I will not labour the point because we have much to go through, but I will say to you, this question was actually from the previous Board meeting held over and it was after our trip over to America, and it is just interesting that our American friends tried to persuade us that the way to go was to go through the courts in litigation and it is really just the difference in the systems.

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton:

I was not on that trip so I do not know what you were told on that particular trip, but I think it might be interesting for Board Members to explore a little bit more of the history of the NYPD (New York Police Department), the increase in numbers of the NYPD, the increase in complaints that followed that and the issues that surround the way that complaints are now dealt with in New York. It may be of interest to get into more depth in that.

Mr Basil McCrea:

I will say, that when we heard the stories, if the Chief Constables thinks that he has got difficulties with the media here, he should see what the NYPD have to try and explain. Thank you.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Questions 8, 9 and 10 they are from Dolores Kelly and we will take them together please.

Q8 - Given the recommendations of the CJI report March 2009, 'Policing with the Community' what immediate strategy does the Chief Constable have in order to implement this core principle of 'policing with the community', which is crucial to the successful transformation of policing?

Q9 - The Criminal Justice Inspectorate found that there had been some alignment of service policies to enable Neighbourhood Policing, but there has not been comprehensive implementation of these policies service-wide, can the Chief Constable advise how will this be addressed in the short term?

Q10 - The report goes on to state that although there were examples of response officers using PwC principles and problem solving approaches, these were the exception rather than the rule (p13), how will these approaches become central to policing with communities?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

ACC McCausland.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

Thank you Chairman, if I deal with question 8 first. The current Policing Plan and objective 3 is to ensure that policing with the community is at the core of the delivery of the police service, is a clear target within that to refresh the Policing with the Community strategy by 30 June 2009. In fact, Members of this Board have actually been at some of the Steering Group meetings and are on the Challenge Panel and we are well progressed down the line to achieve that and we hope to bring a clear, refreshed strategy back to the Board to be published on 30 September 2009. Key for the Board and key to answer this question is, that they will be accompanied by a full Implementation Plan so we are looking to produce a very simple one page strategy which every officer will have and the public will understand, the detail for the Board will be the Implementation Plan.

In relation to question 9, all policy directives and service procedures are now reviewed annually. In the review tool we have incorporated the, and taken cognisance of the policing with the community principles, so that the policy service wide will have policing with the community at the core. The Board will have a report on a 6 monthly basis, based on our performance in these areas around the policing with the community principles, and as you know, again that is within the Policing Board targets as laid out.

Corporate governance of neighbourhood policing was implemented and I have provided to the Board, to the Chief Executive and to yourself, a letter in March 2009 which outlined the 25 recommendations that were to be taken forward in terms of implementing neighbourhood policing and where we actually stand in relation to those. Again Chairman, I am happy to share that with Mrs Kelly at the end if she is content.

The Implementation Board has now been concluded because we have completed all the recommendations and those that are now being taken forward tactically and operationally have been passed the Regional ACCs who, I am looking at ACC Finlay knowingly, hopefully are being covered in the recommendation 78 Performance Inspections that are ongoing at the moment.

Assistant Chief Constable Alistair Finlay:

They are.

Assistant Chief Constable Duncan McCausland:

In relation to question 10, the current principles of policing with the community, as the Board would know; service delivery, partnership, problem solving empowerment and accountability, are the principles at the heart of the service we provide to all the community. It must be remembered that the role of response officers and neighbourhood officers are, in certain aspects, fundamentally different but also similar, insomuch as they do employ the principles of policing with the community to a greater or lesser extent to tackle the unique problems and many incidents that they have to respond to.

The response officer's role is mainly reactive, but with the knowledge of neighbourhood issues that support and feed into long term proactive and sustainable problem solving. In effect, if the neighbourhood officer can solve a problem, the response officer will not have to respond. The response officers are aware of the issues in each of the neighbourhoods and the neighbourhood officers that are responsible to take forward the problem solving.

In addition, we have very detailed problem solving folders which are updated and call management identifying neighbourhood issues and task resources appropriately.

Response officers do problem solve at incidents, they do not just react in the first instance, they are also involved in problem solving at attempting to achieve long term sustainable solutions in partnership with other agencies and I think that is a key role which we must not forget, particularly with neighbourhood police officers. As the Board know, we have committed to keep 80% of our neighbourhood officers within their time within the neighbourhoods and we report regularly on the achievement of that target.

The role of the neighbourhood officer as in turn been professionalised and I have introduced, through Criminal Justice, new neighbourhood training modules which will commence in September 2009 which will accredit neighbourhood officers with Chartered Management Institute qualifications and I think that is important.

Overall, and I know that Mrs Kelly's questions came from the Criminal Justice Inspectorate report, there is a very detailed Action Plan which we produced and attached to that report and we are reporting to the Board as to how we are taking this forward.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mrs Kelly.

Mrs Dolores Kelly:

Thank you Chairman and ACC McCausland. I take it that the Implementation Plan will take full account of the Criminal Justice Inspectorate's reports, and I am interested in how the District Policing Partnerships get involved in terms of the measurement of performance at local level and how that is being taken account of, because whilst the Board has to take a strategic view, I think the DPPs need to know how their individual DPPs are performing in the delivery of policing with the community in comparison with all of the other DPP areas.

Another point I would like clarification on is that the Senior Command Team, that the weight of ensuring policing with the community does not fall on 1 or 2 Assistant Chief Constables shoulders, but that there is an ownership across all of the Assistant Chief Constables and particularly in Rural and Urban Region. I suppose at constituency level sometimes we would get complaints and really the Tactical Support Teams can undo a lot of the good work that has been done by neighbourhood police officers. I certainly

would commend the problem solving approach and hope that when neighbourhood teams are put in place, that the majority of their time is spent, and I will be interested to see how the measurement of that has been, particularly in the light of the dissident threats and the strains that there have been on policing resources.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

Thank you for those questions. I can assure you that my illustrious colleagues do carry the weight in relation to policing with the community with me in terms of delivering it and delivering it uniquely in each of their various portfolios. I have a particularly very active relationship with ACC Urban and ACC Rural in terms of in effect tactically delivering neighbourhood policing. As already said, in the Policing Plan each of the ACCs have to report how they are delivering in their own areas against policing with the community.

I see the DPPs and in fact the 15 minute or so discussion ACC Finlay had with the Board in relation to Carrickfergus, as one example of potentially some of the key factors which we will build into the Implementation Plan. Engagement and communication which will be critical, both to this Board and at various levels throughout the community. In terms of Operation Support and Crime Operations, they are very heavily involved in policing with the community but in the unique issues that they have to deal with to tackle what you have just described in terms of, for example, the dissident terrorist threat. What we are aiming at overall is, that policing with the community will be driven right throughout the entire organisation in the fashion that is reflective of the service that that part of the organisation have to deliver. We are coming up with a key simple document which will be understood by everyone and also then, we will be able to put an Implementation Plan as to what we are doing right across the entire organisation. It will include the recommendations from the Criminal Justice Inspectorate Northern Ireland, bearing in mind Chairman, some of those recommendations are without the ability of the police service to implement. For example, the issue of bringing together CSPs and DPPs, it is something that is up for discussion as you know at the moment and we are still, and I look to bring back a revised plan in relation to PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers), but giving the budget restraints we have to be realistic.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr Daithí McKay.

Mr Daithí McKay:

Thank you Chairman. ACC McCausland, could you elaborate a bit more on what training response officers receive in terms of how they interact and communicate with our distinct communities. I am thinking as well in terms of young people, what sort of training do the likes of TSG officers have in how to interact and communicate with young people. Young people in some instances, this has been their first interaction with the police so it is important they take some sort of positive feedback from that. What training do these officers also receive in terms of developing and understanding of communities which they may not be familiar with?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

There are a number of issues there Mr McKay and obviously ACC Toner will want to comment on TSGs. We do have a very active Children's Forum with the Children's Commissioner and with a number of the key organisations that take forward issues for children, in fact we are meeting again this month. From those contacts we take forward and feed in the key information, the key issues that they feel have to be factored through to training. We do that through the Strategic Training Committee which ACC Finlay chairs and we then take forward into the various aspects of the organisation, both at District level and at the college level, in terms of preparing appropriate training processes and mechanisms to ensure there is correct communication and also understanding of the communities within which they are specifically working.

ACC Toner, do you want to talk about the TSGs?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Roy Toner:

I think it is worthwhile because it is also a point that Mrs Kelly raised in relation to additional resources coming in to support the Commander, and that is a principle that we have in place that for example, TSGs or Roads Policing, Armed Response Units come in and provide a specific, specialist support for the local Commander when he or she actually needs it.

There is an element around this that they are very much under the command of who the local police Commander is, they are not under my command, when they are on the ground the local Commander actually owns them and they deploy them as they see fit.

The second element around it is, we are very keen any of these pieces of work to have Community Impact Assessments (CIAs) to see what the impact of that particular piece of work on the ground will do, be it a pre-planned operation or be it something that is developing spontaneously.

There is also the element that you cannot expect officers who are moving around the country to actually have a really deep understanding of a particular community, but that is where the liaison with the neighbourhood policing team and neighbourhood work actually comes in. We are frequently now asking for and being asked that we have a neighbourhood policing officer assigned to the TSG for a particular operation. For example, I know there is a question on the Holylands, the neighbourhood policing officers were with the TSG specifically on that day, because not only do they need a geographic understanding of the area, they need an understanding of the community breakdown.

Training is provided through the college for officers who come through initial training and there is the human rights training which is ongoing and monitored by the Human Rights Advisors to the Policing Board.

I do think there is something about a better understanding for officers in specialist functions around the communities that they police and that is part of the work that ACC McCausland is doing and the action plan and the follow through from the Criminal Justice Inspectorate, because our communities are becoming more and more diverse day by day.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

One of the key things that the Board can do to help us, is to bring forward and support us in relation to local surveys at neighbourhood level so that we do have the information based on a neighbourhood by neighbourhood breakdown, that we then can use that information to effectively deploy our officers and understand the problems that exist, that then would fit Mrs Kelly, into the DPP work so that the DPP can actually talk to the Commander with real facts about the neighbourhoods they are dealing with. I know the Board are looking at that Chairman.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

I will take you to question 14, it is in the name of Mr Spratt.

Q14 - To ask the Chief Constable to update the Board on the investigations into the disturbances that occurred in the Holylands area of South Belfast in March 2009?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I will ask ACC Finlay to deal with the ongoing investigation.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Alistair Finlay:

Thank you Chairman. To date, 11 persons have been charged and 14 reported in relation to the incident which occurred in the Holylands. Two further persons have been identified, although it will be reported once all the statements are available. The offences include riotous behaviour, disorderly behaviour, assault on the police, resisting arrest, obstruction and criminal damage.

Of the persons charged with the offences, 2 have entered guilty pleas and have been dealt with and were fined £350 and £400 respectively. Further investigation is ongoing in relation to disturbances and we have taken steps around a Criminal Justice Strategy Review meeting held with the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) and a point of contact has been appointed between the PPS and the Police Liaison to ensure that that dialogue is maintained. Media footage, internet footage and CCTV has been obtained and a trawl is currently ongoing to a view of identifying further offenders. Members will appreciate that actually is painstaking work which takes some considerable time. All relevant intelligence information is being reviewed in an attempt to identify further offenders. It is anticipated that on completion of the CCTV trawl there will be a number of persons identified and made amenable for liable offences.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Thank you very much. Question 11 and 12 are in the name of Brian Rea and could be taken together.

Q11 - Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) have been used by your commanders to deal with anti-social behaviour for some time now. In your view, what difference have these made to reducing incidents of anti-social behaviour, steering people away from ASBOs and improving the quality of life for communities?

Q12. 'B' District, as part of their Local Policing Plan, has introduced a scheme - Victim Care Line - to keep victims informed. They have done so in conjunction with the DPP and Victim Support NI. In your view, is such a scheme worth introducing in other Districts?

Mr Brian Rea:

If I could just before the Chief Constable answers these 2 questions, these arose as a result of my attendance at the launch of the 'B' District Policing Plan which was a very good event and I would, at this point, want to commend Chief Superintendent Brian Maguire, the District Commander and his officers for the Plan and for that event.

I would want to mention especially Chief Inspector John McKeag because it was he that I had discussions with and it was from those discussions and what was displayed that these questions arose, so I may have some comments to make after I hear an answer.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Thank you Chair, I will ask ACC Finlay to deal with the detail. It is a complex area and it is a lengthy response. If ACC Finlay can deal with the key points, we can certainly give a full response in writing Mr Rea if that would help.

Mr Brian Rea:

That is fine.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Alistair Finlay:

Thank you Chairman. Basically within Urban Region and all the partners that are involved in this and that is the councils, the Housing Executive, the Youth Justice Agency, I have found ABCs (Anti Behavioural Contracts) to be a useful, early intervention tool in diverting, not only young people because although we think about

young people in this context, ABCs and ASBOs (Anti Social Behavioural Orders) are equally applicable to all age ranges and are a diversion from Anti Social Behaviour.

Since the inception of ABCs in 2004, Urban Region have issued 82 ABCs and 51 of these have been classed as effective with 13 considered ineffective and 8 have been progressed to ASBO. There are currently 18 ABCs running within Urban Region and there is no natural progression from a failed ABC to ASBO. There is not a stepping stone approach. In some cases it is more appropriate to go straight for an Anti Social Behaviour Order or as we will illustrate shortly, the majority of these issues are actually dealt with by a letter in advance of going into the ABC procedure.

There is a very positive feedback roundabout this tool, it has a positive impact and it is a useful and effective way of bring resolution to communities. You will note that anti social behaviour in the financial year to date is down 11.8% and this is in some way due to the way we have used Anti Social Behaviour Orders, ABCs, the use of anti social behaviour officers and one of the key things that I would highlight, where it is the use of letters highlighting anti social behaviour in advance of any formal process. For example, in 'A' District there were 365 anti social behaviour letters issued, only 25 ABCs and then 13 ASBOs, so there is an incremental approach and in actual fact, we are solving a problem in the least impactive way and the easiest, quick, effective intervention at quite low cost to us and without involving the criminal justice parties.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

If Mr Rea is content I will not answer the part of the question, I will write to me on how the ABC works.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Alistair Finlay:

If you are content, I will quickly touch on the Victim Care Line which was the other aspect that was highlighted.

This is a pilot scheme initiated in 'B' District in partnership with the District Policing Partnership and Victims Support Northern Ireland, and it is aimed at keeping victims informed regarding their investigation, something that comes up recurringly as us not being terribly good at or not as good at as victims would like us to be.

Where an officer attends a call they will present a Victim Care Card to the complainant that contains the serial number, the investigating officer's name and details of a free phone number which they can call during certain hours and that detail is all on the card. The number takes the caller to the Occurrence Management Unit within Strandtown and from there they will be able to get an update on where the investigation is.

The pilot is running for a 3 month period within East Belfast and after any learning that we get from how it works in East Belfast, it will be moved to South Belfast and evaluated before consideration for putting into other Districts. The reason it is not going straight to other Districts is, we think it is worth trying and ironing out any difficulties getting feedback from it before progressing with it further and then having to change the scheme again.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

It is also supplementing a pilot scheme we are running in 'H' District to the Criminal Justice Board with Victims Support where we are trying to, in effect, organisationally tackle the issue of having a 'one stop' shop contact for victims, so 'H' District will try their pilot under the Criminal Justice Board auspices, 'B' District will try theirs and then we will evaluate which one is best, but we will be introducing this type of approach.

Mr Brian Rea:

I will just come back for a moment Chairman, and ask if you would keep us abreast of developments and evaluations. Thank you.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Chairman, just on this, when ASBOs came in there was a huge pressure on us to get lots of ASBOs. We resisted that, because frankly when we get to an ASBO, in a way it is an admission of failure because they tend to be focused on young people and the whole drive has been to keep people out of the criminal justice system and not put them in it, and I think this shows an intelligent use of letters and precursor activity has kept ASBOs to a minimum but has actually kept a lot of people out of a system which they really need to be kept out of if we are going to give them a chance in later life.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Thank you very much indeed Chief Constable that concludes the questions. This as you alluded to at the beginning, is of course my last meeting in public before I step down as Chairman of the Board at the end of this month. I appreciate the remarks that you made.

As a Board we will hold the elections for a new Chair and Vice Chair immediately after lunch. As I will be continuing to serve as an independent Member, I would like to place on public record, my thanks to you Chief Constable, the Deputy Chief Constable and the colleagues on your senior team, and indeed, the PSNI in general. I notice the Federation represented here and I particularly enjoyed my tussles with the Federation.

Also, in respect of my fellow Board Members, my thanks to you for electing me to this job. Also I wish to acknowledge all the work that you have done, you have been truly amazing in commitment and Committees and I am deeply indebted to you for your rapport.

Also, thanks to the Chief Executive, his predecessors, also to the staff, you have been great. Thank you very much indeed and I am much indebted to you all for the privilege. Thank you very much.