

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING IN PUBLIC OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY 1 JUNE 2006 AT 12:45PM NOON IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Chairman)
Mr Barry Gilligan (Vice-Chairman)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mr Joe Byrne
Mr Brendan Duddy
Ms Arlene Foster
Mr Willie Hay
Mrs Dolores Kelly
Mr Danny Kennedy
Ms Deirdre Mac Bride
Mrs Pauline McCabe
Mrs Rosaline Moore
Mr Ian Paisley, Jnr
Ms Dawn Purvis
Mr Brian Rea
Mr Trevor Ringland
Mr Peter Weir

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

Sir Hugh Orde (Chief Constable)
Mr Paul Leighton (Deputy Chief Constable)
Mrs Judith Gillespie (ACC Rural Region)
Mr Drew Harris (ACC Criminal Justice)
Mr Duncan McCausland (ACC Urban Region)
Mr Peter Sheridan, (ACC Crime Operations)
Mr Roy Toner, (ACC Operational Support)
Mr David Best, (Director of Finance and Support Services)
Ms Sinead McSweeney (Director of Media and PR)
Deputy Director of Human Resources, PSNI
Mr John Rafferty, Head of Inspection and Review.
Chief Inspector, Command Secretariat

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

I regret the delay in the start of today's Board meeting in public, that is simply due to the fact that we have so many questions today. As I have emphasised in the past and I will explain again, basically questions come from Members, they come from Committees of the Board, or indeed, someone may write to the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman and the question could come through one of us. Basically Board Members are asked do you want this question replied to in writing, or in the private session, or in the public session, they make the choice at the end of the day. The Chief Constable may say I am likely to provide you with more information in the private session, simply because a case may be sub judice, or the Chairman might give guidance but at the end of the day, if a Member of the Board says I would prefer that in the public session it would be in the public session. We have simply had so many questions today and that has been the reason for the delay.

During this public session the Chief Constable will present his latest Policing Report. Before I invite you to speak Chief Constable and I would welcome you and your colleagues to this public session, I would like to mention a number of incidents that have taken place here in Northern Ireland in recent weeks that have attracted much public concern and media attention.

First, the brutal murder of 15 year old Michael McIlveen in Ballymena. This Board has roundly condemned the murder of young Michael and welcomes the fact that the PSNI have made arrests and charges.

In recent days there have been a number of other vicious attacks and a rise indeed in race related crime has been reported. We acknowledge that the police are working to deal with these crimes but we do not want to see another death on our streets and today would urge community leaders, politicians and all those with influence to help, through their work and also support the police in any way they possibly can. Sectarianism, racism or hate crime of any kind has no place in our society and must not be tolerated by the community, neither should the culture of knife crime.

Last week, Chief Constable, this Board was pleased to give its full support to the knife awareness and disposal campaign. In recent months, knife related crime has become an increasing problem in Northern Ireland with a number of high profile incidents adding to

the public's concerns and fears over this type of crime. The figures in respect of knife crime in England and Wales for last weekend were shocking and we need to work to make sure that this culture does not embed in Northern Ireland. This public information and knife disposal campaign therefore is not only timely but it is crucially important in PSNI's efforts to prevent the occurrence of knife related incidents and to reduce the fear of knife related crime in communities right across the Province.

It is therefore also timely that this week we have embarked on the Board's biggest public survey on policing, the 2006 District Policing Partnership Public Consultation Questionnaire. 1 in 10 households across Northern Ireland will receive the questionnaire and we want community views on issues relating to the delivery of policing across Northern Ireland and in each DPP area. This Board urges everyone who receives the survey, and the survey is upwards of 60,000, to complete and return it by 19 June 2006. DPPs – they have become an integral and accepted part of local policing and they have brought policing closer to the community and the community closer to policing, in a way that has not happened before. The results of this survey along with other consultation exercises help DPPs establish local policing priorities and address issues where the community want to see police intention focused with District Commanders.

Turning now to another issue which has been a top priority for both PSNI and the Board over the last two years and that is the new Police College. Over the last 2 years, the PSNI and the Board have been working towards the development of a new Police College to be built at Cookstown, to replace the existing, and I would remind you that the existing complex has been described by the Police Oversight Commissioner as 'third world facilities' and that is at Garnerville, and I would remind you of the Patten recommendation that the PSNI should have a new purpose built college. To date the Government has made available £90m which while it is a substantial amount, still leaves us with a shortfall in funding without which the College as planned simply cannot be built. Until the Board has received assurances that the funding will be provided, the PSNI and the Board cannot move forward and needs Government to indicate its intentions.

The PSNI and the Board are committed to providing a world class police training facility – one that will allow our officers to be trained to the highest possible standards both now and in the future. We have now made 2 formal requests for a meeting with the Prime Minister as we believe that resolution of the College funding issues is of such critical

importance. This week, Security Minister Goggins has confirmed he is supporting the Board's request for a meeting with the Prime Minister and we will be meeting the Minister later this month to ensure that since he has only recently arrived in the Province is aware of all of the issues. The Board trusts that a meeting with the Prime Minister to put its case will take place sooner rather than later. So, today I reiterate on behalf of the Board that the funding issue be resolved and we can get on with the business of building a new College.

Finally Chief Constable, an issue raised by Ian Paisley Junior in this forum about a Home Office policy on UK forces not being able to accept applications from people who have unsuccessfully applied to any UK force within the previous 12 months. A joint letter by the PSNI and the Board was sent to all Police services, Police Authorities and the Association of Police Authorities expressing our concerns that people applying for the PSNI could be disadvantaged if having been unsuccessful here, they subsequently were blocked by a UK force. The Home Office, I am delighted to be able to report, has agreed to revise their policy to make it explicit that it only applies to rejections from forces in England and Wales, not PSNI, so a success here. Chief Constable over to you.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Thank you Chairman for your opening comments. We too welcome the survey. It will certainly help to inform the front end of policing and local policing. We also support your comments in relation to the College which you rather unkindly referred to as 'third world', I'm not sure it is that modern. The other point I made is that I am staying, and I said I was going to stay until the College is built so you are stuck with me for a rather long time unless you get some funding for it, which may encourage Ian to do some work on that.

The Board asked us for a brief presentation on the Best Value Review on Patrolling and I will ask ACC Roy Toner to introduce his colleagues who will give a very short presentation to the Board as requested. Just by way of clarity and I know there was a question on this, the recommendations are a result of a substantial piece of work by both the Board and the PSNI. The recommendations are currently recommendations, so they are not all certainly enshrined in stone and have not all being fully endorsed and agreed by the senior management team of the Police Service. They are very much and will be very much linked to the Review of Public Administration and the review of how we deliver front line policing but I will ask Roy to very briefly go through that.

Assistant Chief Constable Roy Toner:

Thank you Chief Constable to the Chairman and Board Members. We have got John Rafferty, Head of Inspection and Review and Inspector Pete Bouma from the Best Value Team who will do the presentation. They will give you an outline about 10 minutes maximum on the main aspects of the Best Value Review in relation to the Patrol Function in the PSNI. This is a very timely Review as we are trying to develop a patrol model for PSNI that reflects more the environment that we are actually policing on a day to day basis.

Best Value is led on by the NIPB not by PSNI and we act as an agent on their behalf on the delivery of the Best Value Reviews. In addition where the Chief Constable said in relation to the 140 recommendations, some are very straightforward and can be implemented very quickly. Others have a longer timeframe of 2 – 3 years. They involve investments in information technology or different types of patrol vehicle, etc and some will have to be reconsidered in light of potential restructuring of our District Command Units and potentially our Headquarters structure as well. I am coming to the NIPB on 15 June 2006 to give them an outline of our preliminary model for that restructuring. I will ask John now to give a brief outline on the Best Value Review and what we have done to date.

Mr John Rafferty:

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. My name is John Rafferty, as the ACC has said I am Head of Inspection and Review and I would like to take you through a brief presentation on the Police Patrol Function Best Value Review conducted last year. The format for the presentation will be a brief overview of the process that we used during the review, then a flavour for some of the more strategic issues that came up and what we have recommended. Finally I would like to open it up to the floor for questioning but if you will leave your questions to the end, I would much appreciate it.

In terms of the process that we used during the Review. We used the Home Office Best Practice approach which is called the four Cs, which simply stands for consultation, challenge, comparison and competition. By way of a little more explanation on those particular points, we consulted extensively during this particular review. We consulted internally and externally; internally were the likes of the Top Team, DCU Commanders,

many front line staff and officers and staff associations as well. Externally we would have talked to people like DPPs, the Policing Board itself, CPLCs, Community Safety Partnerships and the like. We also consulted extensively with the public and that includes hard to reach groups. In terms of the challenge aspect, we put in an independent challenge panel and this was a group of people who were apart and aside from the PSNI who were there to check and see what we were doing, how we were doing it. It was really to give a sanity check to make sure we were doing things correctly. In terms of the comparison, we compared with over 30 forces worldwide and that's police forces, as well as high performing public sector organisations. So, a very big consultation and comparison exercise was undertaken and finally competition. In terms of competition, the basic patrol function and basic core policing function is not open for competition. But we did see other areas which were not linked to core policing and they were subject to competition and by competition we mean looking at how we could do things differently. That would mean things like outsourcing it or perhaps even passing it on to other organisations who were more suited to doing the particular task.

In terms of exclusions, there were things that were excluded from this particular review, predominately on the basis that there was other work ongoing in these particular areas. As a result, it would be wrong to duplicate effort so therefore things like, sickness policy, part-time officers, call management system and PCSOs (the Police Community Support Officers) have all been excluded from this particular review for that very reason.

In terms of the options for change, the output of the Review itself, over 300 options were generated. We didn't just leave it there. We wanted to make sure these options made sense and we went back and we reconsulted with the public and all of the different stakeholders we have mentioned before, to get their views on the particular options that we had come up with following the initial consultation. Then, based on that input as well as follow up sessions with the Project Board, with the Policing Board and with the Top Team here, that was whittled down to 140 recommendations which are now being explored in terms of how we can implement them.

The final part of the process is what we call the Post Implementation Review. That part of the process is where the Policing Board comes back at a sensible time after the event to make sure that, firstly the recommendations have actually been implemented and

secondly they have been effective. We envisage this will happen sometime around next summer and will roll then each year thereafter to track the progress.

In terms of the more strategic issues that came up, probably one of the biggest ones was shifts – the issue here is linked to demand versus resources.

Right now, our current shift system which is a fixed 12 hour system does not match our resources to the current demand. Now, very early in the process we also realised that it had officer health and safety issues, as well as links with the public itself. Very often a reoccurrence system, we don't have the opportunity to have a short time periods between a first engagement with the public and a re-engagement with the public, so there are extended lengths of time there if a shift were to change in the meantime. The Team also recognised very early in the process that there was a level of expertise missing from the Review Team and we brought that expertise in from Merseyside. There is an expert from Merseyside called Sergeant Colin Mason who is used extensively across the mainland to do these kinds of studies.

So, in terms of options, there were several options which came out of this particular part of the review. There was the 12 hour fixed shift that we currently have, a 12 hour variable shift system, there is an 8 hour fixed, 8 hour variable and 10 hour variable. These were all the major ones that were considered.

The model, which is used by the expert from Merseyside, takes into consideration 12 separate components for working shifts, things like linking in with the working time directive, matching demand and resources, things like officer fatigue indexes, which come from the Health and Safety Executive, looking at numbers of officers, numbers of teams, maximum and minimum number of officers that we will have on at any given time Based on a lot of those variables, the one shift system which ticked most of the boxes was the 10 hour variable shift system and that's what is being put forward.

Now we are not saying there are not risks to this, of course there are risks to all of these recommendations. Some of the risks would be possible opposition from front line staff, it does mean they will have less days off work during the year and we recognise that. There are also possible issues around staffing, numbers of staff and numbers of teams which has to be addressed during the implementation phase. But having said that, the benefits

are pretty high. We will better match our resources to demand. We will have better officer work life balance. We will have potential financial savings and it is estimated at the moment at about £10m per year – that is based on overtime savings alone.

The second big area I would like to cover is single officer patrolling. The issue really here is in terms of officer visibility and the efficiency of double crewing. Now, the options that we came up with were to continue as with double crews, or to go with single officer patrol daylight hours only, or potentially go to single officer patrol for an early shift only, or finally go to 24\7 default single officer patrol all of the time, unless a risk assessment or operational needs dictate otherwise.

Now we do recognise again there are several risks and concerns out there. First and foremost, officer safety is paramount. Secondly, there are also concerns by officers around isolation if they are out there on their own. There are possible training issues as the ACC alluded to earlier. There are also possible issues around the vehicle fitment. But ultimately, this comes down to the big question of officer safety versus service delivery.

We believe that the risk assessment is the key in this particular process, so working through the risk assessments, we believe it is possible to put this system in and it does have some very big benefits. We believe single officer patrols should result in a dramatically increased officer visibility out on the floor. It also should increase our officer efficiency. At the end of the day two officers addressing two separate incidents should be more efficient than two going to one and it should also result therefore in a quicker response rate.

The National Intelligence Model, or NIM as we are calling it internally, is the next area that we looked at and the issue here is around about tasking and directing of officers whilst out on patrol. Now the options that we had here were two main options. One was no change, continue as we are, or secondly, we could maybe take the National Intelligence Model and use it and optimise it more in the patrolling environment. That would mean things like better briefing and debriefing, better training and awareness of NIM and what it can be used for, as well as improved tasking to hot spots.

The big risk here is quite simply lost opportunity, if we don't use it, there is the lost opportunity in terms of tasking to hot spots. There are also possible investment costs

associated with this, as well as training and soft ware issues. And finally, in terms of the training and understanding of training by the officers, it has to be targeted at the right level. It is also a risk we are considering. The benefits though should be significant. We should have more focused tasking of officers out there to hot spots. Essentially we are talking about getting the right people to the right place at the right time.

Then there is Roads Policing, another big area which we looked at. The issue for roads policing we believe is around accountability for the DCU Commanders. Right now the DCU Commanders have responsibility for road safety in a particular DCU location, but they do not have control over the roads policing officers. This is a bit of a disconnect for us and we believe that change needs to be made. Now the options that we come up with were no change, continue with the centralised structures we have currently which creates and perpetuates that disconnect. Or, we could devolve Roads Policing to a smaller number of DCU which was alluded to by the ACC earlier but with a strengthened centralised branch for policy issues. Or, we could simply devolve those policing officers and let the DCU Commanders do with them as they wish.

Again, there are risks to these particular recommendations and this one is no different. There is a possible dilution in terms of the roads policing expertise that is managed as we go to a smaller number of DCUs. We recognise that at 29 DCUs that is not possible, but certainly at a smaller number it becomes more possible. Also roads policing officers could potentially be used for other duties and that is something which we obviously have to manage during the implementation process as well. But having said that, the benefits are substantial. The DCU Commanders should have greater control over the resources which are there to deliver on the matrix they are responsible for in their own DCUs. A strengthened centralised area in terms of policy will be there to interact with partner organisations and also be there to try and maintain the expertise across the organisation to create a standardisation of the processes.

Bearing in mind that we have 140 recommendations in this particular piece of work, I have given you a very, very brief flavour for the top ones but the summary of the ones that I have shown you shows that resources should better meet demand. We should provide a very good work-life balance for our officers improving their health. we should be able to maximise the visibility of officers on the ground and also improve the efficiency of the

officers whilst out on patrol. Finally, we should have the right people in the right place at the right time. I would now like to invite questions from the floor if you have any.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

We will take three questions.

Mr William Hay:

Just on the single patrolling. I would take it that there are areas in Northern Ireland that will take a long time to role out single patrolling officers in Northern Ireland. That's a great issue out there in what criteria may be used in the future and we are looking at I suppose is single patrol officers out there on the beat and I think there is a great fear as I think he indicated to that. There is a great fear out on the ground that this issue can only be dealt with properly I suppose, when we have the security right within Northern Ireland, which will take a long time but certainly, I believe, there are areas in Northern Ireland it would be difficult to role out that programme.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

You are absolutely right. The whole principle of all this and the point was well made by John in his presentation is around risk assessment and as a principle it would be nice for it to happen. It is not going to happen in the next year, five years or whatever, it depends on the threat assessment. What it does mean is that some District Commanders working with their officers and their representatives from the Federation and Superintendents Association are already doing it so whilst it works in certain places it will not work in others and it will be that bespoke. I don't want people to get the idea that officers are going to be forced into a position where they feel uncomfortable. That's not the point around this. The point around this is testing and challenging everything we do and we will do nothing what does not make the front line i.e. the community we serve better served, that the whole principle behind this.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Deirdre Mac Bride.

Ms Deirdre McBride:

Thank you for the presentation. In relation to single officer patrolling and in particular in relation to hot spots, has any consideration being given to child protection issues, in terms of officers interacting with groups of young people in the evenings?

Assistant Chief Constable Roy Toner:

I'm not actually sure where the risk aspect of that is identified. As regards officer's safety, I think the Chief Constable touched on it, if an individual officer is out on a single person patrol and that's been risk assessed, they make the call themselves and the decision whether they engage. I'm not actually sure where the risk would come from any other aspect. Can we have some clarification Chairman?

Ms Deidre Mac Bride:

It is commonly understood in detached youth work, that youth workers work in pairs when they are trying to intervene and trying to build relationships with young people who are hanging out on the streets, simply because it is safer for the youth workers in the event of something untoward being said to have happened. Therefore I would be concerned that if we moved to single officer patrols and didn't take that into account that officers would avoid talking to young people and I wouldn't want to see them avoiding talking to young people.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

Can I just add to that? Recently the PSNI launched a child protection policy last year. Then at the start of this year, a Policing with Children's and Young Persons Policy. Now those issues are covered in both policies and the policies were the subject of consultation with NSPCC, Social Services, and other outside child protection organisations, so those issues are covered in the policy.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Pauline McCabe.

Mrs Pauline McCabe:

Thank you. I think the review of the 12 hour shift system is particularly welcome. Many of the District Policing Partnerships have raised concerns around the impact of the 12 hour system on the quality of service delivery and I think that is very welcome. Two things,

could you confirm I think you were saying that the 10 hour variable choice is the optimum one for service delivery, it's not that you are choosing the one is the best comprise we can get with our officers based on the current system? Secondly, could you tell us what sort of timescale you are looking at against implementing the new system?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Roy Toner:

The 10 hour variable is the best system. John and his team have worked intensely on this with support from Merseyside police. The 10 hour variable is the best system that will fit our demand and supply requirements at the moment and tying in the health and safety aspects for officers working for a long period of time. The second phase is that the project team that is being set up in relation to the restructuring of our District Command Units, we are hoping to have the first phase of that in place by 1 April 2007. The game plan would be that we would have those new shift patterns in place by 1 April 2007. There is currently a process in negotiation that we have to engage with colleagues in the Federation and the Superintendent's Association and how we can move through this, but the 1 April 2007 is the proposed date.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

There is a question arising directly from this Report today. It is question 8 Mrs Moore – 140 recommendations contained within the Best Value Review.

Mrs Rosaleen Moore:

In terms of ranking order – 140 recommendations are obviously onerous but in terms ranking order in terms of priority setting, have you any comments on that in terms of implementation?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

In broad terms as I said before, the ones that have been highlighted today are the top three or four in terms of challenge and difficulty, but in terms of service delivery the most important will take sometime and certainly in relation to roads policing, the jury is still out on which way that goes. Some are actually remarkably straight forward and Members will have seen a report but ACC Toner is going to touch on how we are going to bring those in.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Roy Toner:

Some of them are very straight forward aspects in relation to briefing and that can be brought in within the next few months and there are implementation plans being put together and the Board will oversee that. Some in relation, for example, the work that has been done on the Best Value Review is informing the Information System Strategy about mobile data that officers could use out on the ground, so the feedback looks there in place. Some of the other ones, particularly the roads policing example is one that will have to be examined because the structures will be different in the future, where is that commanded from, where do we get the best value so that we deliver that service out on the ground. So, basically the prioritisation will be put in place and we will be bringing that back to the Board as part of the post implementation review. The Board will oversee that and how we are doing. I would say is that Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary and the National Auditor Office are on record as stating that there is no other police service in the UK that has actually undertaken such a comprehensive piece of work around the patrol function. Indeed, we are hoping that we are actually leading on that for parts of the UK.

Mr Joe Byrne:

I welcome the Report as given in relation to this single review process. Given that there is going to be a comprehensive spending review and as a result that this is likely to a big cut in police resources from the Treasury, how important is it that other recommendations in relation Best Value Review are speedily implemented, so that the police and indeed the Policing Board, are in a fit state if devolution of policing and justice ever comes?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

The reason for having a Best Value Review is to implement changes to save money. This organisation has proved year on and year on that it has come in on target. The last four years we have unqualified accounts from the Northern Ireland Office and the Treasury which I think is unique in the public sector in Northern Ireland. Also we have delivered the savings which we have been required to save under Gershon, so we are looking at all sorts of ways of making sure we are more efficient and if we can do this for less money without comprising quality of service we will do it. There is a tension there and Members are fully aware of issues around longer term funding that not only we face but all parts of the public sector in Northern Ireland.

Mr Alex Attwood:

Can I ask the Chief Constable if it is the case of the police senior command have signed off on a 10 hour shift pattern which seems to be what ACC Toner was suggesting might become the reality sometime early next year, because I wasn't aware that had come across the Board?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

As I said at the beginning, the health warning around the Best Value Review is, they are recommendations and we at the Senior Management Team are absolutely clear which ones make sense and which ones don't I will come forward and advise you of that. What is a very clear understanding is the 12 hour shift system does not fit the supply and demand. The whole principles here are to make sure that we are effective in serving the public and there are some challenges in that, but the notion of having half of your officers off on any one day, is not a good one in terms of resource management, but it will certainly come back to you.

Mr Alex Attwood:

If it is any help to you, at the accountability meeting in West Belfast which ACC Duncan McCausland conducted last week, which was very good, talking to his senior officers there, they all accept that a 12 hour pattern is gone. They don't know what it will end up like, but they all accept, whatever their preference might be, that's not going to be the case.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Could I say a very sincere thank you to you Mr Rafferty for the content and the clarity of your presentation?

Mr John Rafferty:

Thank you.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question 15, the Vice-Chairman – it relates to how normal is our policing.

Vice-Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:

Thank you Chairman. Chief Constable. Can you give us your assessment of how close we are to a normal policing environment here, your assessment of the situation that officers in Northern Ireland face on the ground, compared to the rest of the UK and indeed wider Europe?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

It is a wide ranging question and I will try to be fairly brief. We are still different and we need to be clear on that this is still, what I refer to as a unique policing environment on occasions, but in some extent we are becoming more normal. I would refer Members to the IMC Report in terms of intelligence assessment of certain paramilitary groups. We are becoming more normal.

If you look at our crime rate, it remains one of the lowest compared to comparative forces in the UK and if you look at crime reduction, we are certainly exceeding the achievements of many forces in other parts of the UK and that is an indication of increasing public support for policing in my judgement.

In terms of normalisation, this organisation has delivered everything it has been asked to deliver under the normalisation agenda and we have proved that we can deliver a very effective police service with decreasing reliance on military support. That having been said, now the police service deals with 3,000 marches a year. I don't even think the Metropolitan Police probably has that many, which shows just how different we are. I would certainly want on record the fact that we could not have survived last year's marching season without extensive support from our colleagues in the military, although routinely we use very few soldiers in routine support of police operations. That's a very positive thing. So, we are different.

In terms of the threat, well no other police service faces a dissident republican threat currently in my judgement although of course there are other challenges emerging to other forces, which we are not exempt from, in terms of international terrorist's threats. So that is a threat for all police services and we are not excluded from that. I would remind Members that a man has already been convicted, one of the few convictions for international terrorists has been achieved by officers from this police service and has been sentenced to 6 years for an international terrorist offence.

So, we still have a dissident threat and in my current assessment of threat from dissidents is reasonably high. It was not long ago we intercepted a large bomb being made we will say by dissident republicans subject currently a matter for prosecution.

That all having been said and it is topical that the Best Value Review was raised today, our officers are continually pushing edges in terms of normal policing.

The Chairman reminded me only this morning that he had a conversation with a sergeant on single officer patrol on a pedal cycle only last week. You do see in certain places, a few different style of patrol to that which you would have seen historically and we are doing it in a very sensible progressive way is a matter for District Commanders. I have not made, or given and will give no instruction to a District Commander on how he or she patrols. It is their judgement working with their officers and their communities supported by very sophisticated intelligence so we know what the risks are. I will certainly not put my officers at any risk as we continue to push those edges. So, it's a complicated a way of say that we are moving forward but we are still not the same as other police services in the UK.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Chief Constable do you wish to make any other introductory remarks at this stage?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Thank you Chairman. I won't touch on performance, that was last month. A very brief update for Members on some police operations since I reported to the last Board.

In terms of organised crime, we continue to attack those committing intellectual property fraud, counterfeiting and selling cigarettes, etc to unsuspecting members of the public. In May over £1/3m worth of counterfeit of goods were seized, the vast majority being films and DVDs - £151,000 worth – that's over 10,000 copies. What is worrying in my judgement is that nearly one third of a million of cigarettes were seized during that time. These are not real cigarettes, well they are real cigarettes, and they are far more dangerous than ordinary cigarettes about 10 times more tar in these. They are being sold within communities so people are actually selling poison to their own communities which

they fail to recognise. Only this morning two people have been charged with offences in relation to dissident republican membership and importing cigarettes.

Other operations currently under investigations, a new scam for want of better description, was identified by our Organised Crime Squad working with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, this involves fraud around cattle and selling of cattle at different ages. Substantial money is being raised through that. A large police operation working with DARD has led to arrests and charges in relation to that particular offence.

A success story, two people sentenced to 12 years in prison each for armed robbery of the Ligoniel Post Office back in June 2004. That was an Organised Crime Squad operation.

On the drug's side, again we continue to have success against those trying to import cocaine into Northern Ireland. A substantial seizure on 10 May 2006 somewhere around £60,000 - £80,000 cocaine – a man has been arrested with possession with intend to supply and the Belfast operation recovered ½ kilo of cocaine, that would be about £30,000 in street value. Again a man has been arrested and charged with possession with intend to supply.

The murder of Mr Fleming in Coleraine, a man has been arrested and charged with that murder and a second man with withholding information.

You referred to the murder of Michael McIlveen, Chairman, 6 people have been charged with that particular offence. Their ages range from 15 – 19. One other has been charge with affray.

An area I think we need to be waking up to, for want of a better description, around unlawful immigration. An operation by the Foyle Crime Team has uncovered a system whereby local people are being paid to marry illegal immigrants. A major operation identified in Foyle and led by Foyle, and two people have been charged in relation to those particular offences and a third person is being interviewed by the Home Office in relation to deportation. We doing a lot of work with the Garda who have more experience of this sort crime than we do.

Finally, Chairman two other things. In relation to the shooting of Mark Haddock, that is an ongoing investigation for attempted murder. I have briefed Members privately in more detail and an appeal was made by my Deputy Investigating Officer yesterday.

Finally, in terms of concerns around burglary, I know Castlereagh is an area that people have been concerned about. A police operation on 10 May 2006 did result in a very substantial arrest of two people who have been charged with attempted break-ins at two houses in the Castlereagh area. A huge amount of effort is going into Castlereagh to that particular problem. The potential victims of those crimes would have been between 70 – 90 years of age.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

You raised, Chief Constable, the issue of immigration. Two questions will be brought together – 11 and 3 – Dolores Kelly

Ms Dolores Kelly:

Thank you Chairman. Chief Constable given that from the start of June 2005 until the end of April 2006, 224 persons were taken to police custody suites on behalf of the Immigration Service. Members have serious concerns about the detention of foreign nationals in PSNI stations. We would welcome the Chief Constable's views on whether he believes this is a satisfactory means of holding such persons, the impact it may have on his resources, his views on whether such detention is human rights compliant, and whether he would support the Board on calling for government to provide more appropriate holding facilities? In addition to that question, could the Chief Constable explain the role of the PSNI in dealing with immigration in Northern Ireland and identify the issues which his officers face in dealing with illegal immigrants?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I will ask ACC Toner to deal with those questions.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Roy Toner:

We have a Foreign National Unit which is under the command of ACC Peter Sheridan in Crime Operations Department. The function of this Unit is to ensure that foreign nationals who arrive in Northern Ireland from countries that are designated by the Home Office register with police. Checks are then conducted to ensure compliance with this Home

Office requirement and police make a return to the Home Office of those persons who register for immigration purposes.

This is fairly standard practice across the UK. The main issue for police officers in dealing with illegal immigrants has been access to the Immigration Service itself. That has been a problem and we acknowledge that as do the Immigration Service. This has now been addressed with the formation of a UK Immigration Service Enforcement Team set up in the Province with police support. In addition, there is an out of hour contact service for police across the Province to speak to with the Immigration Service and to receive advice if needs be. It is envisaged that the eventual establishment of a fully functional enforcement and removal immigration team, with dedicated PSNI support for the issues that are peculiar to immigration for Northern Ireland, will be set up and fully functional. If PSNI officers are involved in that there will be full cost recovery and indeed, we may ask that those officers will be supernummary to the 7,500. There is an emerging trend of police coming into contact with illegal immigrants throughout the Province, either as a result of those people being detected for criminal, or motoring offences, or reporting immigration issues. We deal with any criminal aspects, if an illegal immigrant is stopped for a dishonesty offence or motoring offence that is one for PSNI to deal with.

The immigrant aspects are the responsibility of Immigration Service. We continue to work in support of Immigration Officers in respect of immigration offences and will continue to do so. In light of that, where Immigration Service brings someone into custody specifically in relation to immigration matters, this is not where an illegal immigrant is brought into custody for a criminal matter, but for an immigration matter, the Northern Ireland Prison Service has set tight parameters around when people for immigration offences should be held in prison.

Therefore as there is no Immigration Service Detention Centre in Northern Ireland. We have agreed that the Immigration Service can use our facilities with full cost recovery. We have looked at the amount of time and involvement in this and we find that most of these people are in for less than 24 hours. It is not causing great pressure on our systems and we are getting full cost recovery. We are satisfied that it is human rights compliant and indeed the individuals who are brought in have full access to legal advice and indeed have the protection that our custody suites have CCTV, recording facilities and that there are

police officers present there, so at this point of time it is not causing us any major difficulties as an organisation.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Do you want to put a supplementary in?

Mrs Dolores Kelly:

Whilst it is not causing any particular problems, it is no doubt an area where there will be increasing pressures and part of the question was would the Chief Constable support the Board in calling for a Holding Centre? I think we are particularly concerned about families who may well be illegal immigrants and whether or not they are then split up.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I think what we have identified if you look at certain areas of the UK is a growing issue rather one that is shrinking I would have no difficulty in saying it, it would not cause us any difficulty if there was a bespoke Detection Centre, as you see elsewhere, staffed by Immigration Officials. ACC Toner makes a point that as long as we continue to have to look after these people, they will be looked after in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act. They do get full access to legal advice if they need it and they are well protected and well fed, etc, but it is not core police business.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question relating to the assessment of a sectarian crime in Ballymena District Command Unit. Question 7 – Mr Attwood.

Mr Alex Attwood:

Before that, can the Chief Constable comment on the attempted murder of Mark Haddock. I think the people rely very heavily upon your assessment and the assessment of ACC Sheridan when it comes to these matters and clearly your view informs among others the opinion of the IMC. I think that in respect of the UVF and any possible involvement in this murder, that's particularly important because there are reported developments going on with the UVF which may lead to something more positive. Developments which I believe are very well founded and therefore this issue about Mr Haddock, it is going to be very important to make an overall assessment of where the UVF are. We know that from bitter experience that NIO take a long time getting around to declaring ceasefires being over

and we know that from bitter experience that there are organisations that use flag convenience or convenient words to explain away their involvement with serious crime. So, when it comes to this matter, it is important that you give an assessment when you are able to give an assessment. In order to give confidence if that is the case to what is, or is not, going on within the UVF and besides that's the only comment I want to make about the Haddock thing. I do not know if there is anything further you want to say in relation to that.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde

Very briefly Chairman, we will report fully to the IMC. It is 48 hours from the crime so it is too early to make any informed opinion, but rest assured we will not shy away from our responsibilities we are very clear on that.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Sorry, I thought I was on question 7

Ian Paisley Jnr:

Whilst this is topical, could I ask a question? Obviously the attempted murder of Mr Haddock has to be condemned and this platform should be used by all to ensure that it is condemned and condemned utterly. I know that you are restricted in some of the things that you can say, but can you give the public any indication of any leads that your enquiry has already identified? Can you indicate to us when you think you will be able to attribute and will you assure us that no matter how inconvenient that final attribution may be, that you will not shirk in any responsibility in ensuring that attribution will be made? Finally, could you maybe say something of the impact that this attempted murder and possible follow-ons from it may have on your policing strategy in loyalist areas?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I will ask my ACCs to comment on our policing strategy. In terms of leads, I am not second guessing my Senior Investigating Officer 48 hours into the investigation but certainly we stand on our record our history is very clear where it is appropriate to say this publicly regardless of consequences to others. It is a critical part of the role of the police service.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Peter Sheridan:

Just in terms of investigation, there are a number of lines on enquiry that the SIO is currently following. We put out a press release asking for witnesses to come forward and I would just reiterate that if members of the public are aware of any issues that should be brought to our attention that they do so in relation to that enquiry. As the Chief Constable has said, when the time comes we will make a proper assessment round it, we will advise the IMC accordingly.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

Just in relation to policing strategy in any loyalist areas, obviously there is a key reassurance message we have to give and continue to give to the entire public and that is why we look to emphasis policing with the community and raise visibility where necessary. Again in terms of the assessment or the protection of our own officers that will be based, as the Chief Constable has already said, on a clear risk assessment as to how and the style of policing we will adopt.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Ms Arlene Foster.

Ms Arlene Foster:

Thank you very much Chairman. At the risk of talking about the elephant in the room which no one is going to address, it seems it falls to me.

You give us a briefing this morning in the private session and I know if I asked you did you feel constrained in that briefing this morning by a Member of this Board, you will say you were not. But I have to share with you that I felt constrained in probing you this morning because of the presence of a Member who is linked to the PUP, who is not linked to the PUP, who is the Chairman of the PUP which has links to the Ulster Volunteer Force. I felt certainly that I didn't want to probe you further when you mentioned certain matters.

This Board has a statutory obligation to hold the police service in Northern Ireland to account and I have to say I feel that I am constrained in that accountability role today. I know it is not a matter for you directly and it is certainly something that we as a Party will be discussing with the Secretary of State in relation to that appointment, but surely you recognise that this Board needs to be concerned about its accountability function, certainly

I am and I'm sure the other Members of the Board are. This is not a direct attack on the Member involved but it is a wider issue, because if things work out the way the Secretary of State wants them to work out, there will be Members of another political party linked to an organisation which he wants to see coming under this organisation as well, so I want your view in relation to accountability.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Before the Chief Constable says anything, as you rightly say, the appointment of Independent Members to this Board is a matter for the Secretary of State. That's the first point. Secondly, that the Member concerned has signed fully the Standing Orders which includes a statement on confidentiality. The third point is that that same Member has been unequivocal in her support for the police in formal statements. Chief Constable.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Do I feel held to account. I am the most accountable Chief Constable in the country frankly and I have no difficulty whatsoever and I did not feel constrained one bit this morning. I told the closed session of the Board what was appropriate to tell the closed session of the Board regardless of who was there and who wasn't there, so I have no constraints about the current structure of the Board and it is quite straightforward to me. The more representative this Board is of the communities that my officer's police, the better it is likely to be. I am on record as saying that Sinn Fein should be on here for exactly that reason as well. I have had some very useful and interesting conversations with Dawn, all of which I thought were extremely helpful, constructive and gave me a far better view of the people she represents and that's who we police, so I have no difficulty.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question 7. Mr Attwood, I presume you still want to ask it.

Mr Alex Attwood:

The Chair referred to the tragic events in Ballymena. As there has been some media comment about all of that and certainly I think there is a general feeling, certainly among my colleagues, of a high level of anxiety in respect of the area generally. So, I just want to ask you to provide a general assessment of the level of and nature of sectarian crime in the Ballymena District Command Unit and your overall assessment of the situation that exists there, including the activities of the area's paramilitary organisations.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I will ask ACC Judith Gillespie to deal with that but just before that, very briefly. It was a crime that was very professionally investigated. Our Crime Operations Group was there as soon as it became known how serious it was. People have been arrested and charged very quickly. So, I think in terms of police commitment to make absolutely sure that those responsible are brought to justice it has been unequivocal. The Deputy Chief Constable visited Ballymena a couple of weeks ago. I also popped in there Saturday night at 8.30pm just to see what was going on, unannounced. What I found was the District Superintendent, the District Chief Inspector, the Sector Inspector, the sergeants, the community team, TSG support, I found huge energy and a plan around reassurance, which I thought was highly impressive. No one knew I was going, it was just how they were policing that night, so I think the commitment of our officers to deal with the issue and to reassure the community has been absolutely unequivocal but I will ask ACC Gillespie to go into to a bit more detail.

Assistant Chief Constable, Judith Gillespie:

Sectarianism within Ballymena is not a new phenomenon and it's reflective of the divided society in Northern Ireland. Indeed to some degree this is an issue in virtually every district in Northern Ireland and that is borne out by our sectarian crime figures.

To indicate the scale of the problem in Ballymena last year, that's 2005-2006, police recorded 133 sectarian incidents resulting in 145 crimes. Combating sectarian crime remains a priority for the police service as a whole but in particular in Ballymena DCU where it actually features in the local Policing Plan as a priority upon which the District Commander will be measured.

With regards to paramilitary activity, dissident republicans have been active in the Ballymena area since 2002, when as the Board will be well aware, there was attempted murder on a catholic PSNI recruit by placing a bomb under his car. Following separate incidents both in Ballymena in 2005 and in Belfast in recent months, there are currently 8 people awaiting trial for terrorist offences.

In relation to loyalist paramilitary activity, this has involved members of both the UDA and the UVF. In the summer of 2005 loyalists were involved in a violent reaction to a republican parade in Ballymena which involved attacks on catholic properties including

churches. The loyalist feud in 2005 was also evident with some pipe bomb attacks on rivals and street disorder as a result of the Whiterock parade involved loyalist paramilitaries in South Ballymena. The police have been alerting the community to the phenomenon of rival factions of young people who are eager to identify with either dissident republicanism or loyalist paramilitaries in the town. Arrests have been made by local police in recent months of youths carrying offensive weapons, like bats and catapults in circumstances where it is obvious that violence was planned.

It is also evident that outside the direct influence of paramilitaries, sectarian attitudes and expressions prevail amongst some young people and this was starkly demonstrated with a website that uses school names as a reference point and that uncovered gratuitous sectarian language and symbolism. Work by the DCU with local post primary education has been carried out to deal with this particular issue. DCU Command has been actively involved in encouraging dialogue with and between political and community representatives over the last six to seven months concerning sectarianism.

Some encouraging signs have been evident which include the removal of an offensive paramilitary mural adjacent to Harryville church and a reciprocal removal of republican flags in the Cushendall Road area of the town. These are small beginnings it is acknowledged but they are hopeful signs.

The DCU Commander has twice been a keynote speaker on the subject of sectarianism at events held as part of the Mayor's initiative as well an event organised by the local DPP at which all post primary schools were represented.

To counter the threat of sectarian or terrorists incidents, the Chief Constable has already referred to the additional resources which are clearly evident within Ballymena district and in particular within recent weeks. Officers are engaged in high visibility reassurance policing within the District Command Unit and are fully briefed as to the priorities within the District. Ballymena District Command Unit has also recently established a Hate Crime Unit to specifically to deal with hate incidents including those of a sectarian nature.

Breaking out of this sectarian cycle will obviously not be easy and police will do their part in addressing sectarian crime, but can I stress that a response to sectarianism based on police action alone is always going to be unsatisfactory. Police deal with the

consequences of sectarianism when it becomes a crime but we cannot police hearts and minds. Others including community leaders, parents, schools, churches and the government also have their part to play in addressing this issue in the longer term.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Ian Paisley Jnr. and then Trevor Ringland.

Ian Paisley, Jnr:

Thank you very much for that detailed report which helps maybe to portray the situation in a much more accurate way than is sometimes portrayed in the newspapers. Can you confirm for us that of the 133 sectarian incidents, that 43% were carried out by catholics on protestants in a predominately protestant town and that that is a dramatic increase on the attacks on protestants since last year.

Secondly, do you agree that it has been unhelpful when certain public comments have been made that haven't supported the police, and would you call on all political leaders in that area to support the police? I am thinking specifically, including the husband of the Police Ombudsman, who has made two public statements, one condemning Terry Shevlin, the District Commander, who put this information into the public domain about the proportion of crime and secondly a letter that he wrote to the catholic young people in Ballymena calling on them to support leadership from schools, sports clubs, parents, priests, parish leaders and political leaders, but deliberately did not call on people to support the police in the leadership that they give. I am sure like me you are disgusted that there has been a lack of support for the police in an area where there must be support for the police.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

I will try and address all of the lengthy question, but I am sure if I miss something out I am sure you will remind me. In terms of the attribution of sectarian crime, we have broken that down based on a best estimate locally and any release of those figures would have to be heavily caveated that they are simply a best estimate of the attribution locally. In terms of the breakdown, you are right in saying that approximately 43% of these crimes were committed against protestants, but that is a local analysis of the situation.

In terms of who should be condemning this tragic incident and who should be supporting the police, I would call on everyone - every right thinking person has condemned this tragic incident – and I would call on every right thinking person also to support the police in addressing sectarian crime but also to support other people who are working very hard within the Ballymena community to address the issue of sectarianism generally, because clearly that is an issue that does not just depend on a police response – it depends on everyone supporting the response.

Mr Trevor Ringland:

ACC Gillespie thank you very much for that report and I think you have touched on some of the things that I was going to raise. I think the elephant in the room in Northern Ireland terms is sectarianism and we have to take action to address that. We have done tremendous damage to our society over the last 40 years when divisive buttons were pressed by various people and that has led to tremendous conflict and tremendous hurt and damage which we are now trying to address.

We have created an opportunity to move away from that and I think we heard today some of the things that can be achieved through policing in a peaceful environment. It is to start selling that message to the wider community and some people at this present moment are not getting the opportunity to have that normal policing in their communities understand that maybe it is some people in those communities who are preventing that from coming about. There are those in our community who want to work constructively for the future and those who don't and I think it is incompetent on the community to understand the role that they have to play. Chief Constable would you agree that it is up to the community to start playing that part and bring that to the fore and also, the leaders in those communities, no matter what level they are at, to start showing the leadership that this community needs to have to move and tackle the problem of sectarianism and tackle the problems that have arisen out of the last 40 years?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I think this sums up the feeling on this side of the table. In terms of responsibility why I referred to my visit, and I know the Deputy Chief Constable was out on patrol a couple of weeks before me, was the fact that the police service in Ballymena have accepted that responsibility, what I saw was responsibility. Terry Shevlin has my full support as do the officers who are pushing the edges. We need a dialogue with all representatives.

I received a letter the other day from one of the churches actually highlighting Terry's contribution to policing and trying to deal with problem and the fact that he had taken responsibility and we need that from across the divide. We actually need people from different sides to get into the same room with our people, and that includes Sinn Fien, to have a conversation about the underlying trend. We can deal with the symptoms and we will deal with symptoms, what I was saying was dealing with the symptoms, now to deal with causes, when you can understand it far more deeply and we need the people in the community to take that. It is the responsibility where we sometime shy away from.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

I'll take two more contributions to this. Danny Kennedy and then Alex Attwood.

Mr Danny Kennedy:

Chairman. Thank you very much. Can I ask you Chief Constable or indeed ACC Gillespie which area had the highest number of sectarian incidents in that year? Was it Ballymena or was it any other area or is that figure available today?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

The area with the highest number of reported sectarian incidents was North Belfast.

Mr Alex Attwood:

I know Ian Jnr has many skills but he has now developed the skill of mind reading – the ability to interpret other people's minds (*interruption*). I am glad that Willie Hay would concur with me that his party colleague has developed the skill of reading the mind of what other people have written.

Mr Ian Paisley, Jnr:

I read what is published. You don't have to read people's minds to read what is published and see a blatant failure by someone to support the police, who should be supporting the police.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

One at a time – Alex.

Mr Alex Attwood:

The word that the speaker used was the deliberate omission of the reference to the PSNI – that is mind reading, and for all skills that Ian Junior has, that is one that he doesn't qualify to have. And as for what is disgusting, I think there are enough people in this room who can draw conclusions to what is disgusting today.

Let me finish, Chair.

The third thing is that, for any public representative to be criticised for writing a letter to the papers where he reaches out to catholic young people, which is a clear recognition that among a small group of catholic young people, and among a much larger group of other people in Ballymena, there is a problem around sectarianism. For somebody to be criticised for putting his neck on the line, for reaching out and doing that and being brave about it, and saying to his own community 'there is a bit of a problem, what are you going to do about it?' To show that leadership and then to be condemned for it, I think, is not a very responsible place to be.

The final thing is that figures are of reported crime, and as everybody knows, and everybody around this table should know after five years on the Policing Board, there is a lot of crime that goes unreported. A lot of crime goes unreported from elements within the nationalist community, something that now, gratefully, is getting changed, as ACC Gillespie would confirm about the reporting of crime figures in South Armagh, for example. So, don't let's take certain figures and represent them as being the full and only truth. The truth is much more complex than that.

And to conclude, there have been a lot of responsible politicians and parties and people in Ballymena over the last number of weeks, and these include people that Ian Paisley has referred to, and they have been responsible they have been brave and I have no doubt the police would concur that. I think there is about only one person in this room who doesn't.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

I would respond by saying that within Ballymena District Command Unit there is a very positive relationship with the District Policing Partnership and that includes all members of the DPP. There have recently been meetings between the District Commander and

representatives, including Declan O'Loan and others, to discuss the forthcoming parading season and in particular a forthcoming parade on Saturday, which is seen as a key forthcoming incident within the DCU and will determine how things shape up in the future. There are very positive signs in the run up to that parade, which I am very happy to report. But relations between the District Command Unit and the District Policing Partnership is a very positive one. and I would like to stress the fact that we are working together – police and members of the local community from both sides of the community – churches, schools and other organisations to address the issue of sectarian crime. But it really behoves every community representative to be working and assisting the police in that regard.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question 12. It is from Mrs McCabe and it relates to attacks on Polish families in Derry\Londonderry.

Mrs Pauline McCabe:

It was just to ask if the Chief Constable could give us an update on the investigation into those attacks on families in Bond Street area and also to let us know what steps have been taken to protect and provide reassurance to the Polish community?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

Foyle district has a Polish migrant working population of approximately 1,000 people and these people live and work in various parts of the city. In recent weeks, 3 attacks have taken place against property of members of the Polish community and these attacks must be totally and unreservedly condemned.

The alleged motive for these attacks was linked to 2 issues, firstly the wearing of Celtic shirts by 2 Polish nationals in a loyalist area and clearly they didn't appreciate the significance of that. Secondly, the Polish community being wrongly highlighted by the local community as being involved in a shop burglary in a loyalist area.

The investigation into the recent attacks on the house in the Bond Street is still ongoing. Extensive damage was caused to the house during the attack, despite the fact that the perpetrators would clearly have been aware that the occupants were present in the house. No one was injured as a result of the incident and no one has yet been made amenable

for these attacks. However, enquiries are ongoing and police in Foyle District remain in contact with the family through the Polish Welfare Association.

Local police have also made it clear to the community via representatives that the Polish residents of this house were categorically not involved in recent crimes in the local area. Unfortunately, the families concerned have left the Bond Street area now. However, to ensure the safety of Polish nationals within the city and to allay their fears, extensive consultations have taken place between the Polish Welfare Association, police and community representatives. Police are satisfied that these unfortunate events are isolated cases and not part of any orchestrated campaign. We are absolutely determined to ensure that as far as possible, migrant workers are protected and in response to this number of incidents involving migrant workers, police have increased patrols in the areas where they are known to live.

In Foyle DCU, 50% of its racial motivated crimes were cleared last year and you will be aware that it remains a Policing Plan target to increase clearance rate for racial crimes. Under our PSNI Hate Incident Policy, minority liaison officers continue to proactively work to identify migrant workers and advise and assist them in partnership with local voluntary and community groups and employees, and interpretation services are available 24/7. The recent publication of the Hate Incident Policy re-enforces the commitment to protect and support victims of all racial incidents and to ensure an effective, consistent and robust investigation and the Board might like to be aware of practical issues like the Northern Ireland Office Community Safety Unit's, Hate Incident Practical Action Scheme which provides additional home protection measures to those who have been attacked.

Mr William Hay:

I know the area quite well, a very settled community. This is the third incident here on a Polish family and I am just wondering if it is orchestrated and is there any paramilitary issues behind it? Also as well Chairman, there were people who used the situation, because of a few people who for a lack of understanding, I think, were wearing some Celtic tops in an area that is almost 90% protestant. The sad reality was that there was people who decided then to use that situation and unfortunately an innocent family suffered and has left the area. I am just wondering on the paramilitary issue, have your any information?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

As I said there is nothing to indicate that these attacks were orchestrated in any way and work has been done through the Polish Welfare Association to help the Polish community understand the subtleties of life in Northern Ireland and the issue of wearing of Celtic shirts in loyalist area.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question 27, Mr Attwood on the Historical Enquiries Team.

Mr Alex Attwood:

As has been said previously to the Board, one of the bravest initiatives undertaken for dealing with the past has been the Historical Enquiries Team. It is work that is very difficult and uncertain but it is beginning to have some traction with people who are going to see the Historical Enquiries Team in terms of reassurance. But there was some media comment in the last few days, both by the Police Ombudsman who is responsible for the police side of HET if you like and the HET themselves, in respect of the wider case load and the anticipated timeframe and the amount of money that was available were both inadequate, or maybe inadequate. So, given that this is such an important initiative, what is your sense of both the timeframe and the money issue and does further representation to government need to be made now or what other measures might be required?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I always get worried when people say things that are brave initiatives, that suggests it is vaguely suicidal and it is a very important initiative. I am grateful for your observations on it.

It is an ambitious project and it was developed by the police service with the support of the Board and others once we floated the idea and we did take the lead. The assessment of costs which we went to the government for and received funding for was based on the work of the Historical Enquiry Team. It was not based on any multi agency approach to this or other people coming in and I have made that point absolutely explicit to the Northern Ireland Office very recently. If money was to be withdrawn from the project, then obviously it would have an impact on our ability to deal with the work and the timeframe we had hoped to deliver it in. At the moment, I don't think there is a need to make any

further representations but I am closely monitoring the situation. I meet with HET very regularly, at least once a fortnight, to see how we are going. At the moment we are Okay.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question 13 and 14 relates to the complex area of disclosure. Ian Paisley Jnr to put his question and then Mr Attwood if you would put yours as a supplementary please.

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr:

I know this is a complex issue in terms of disclosure in criminal trials, but I wonder if you would care to comment on the effect that disclosure is having on the role which the police play in bringing cases to court and hopefully seeing them successfully prosecuted. Are you content with the way in which disclosure procedures operate here in Northern Ireland? If you are not, could you spell out to us how you would like those procedures regarding disclosure to be operated that would benefit the entire community in ensuring that justice is done and is seen to be done? Are you in a position to comment on any high profile cases where disclosure regulations are having a detrimental effect and and I pose the question about the Special Branch break-in at Headquarters? I know it had an effect on the Stormont case, you may want to comment on that or other matters.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Alex do you want to put your question now?

Mr Alex Attwood:

Let's hear what the Chief Constable has to say.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

First of all, the overriding principle that I have been very keen to prosecute is if we are running proactive operations is to bring a prosecution because that is the only way you get a proper public assessment of a case by a proper public trial. I do not particularly want to comment on individual cases.

There are a number of issues which have concerned me around disclosure which I have raised and we have had some very constructive conversations with the Attorney General and the Lord Chief Justice and others in relation to the way forward. I think these were extremely helpful, positive and constructive.

Disclosure itself is not an issue. It is enshrined in legislation, the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 and the Criminal Justice Act 2003 where there is an extremely helpful interpretation, if Members are interested. The Attorney General has provided guidelines and there are a number of specific stated cases I am happy to provide to the Board, if there are particularly interested which summarise the key issues around the principles of disclosure and I promise not to bore you with them today.

The key issue for me here is around the role of different parts of the trial process to ensure that a fair trial in accordance with Article 6 of the Human Rights Act is allowed to take place and all this legislation is human rights compliant if properly implemented. Our role is to provide anything we have in our case which potentially undermines our case to the Defence, that is our obligation. We have a Professional Disclosure Unit which deals with that.

The obligation of the Defence enshrined in legislation is to provide a statement of the Defence and I think that is where we need to far more robust, or our prosecutors need to be far more robust. It is explicit in the guidelines and the stated cases and is entirely reasonable that one would expect following primary, or initial disclosure, as it is now called, that the Defence tell the prosecution what the Defence is and we can then make sure that there is nothing else in our records that potentially would assist that Defence. I think that if that is robustly enforced and if we are not satisfied with the Defence statement, we go back to the Judge. I think we can move this world on and that the way I intend make sure we do achieve our objectives.

There are some very complex areas around public interest immunity where deeply sensitive information has to be looked at and there are occasions where quite frankly because of overriding obligations under the Human Rights Act, Article 2 Right to Life we have to make very hard decisions on whether to prosecute a case because the potential outcome of such a case could put people at substantial risk. I look to protection from the courts for that in appropriate cases and we do make representations to the judges who of course have to make the final decision.

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr:

Would you agree to the introduction of a Special Prosecutor to put the disclosure case?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Well I think the role of prosecution is explicit in the legislation, which is to decide what is relevant and what is not and again I think the Attorney Generals guidelines are very clear on the need for robust interpretation of what that is and I think that is the role of our prosecutors. We have prosecutors in Northern Ireland, and a very small group of barristers who prosecute on behalf of the Director of Public Prosecution, but they are in place. I think there is a debate to be had around the role of the trial judge and the disclosure judge in Diplock Courts which is not a matter for me, it is a matter for the law. But, currently the disclosure judge is different from the trial judge which can cause some particular issues in certain trials and there is work ongoing. It is out with my responsibility but there is a substantial piece of work looking at that particular issue and indeed Lord Carlisle has made observations on it in his latest report.

Mr Alex Attwood:

That was a useful answer, there were even moments of frankness in the answer from the Chief Constable. But, a few thanks I want to say, it was important that the Chief Constable reiterate the Article 6 requirements to a fair trial because there is a danger that we can overcook this thing even though there are issues we can overcook it and compromise the right to a fair trial. My question is that the Chief Constable said twice that the prosecutors need to be far more robust. Does that suggest that the prosecutors to date have been a bit of a roll over?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

No I don't mean that. I think the world has moved on. If you look at defence statements and the legislation and the guidance around defence statements, I don't think it is good enough for us to accept a defence statement which says the defendant did not do it, because then that does allow people to undergo, one could argue, fishing expeditions to seek anything that may create a case that doesn't exist. I think it is utterly reasonable that the prosecution has a right to a defence statement that outlines in reasonable but broad terms the difference that the defendant wishes to adopt. So then we can make sure that we disclose fully against that defence. I think that is different from simply demanding everything we have on everything. I think that is where the difference is in terms of the Article 6 point, I know those points are well made in the House of Lords, Judgement, RVH&C.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question 4 relates to training. Mrs Moore.

Mrs Roseleen Moore:

We have agreed to short circuit this one in relation to time, but in anticipation of a recommendation to approve the TED strategy, there were a number of points raised and we would like, as a Committee, to seek maybe a meeting with yourself, Chief Constable and your Deputy in relation to diversity training, especially diversity training in relation to the Foundation Programme. This has been thrown into relief by the debate which we have just had about the sectarian nature of Northern Ireland society and the need to maintain the meditation principles that have been inherent in the Foundation Programme to date and we would like to meet and have a discussion.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I am happy to have that conversation. As has been said there is a herd of elephants in the room today, but in addition to this the broadening of the spectrum of diversity our officers are now facing is fundamentally different to one three or four years ago, it's not to say this is not one of our top priorities, we are happy to have that meeting.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

We now move from elephants to horses. Question 10 Mr Brian Rea.

Mr Brian Rea:

Following recent public comments on the appropriateness of police officers patrolling on horse back and the absence to any reference to the use of horses for this purpose, in the Best Value Patrolling documents made available today, will the Chief Constable please advise of the effectiveness of each of the following methods of patrolling, the situations when each method is preferred, an indication of the cost of each method, and for what period of time an officers can remain on front line duties during a shift using the four particular methods listed, on foot, high visibility vehicles, unmarked vehicles and on horse back.

There is a second part to this. It seems that most police forces deploy police officers on horse back to police street disturbances and riot situations at football matches and other

types of demonstrations. Does the Chief Constable envisage using the same measures in Northern Ireland and would it be envisaged that officers would patrol on horse back alone rather than in pairs? I will leave the third just for the sake of time.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

There have been a number of comments made publicly, they have not been made by members of the public, and they have been made by people who should have some understanding of the basic police principles, but sadly didn't show that knowledge. We do not have a mounted section in the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

We, on occasions, borrow police horses from the Garda who kindly lend them to us to undertake high visibility patrolling because all informed good practice around policing shows they can provide a high level of reassurance, because there are extremely visibility – they are about 10' high. For example, reassuring an area like Castlereagh where there has been a high number of burglaries, they stand out, they can actually see over hedges and things because there are 10' tall, not 6' tall or 5' tall. They are best value and they are referred to in the Best Value Report, page 104, by way of information.

I have no current plans to create a mounted section. This is a very expensive way of policing and at the moment I am not sure we can justify that but we are looking at that. This is a part of a pilot we are running because the Garda are kind enough to lend us their horses and they are bid for by District Commanders who think they add value to their policing plan.

In terms of effectiveness, it is very hard to quantify and qualify what is effective and what is not. Foot patrol, we know the evidence shows provides a level of reassurance, certainly high visibility patrols. In terms of is it going to catch a burglar around the corner, answer no it is not? So, that's one part of the spectrum, it does provide availability and allow members of the community to talk and interact with police officers, a vital element and one of the most traditional elements and we have no intention of changing it and in fact we are doing very best to increase it. High visibility vehicles, obviously it's the immediate response. We have that particular challenge we have to provide an immediate response when people dial 999. They also can carry far more equipment than officers on foot, although you would be amazed by the amount of equipment on foot is carried. If we give them anymore, we will have to give them wheel barrows to carry it around in.

In terms of the cost, well it varies and I am happy to provide a detailed answer in writing Chairman around relevant costs of different types of patrol.

The bottom line is that we have empowered our District Commanders to devise a bespoke style of policing to different parts of Northern Ireland because they are so different. We do that in conjunction with District Policing Partnerships who I know my officers listen to very carefully and indeed some of the answers already around the style of patrolling in Ballymena illustrates how flexibility that response has to be.

In terms of officers on patrol, they tend to patrol in pairs. That is seen as the best way of having officers patrolling in mounted sections but no more than pairs. We don't use them in public order because we don't have the numbers. You would have to deploy a minimum of 6 in any public order situation. I could bore you further, as I was in command of them in London, but I would not envisage them being used in public order in Northern Ireland.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

That takes us to the final question. Question 28 relates to discipline of police recruits. Mrs McCabe.

Mrs Pauline McCabe:

Could the Chief Constable confirm the number of police recruits who have been disciplined for each year of the recruitment programme and could you also describe the types of offences that have resulted in such action and say how the percentage of recruits disciplined here compares with other police services.

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton:

If I could start with the end of the question that Mrs McCabe has asked. We can't yet compare with the rest of the UK simply because our recruits are on a different basis. Members will be aware that they are not attested until the end of their training in Northern Ireland, therefore during the period of their training they are student officers, they are not police officers and obviously in the rest of the UK they are police officers from the time they join, therefore they are subject to police regulations and discipline under police regulations. So it is not directly comparable. We are seeking some figures that might give us an idea to what the numbers generally would be.

With regards to the period 2001\02 to date, we have recruited nearly 2,500 student officers who have been through the Police College and less than ½% of those have been dismissed. The total we have now dismissed are 14.

The range of discipline matters starts with a very minor thing called a show parade which is really not having your uniform in proper order, your shoes properly cleaned or your trousers pressed. Above that, it is still a very minor level called verbal warning and that's for very minor breaches, not having a piece of work handed in on time, being slightly late for class, their bedroom being untidy, which of course some of our students find quite difficulty in these days. Verbal warnings account for half of the total figure of 175 disciplines. So half of the total figures are for very minor issues within the training college.

We then move on to a written warning and that is something which is given to something slightly more serious, losing a piece of police equipment or using inappropriate language in the training situation where they are still learning what appropriate language might be. They may get a written warning. Now contained within the written warning is the wording; "on confirmation of this warning you have reached that stage where one more breach of discipline may result in the termination of your service under regulation 6 of the Police Trainee Regulations 2001. So, a written warning is considered fairly serious and if they have another one, it may actually be terminal, in the sense that they may be dismissed.

Now, above that is suspension and then dismissal. Not everyone who is suspended is dismissed, it depends on the outcome of the actual investigation but as I have already mentioned, we have dismissed some 14 out of the nearly 2,500 that we have recruited since 2001 and if there is anymore detail, I am happy to talk about it later.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Can I say thank very much indeed and thank you Chief Constable and your colleagues for taking our questions today.

Just in conclusion, another project which the police are to be commended for relates to the Special Olympics. Along with the Board's, Vice-Chairman, the two of us attended the launch of the Law Enforcement Torch Run recently at the front of the Belfast City Hall. Indeed, Barry was dunked as part of the Polar Plunge Fund – that was the challenge on

that day – and he would never forgive me if I left him out and so too ACC Duncan McCausland.

The Board is pleased to provide for kit for the officers visiting towns and cities throughout Northern Ireland to raise funds to support the Games through the Torch Run. On behalf of Board Members and Staff, I am pleased to present, Mr Jeremy Adams with this money and also this fleece which the Board is also supplying to the officers.