

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD IN PUBLIC HELD ON THURSDAY, 7 APRIL 2011 AT 12:00NOON IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

Mr Brian Rea (Acting Chairman)
Mr Gearóid Ó hEára (Acting Vice Chairman)
Ms Martina Anderson
Mr Jonathan Bell
Mr Leslie Cree
Mr Alex Maskey
Mrs Rosaleen Moore
Mr Basil McCrea
Mr Ian McCrea
Mr Daithí McKay
Ms Mary McKee
Professor Sir Desmond Rea
Mr Trevor Ringland
Mr David Rose
Mr Alastair Ross
Mr Jimmy Spratt
Mr Suneil Sharma

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Matt Baggott (Chief Constable)
Mrs Judith Gillespie (Deputy Chief Constable)
Mr Drew Harris (ACC Crime Operations)
Mr Will Kerr (ACC Criminal Justice)
Mr Alan Todd (A/ACC Rural Region)
Mr Gary White (A/ACC Operational Support)
Mr Michael Cox, Deputy Director of Human Resources
Ms Liz Young, Head of Media & PR
Superintendent Command Secretariat

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Dr Debbie Donnelly (Acting Chief Executive)
Mr David Jackson (Director of Community Engagement)
2 Board Officials

APOLOGIES:

Mr Dominic Bradley
Mr Barry Gilligan

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Good afternoon everyone and welcome to this Policing Board meeting in public.

Last Saturday afternoon, a young man got into his car to go to work and he was brutally murdered when an undercar device exploded.

We are going to begin today's meeting by observing a minute's silence in memory of that young man, Constable Ronan Kerr., so I ask you to stand with me in a minute's silence.

[The meeting observed a 1 minute silence]

Thank you.

Chief Constable, you described Ronan as a peacemaker and Cardinal Brady described him as a peace builder, and he was both. But what was clear from his funeral was this, that he was first and foremost a loving son and devoted brother to a family that have been left devastated.

Ronan's family were immensely proud of his achievements and his work as a police officer, and so they should be. He was an exemplary officer who, in a very short space of time, had made a lasting mark on the community and in the colleagues with whom he worked. He possessed all the attributes that make an excellent officer and had the potential to go far in his career.

Like his colleagues, he made the choice to serve and protect the community. In the aftermath of his death, the community has shown their disgust and revulsion for those responsible; and yesterday the symbolic tributes paid to Ronan, demonstrate the overwhelming unity within the community.

We thank everyone for their widespread support at this time; and ask that their continued support for policing and the officers that work day and daily on their behalf.

His mother's powerful call to the community that her son's death should not be in vain must now be translated into action. Someone knows who did this and they must now do the right thing so that no other family has to go through the grief that the Kerr family has gone through.

Chief Constable, we know that Ronan's colleagues will do their utmost to bring those responsible for his death to justice. We have had a briefing on the progress with the investigation and the substantial arms find and arrests that have been made. We would congratulate ACC Drew Harris and his team, indeed everyone for the work that they are doing and how swiftly and effectively that work is being done. We would urge anyone with whatever piece of information, no matter how small, that they bring this to the police directly, either directly to the police, through Crimestoppers or indeed, through the Garda.

I would urge on behalf of this Board, the community to search their soul and give up those who are responsible so that they can be brought to justice and so that no other family or families have to suffer this same loss and heartache.

Today, is of course the last public meeting of this current Board, and over the last 10 years we have been on what has been described as a policing journey, that has delivered significant changes to policing. Police change has allowed the political and peace process to move forward, and we are not going back and we will redouble our efforts for the future.

When I speak of going back, I just look back, in one case quite a number of years, many years, and in another case just not so long ago, and make this comment that as well as the huge effort and commitment into the investigation of Constable Ronan Kerr's murder, other murder investigations continue. In particular, I am pleased to note the progress made in respect of the investigations into the murder of Inga Maria Hauser in 1988, that is the long term back one and to Bobby Moffett last year. Again I would ask all members of the public who assist in these investigations, to come forward to the police or to Crimestoppers.

When the Board agreed the new emblem for the PSNI, the symbols were designed to reflect diversity, hope and the desire to mutually respect and protect difference through policing. Symbols that reflected an inclusive society where all our values, common interests and differences are recognised, celebrated and protected.

Back in 2001, Ronan was a teenager, but in joining the PSNI he wanted to help make that better future and difference through policing. He was the epitome of the emblem he served under. Chief Constable.

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

Chairman, thank you very much for those words which I know will be of great comfort to Ronan's family and to my colleagues serving in the PSNI over the days and weeks ahead. The past days have been of immense sadness for Ronan's family and it must be them who remain in our thoughts and prayers at this time. Also for their friends and for the police family because that is what we are. We are more and more an inclusive organisation that accepts people on their ability and on their passion and their desire to do a good job on behalf of the people in the future. I think it also reminds us of the courage and sacrifice required of those who join this profession and quite frankly just how precious they are as people, but how precious they are to our future.

I hope it is of some comfort to Ronan's family and everybody who knew him that we saw yesterday, what I would describe as the new reality of policing. Policing that is increasingly involved with communities, intimately involved. The relationships that we saw yesterday have not just taken in a few days, they have been built by people talking and listening and being prepared to take risks. They have been built because of the work the Board has led on, on policing with the community and that takes time. But yesterday, to see red jerseys alongside PSNI officers, with young people, politicians but most importantly just the people that live there coming out in huge numbers to support Ronan's family is the new reality of policing and it is a policing that is personal. It is a policing that has evolved and I do think yesterday we saw something of the shared future and that is something that myself and my colleagues and everybody that works for this great organisation that is 10 years old will redouble our efforts to make sure that that is never lost.

It is right that we condemn absolutely those people involved in this brutal murder. We will pursue them with a world class investigation and bring them to justice relentlessly, and I use that word deliberately. It will be relentless and it is right that we appeal and I was really heartened by the words spoken from pulpits yesterday, words of condemnation, but words that appealed also to families and loved ones around those who want to take us back and I have no doubt that those words will have effect because they will reach people's consciences. It is right that communities take the oxygen away from these people so they cannot build support, they cannot seduce young people into thinking this is the way forward. But I fear at the same time that some of these people and the killers will not respond to persuasion, or argument, or the fact that we are now an inclusive place. I think they are too wrapped up in hatred and that is where we need to have more than simple words. We need, and I think my colleagues, and Ronan is the epitome of that, deserve to have people come forward with good information with the ability sadly to put these people before the courts and see European Law take its course.

We rely upon people since we work through a criminal justice system, in a democracy, within the boundaries of human rights, we rely upon people to protect their protectors, to protect their police and that has to be more than words. I would say to people that know something and have doubt about this, if you saw someone get into a car having drunk significant quantities of alcohol and drive towards a primary school, with all the recklessness that that entails, you would intervene and you would pick up the phone. If you knew of a child held hostage and being abused by people that did not care whatsoever, you would pick up the phone. Well the people that have done this are as reckless as the people that drive towards primary schools having drunk too much, and they are holding us hostage in terms of the good that we can do and the good that can be done in society. So, there is a parallel and I would like to see information coming in about people who want to use extreme violence and are planning for that, in exactly the same way as we would welcome from crime. That is why crime has gone down this year, that is why confidence has gone up and that is why policing has been embraced. I think there is a step change we would invite now in terms of protecting our protectors.

Chairman, this week has proven beyond measure that we are in a different place. It has proven that we will work harder on the things that matter. We will have those

difficult conversations, we will agree, we will disagree, but the support across communities has been quite magnificent and I really welcome that. In the months ahead though, I would like to see debates about how we take this momentum forward. I would value more flexibility as a Chief Constable in how and where we spend the resources given to us by communities to protect them. We probably have too much bureaucracy and regulations. We are in the business of protecting people that comes first and we have to reconsider whether we are doing that in the right way. There will be opportunities to pass legislation that will protect the protectors as well as protecting communities. My invitation is, let us take some risks, let us do it by consensus. We need justice systems that are speedier.

We made massive progress this year with our colleagues in giving discretion back to police officers and making sure that justice is proportionate. But we cannot wait 3 or 4 years for trials to come, there must be a better way of doing that, that brings people to justice quicker. I think we need to spend more time in conversations about the controversial issues, that if we do not talk about them quietly, may take us back into a different place and that is about finding space amongst people that challenge each other, but people that are friends at the same time and trust each other. These are things we can talk about as the months go by and this for me would be building upon the legacy of Ronan's sacrifice, that we become more of a team on those particular issues.

Chairman, I want to give some words of encouragement too. This is a resilient organisation. This is a fantastic organisation epitomised by Ronan. We have investigative ability that is second to none. We have expertise, we have experience and with the support of the Board, we have extra money to make sure in the long term we can continue to put these people on the back foot. We have never played down the threat level. We have been preparing and preparing for the long term.

If I go through the last 2 years, we have a Strategic Review that was self critical to put more resources back on the street, supported by the Board, an in-depth self critical look. We have built up our cross border working to a state where, as my colleague the Commissioner said last week, "*we may wear different uniforms, but we are woven of the same cloth*", that was an incredibly important statement and we have challenged

ourselves on how we work with our neighbours. We have gone through a significant challenge around our resource to risk. When we said “*encouraged and challenged by the Board*”, to put 600 more police officers back on the streets, people said it would not be done. It is 611, that is a sign of our commitment to policing with the community. I challenge anyone to show me an organisation that has done that and using those people wisely will again be part of Ronan’s legacy.

We have launched our Policing with the Community Strategy, it is a far reaching important document that is not just words because it is backed up by real commitments, a real emphasis on quality, self accountability. That is a world leading piece of work, again epitomised by what we saw just yesterday, and we have given discretion back to police officers who are trusted by their community, without the 57,000 files that went with that just a year before.

So, why am I saying these things today, because I think this is a time of reflection, it is a time of sadness, but if we cannot use what we have done in the past 18 months to 2 years to secure the future, then we would have failed Ronan and his family and good personal policing will be the way forward still, we are not going to be deflected in any shape or form from doing the things that matter by a challenge from people who will be consigned to history and will be consigned to prison.

Chairman, it would be wrong in conclusion that I do not acknowledge the support of Members of the Board who are leaving today. I think the journey of policing and someone who has been here just 20 months, has been remarkable and I want to pay credit to everybody on the Board who has been part of that journey and acknowledge what you have done.

I want to acknowledge also colleagues who are leaving with all the upheaval of the past few years. It would be wrong not to mention Duncan McCausland specifically, but there are many others who have left the police service as part of the Patten reforms to build the place where we are now, and I want to acknowledge them as well for what they have done.

But lastly, I want to acknowledge my colleague Ronan, his sacrifice, his family and his legacy will be a shared future. Thank you Chairman.

Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

We have one or 2, well more than one or 2 people who wish to come in and we are starting with Jimmy Spratt.

Mr Jimmy Spratt:

Thank you Mr Chairman, and can I too on behalf of my party express our very sincere sympathies first of all to Mrs Nuala Kerr, and indeed Ronan's brothers and sister and indeed, the wider family circle, and also to PSNI colleagues who have lost a valued and trusted member of the Police Service and we must never forget all of those folks.

Can I say in relation to the dignity and the almost simple words of Mrs Kerr, I think had a profound effect on this entire community whenever she spoke, I think it was last Sunday afternoon. Those images and pictures went out right across the world and I think her simple message spoke a message that many of the rest of us were thinking as we sat in our living rooms right around the province and indeed, further afield.

Can I say as someone who has had the unfortunate position of attending many, many colleagues funerals, indeed I was saying to some of the folks, some of the political people from different parties whenever I was down at the funeral yesterday, I remember doing 9 police funerals in a period of 6 days. I think yesterday was the same funeral, but for me yesterday's funeral was different because I think the level of community support right across this province, right across all of this island and these islands and indeed, right across the world spoke volumes of the levels of community support and indeed a new support of people speaking with one voice in support, not only of the Police Service, but also speaking in a voice that very clearly said, "we are not going to tolerate this". I think there is a great new opportunity in all of the sadness and in all of the trauma with the Kerr family and the PSNI over the past number of days. I think there is tremendous opportunities for all of us to move forward in terms of policing, not forgetting colleagues in the past, but as some people said, to look to a future a new opportunity where we all work together in terms of policing, support the Police Service in what they are doing.

In the words of the Chairman, search our souls and have those who were guilty or are guilty of this heinous crime brought to justice as soon as possible, and that means anyone with no matter how small a piece of information, to bring it to the police, that is the responsibility of everyone of us as citizens. I just hope that we do not have to attend any more funerals and that that support will blossom into something that can never be turned back. I think Chairman that is all I want to say.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Basil McCrea.

Mr Basil McCrea:

Chief Constable, we have all had a lot to say over the last number of hours and days, so we do not need to reiterate them. But there are a couple of points that you mentioned that I would just like to pick up on and endorse.

All of us were deeply moved by the way that Mrs Kerr spoke, I think she spoke for many of us and it takes courage to speak out like that. But it also takes courage I think to recognise the contribution that others have made. Sometimes it is easy to say in terms of your own community, but I have to say that one of the most significant things that I saw at yesterday's funeral was the fact that the GAA were lined up alongside your officers, our officers. I think it is a public demonstration about how our society has changed and the point that I want to make to people that listen to me, is to recognise what other people are making a significant effort.

I have to say, I was also deeply moved by the discussions by the Cardinal actually telling us about where we need to go on the society, and my final point on this is to recognise, that although there was a huge, complete and incomprehensive out-welling of support for you, your officers, for Ronan, his family, that there remains a hard core of individuals who are unmoved by the community's statements and it is for those people that we need to have very effective policing, that we need to work together as a community, that we need to have a proper dialogue about the way forward.

You did mention, just in conclusion, about there are other issues to come forward about how we deal with the legacy of the past, about issues that are coming forward and we

must recognise, that whilst we must deal with these issues appropriately and properly, our role is for policing in the future.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much Basil McCrea. Alex Maskey.

Mr Alex Maskey:

Obviously, we had a conversation upstairs as well in terms of the private session and although not much by way of content that was said differently that was said here, but I think it is worth repeating a number of the remarks.

I want to share most, if indeed not all, of what the Chief Constable has said here this morning. First of all, I would formally express again our own party's condolences to Nuala Kerr and her family on the loss of Constable Ronan Kerr, their son and a loving brother. I did not have the honour of knowing Ronan, I knew his father well, nevertheless by all accounts and by every testimony, he was absolutely the calibre of a person that any police service would give their right arm to have as a member.

I think that whilst a lot has been said and much has been said of course about the symbolism of much of the circumstances surrounding, in particular the funeral, and the public out-pouring of responses and comments from all sorts of people, and from every side of our community, I do think that yesterday's events around the funeral and the symbolism there was, as I said upstairs, a window of what it could be like every day for policing and for our community as a whole. I do take great encouragement from the Chief Constable's remarks this morning and where he reaffirms the police organisation's commitment to deliver policing with the community, engaging with the community, respecting all sections of the community but of course that is the responsibility, hopefully shouldered also by those of us on this side of the table on the Policing Board and in wider society. So indeed, all political parties, other civic organisations and the police themselves, we all do have a very important shoulder of responsibility to bear in the time ahead, and I believe that people will do that.

For those people who have been involved and who in fact took Ronan Kerr's life, I would like to add a few remarks.

First of all, I think it is important to reiterate, that the organisation whoever they may have been in this particular occasion, have virtually no public support. It is actually quite, I think illuminating that not one person associated with any of those organisations has had the courage of their convictions to come out and try and even justify or explain or rationalise why they took this young man's life and I personally think that that speaks volumes. More importantly I think, that as you yourself referred, PSNI is an organisation of some 10 years in the formation and it would be best described as a peace process police service and I think that people like Ronan Kerr and others from his particular community, who have had experience, who have had a history but who have very, very positive expectations and I think more importantly, have been prepared to give in their own way, their leadership and their young lives stepping up to the mark, rising to the challenge despite the difficulties there has been in regard to policing in the past, they are prepared to make it a much better future. I would actually suggest to the people who are involved in these activities, first of all to stop and to stop it now because it has no support and it is not wanted, it is not required and his death was absolutely needless.

But more importantly, the words from people in this room may not cut any ice with those people in those organisations, although I hope it still might, I think that the people involved in the killing of Ronan Kerr need to look at the imagery of yesterday's young Gaels in Berragh yesterday who were prepared to shake the hand of a police Chief Constable, prepared to stand beside police officers in their own home village, proudly representing what they come from as the Gaelic Athletic Association from a very strong community there. So, I would actually invite those people who are involved in these activities, to look into the faces of those young people who are stepping up to the mark, proudly of who they are and where they come, but prepared to rise also to the challenges that we all face in the time ahead. So, I again take great encouragement from our young people and I would like those people to recognise that those young people in Berragh who stood yesterday in respect of their own friend, Ronan Kerr, they are the future. The people who are involved in the activities that killed him are part of the past. Thank you.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much. Just 2 more requests, Jonathan Bell and then Alastair Ross, very briefly please.

Mr Jonathan Bell:

Can I say Chairman, thank you for the distinguished way you have led the Board's response to the Chief Constable for what was a modern day hero and we thank God and thank Mrs Kerr and family circle for the life of this man, he had the physical fitness, the intelligence, the inter personal skills, everything that anybody would desire in a good police officer that served the public and we thank God for their lives.

Chief Constable, can I raise a concern that does exist. There is a rise and tide of anger within the loyalist community as to what has happened and would you join me in encouraging those loyalist leaders, particularly in my own area, but also throughout Northern Ireland, who are calling for no retaliation particularly from many young men who are very angry. There is only one police service in Northern Ireland and that is the Police Service of Northern Ireland. They and they alone must be the ones to respond to this situation. While we can understand the anger that is there, but it is they and they alone and I salute the leadership that is being shown throughout the loyalist community, in not allowing provocation and urging against any form of retaliation and we encourage those young men. By all means be angry, we are all angry that we have lost such a modern day hero, but there can be no response other than that through the one police force for Northern Ireland which is the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Can I secondly, just briefly Chairman ask, we have had in recent times up to 170 attacks. We have had 9 improvised devices under vehicles and we do not forget the Peadar Heffrons and the Ryan Croziers who live heroically with disability everyday for serving us. But are you satisfied that with major events coming up, such as the Royal Wedding, the visit of Her Majesty's the Queen to the Republic of Ireland, you have sufficient police officers and sufficient resources commensurate with any threat that may arise?

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

Well firstly, can I say, we do not need any more violence, we do not need any retaliation, the only place to go in dealing with this is to the Police Service of Northern Ireland and through the court system because that applies on behalf of everybody and every community. So, for any community, any community, that is showing a restraint I applaud you and that involves everything. So no retaliation, we are the people who deal with this.

Secondly, policing I am afraid will never be in a place where it can eliminate 100% of all risk and all harm. Sadly, we have seen that over many years and we saw it even more starkly in the past few days. But we have argued the case for a quarter of a billion pounds of extra resources to develop our capabilities even further. I have world leading expertise and world leading experience. Last year we charged 5 times as many people with terrorism than the year before sadly. We have a seamless relationship with our colleagues in the Guards and I would challenge anywhere in the world to give me an organisation that is doing better in tackling serious harm, whilst also maintaining a continual progress with policing with the community and our personal policing. They are not 2 parts, they are part of the same story and we are managing that. This year we have lower crime, higher detections, higher confidence, more people on the street and we are making real impact. But I cannot make a promise that we can eliminate threat completely in spite of all of our efforts. That is why I appeal for information, greater support and greater intolerance, because working through the criminal justice system with the Human Rights Act is entirely the place to be, but you cannot make that work unless you have support from the public and people willing to give you information. So, the big issue here is not about numbers, it is not about expertise, it is about the next phase of protecting our protectors and that is a deliberate phrase I am using now because that is the space I want to be in.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much Chief Constable. Just one more contribution now and that is from Alastair Ross.

Mr Alastair Ross:

Thanks Chairman, I will be brief. I just wanted to add my own personal condolences to the Kerr family for a young man who did put the uniform on to serve the entire community and I think that it is fitting that we have had tributes from right across the table, from all political parties in this room and indeed, the community.

Can I just say that the one thing that that murder achieved was simply to reaffirm a resolute determination of people right across Northern Ireland, from every community and right across the political spectrum to stand together, to bring Northern Ireland to a better future and to firmly reject those who wish to drag us back to a past which offer young people no future and no hope whatsoever. My thoughts today are with his family and with every police officer who puts the uniform on to serve the community and I think the best response would be for the community to still stand together and to work with the police in order to make our community safer and to bring those who carried out such an atrocity, bring them to justice and take them off our streets.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much. Ian McCrea, would you want to finish just very, very briefly please if you may.

Mr Ian McCrea:

I certainly will be very brief. Again I want to pay my condolences to the family circle. I recollect the time of the Omagh bombing. I was standing with my father after that atrocity happened and many of those scenes that I saw are etched in my memory, and certainly no doubt more so on the families who lost loved ones and were injured. That community suffered another atrocity last weekend and certainly having spoken to friends and people who I am aware of in that area, it certainly brought back terrible memories back to the Omagh bombing.

There were follow up searches and things had been found in Coalisland and obviously yet to be confirmed whether or not those are associated with this. But can you give an assurance and join with me in stating categorically, that every opportunity will be taken to remove this type of weaponry, whether it is bomb making material or indeed, the guns that have been in and around the different areas. But people who are known to

be involved with these, that every action will be taken to ensure that they are not allowed to either take part in any of this type of activity or indeed, be removed from the streets and remove the type of materials that are being used.

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

Forty nine arrests already this year by ourselves and by our colleagues in the south. We are policing the island of Ireland together and I think that shows you the determination that I share with my colleague the Commissioner, and the support we have been given by new Taoiseach as well, and this is a problem that we share. So, you can see in terms of the figures and the results already, it is a sad figure. I do not want to celebrate that because I wish we did not have any people having to be arrested, but that degree of success already is significant. We have taken huge measures to free up resources, police officers time spent on the streets by cutting back the paperwork, giving police officers more time to actually do the things that matter in communities, picking up the information that they are given. We have made some really tough choices to put back and to enhance the capabilities that my colleague ACC Drew Harris needs to deal with the serious harm, not just next year but the year after so we can give people a future. You have my absolute commitment that we are, based on our track record, relentlessly pursuing those responsible and we will continue to do so.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much Chief Constable and thank you for all the comments that have been made. Sorry, Professor Rea did you want to say something?

Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Could I extend, through you Chief Constable, the sympathy to Mrs Kerr and her family at this time? Also to you and through you to the Service because you have lost a member of that family in very tragic circumstances and also, that our thoughts are in particular with ACC Drew Harris and his team as they seek to bring the perpetrators to justice.

But if I could change the subject, it would be remiss of us as a Board if we did not acknowledge Duncan McCausland's contribution to the PSNI. He was a distinguished police officer, highly professional who took civil unrest policing to a higher level, not

simply in Northern Ireland but throughout these islands and I would also say much further afield. He was a believer in human rights based policing and he was courageous in delivering that and he will be missed I believe by you and your colleagues and it would be remiss of us not today to pay that tribute.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much. We are going to make some comments with regard to a number of people just towards the end of our meeting in public.

We are going to the questions now, and question 3 is in the name of Alex Maskey, and if we could have a response to that please Chief Constable. ACC Harris I believe is going to answer.

Q3 - Could the Chief Constable provide an update on the ANPR (Automated Number Plate Recognition) upgrade project which was identified as one of the PSNI's Continuous Improvement Projects for 2010/11, focusing in particular on the extent to which the anticipated benefits have been realised?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Drew Harris:

Thank you very much. The ANPR project and the installation of ANPR across Northern Ireland has been ongoing throughout this financial year, and we have almost reached the end of the process of installation of ANPR.

The Continuous Improvement project has been under my own control and we have been assisted by Deloitte's in identifying the benefits and then how we would make sure we realise those to the full.

The National Strategy within which ANPR works is to target criminals through their use of the roads, and the ANPR system brings us 4 key benefits, to enforce the law; to promote road safety; investigation of accidents and to assist in patrolling of roads. It meets the following policing objectives in terms of public confidence and reassurance, reducing crime; increasing the number of offenders brought to justice, reducing road traffic casualties; and making more efficient of police resources. It provides a proactive capability in terms of focusing on patrols in areas and communities at most risk, and

enables the right kind of officers to be in the right place at the right time to deal with various incidents.

As we have been in an installation mode through the last year, we have been concentrating upon that and the upgrade project associated and we are on schedule for delivery well within the project timelines. It is used on a daily basis throughout the service for all forms of criminality, including drink driving, disqualified driving, but right up to and including murder and terrorist investigations.

If I can give an example, I won't give a location. A teenage girl was given a lift in a vehicle she was then subsequently the victim, by 2 occupants of that vehicle, of an assault and then serious sexual assault. She knew she was in a red car and she knew at one stage that this car was followed by a green vehicle. Using ANPR we were able to search for that convey pattern just of a red and green vehicle, and we knew obviously the place, the date and roughly the time and we were able to identify this convey and identify the red vehicle and that led us directly to the perpetrators of this very serious offence. Detectives are learning more and more to use this, particularly targeted against the travelling criminal, particularly those who involve themselves in for instance, aggravated burglaries.

Over the next year, we will then work through the benefit realisation process in terms of focusing resources, increasing detection and assisting in terms of road safety and public safety generally.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you. Alex Maskey, have you anything to add?

Mr Alex Maskey:

No.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much ACC Harris.

Question 5 in the name of Leslie Cree. Question 5 please to do with payments to the former members of the Reserve.

Q5 - To ask the Chief Constable what steps he is taking to ensure that payment to former members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, Part Time Reserve, is made as promptly as possible?

Deputy Director of Human Resources, Mr Michael Cox:

The payment of the Part-Time Reserve gratuity is being undertaken by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Police Service has no direct role in doing that. It is being done by the Police Fund. We have an information sharing agreement with the Police Fund and we have dealt with any requests for information quickly and professionally as they have been received. We understand from the Department, that there has been over 6,000 enquiries and about half of them were incomplete or inaccurate and they have been sent back to the applicants to get fixed and resubmitted, and we will continue to provide the information to help that process as required.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Leslie Cree.

Mr Leslie Cree:

Thank you for that. Earlier today we quite rightly paid tribute to Constable Kerr, but there were many people in the Part-Time Reserve who also provided excellent service, and having created the expectations I think it is very important that we deliver upon that. Could I ask the Chief Constable, because I do believe he has a role in this to former officers, that he would add his support to call on the Department of Justice to expedite this matter as quickly as possible. Thank you.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much. Question 6, Martina Anderson's question on the screen, Chief Constable.

Q6 - To ask the Chief Constable if he is aware of private tuition being carried out by serving PSNI officers and former RUC personnel for prospective recruits for the PSNI?

Deputy Director of Human Resources, Mr Michael Cox:

Okay Chairman, thank you. The current cycle of recruitment finished with the final intake on 27 March 2011 and that sort of sets the scene for this question.

From a cursory examination of all manner of things, there are people who have set themselves up to provide tuition for selection procedures. They are not in any shape or form endorsed by the Police Service, nor would they. We have looked to see if there is any declared business interests for this type of activity and there is not, none that we have identified which we would regard in any event as inappropriate as being a member of the Service.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Martina Anderson.

Ms Martina Anderson:

Mr Cox, my understanding is that the colleges, Colleges NI, have been approached by yourselves in relation to a pre-entrance programme to assist any candidate perhaps getting access. I have been informed that this was the second time you had such a possible discussion with the colleges, but that there was some resistance within the organisation because of the kind of tuition that is being done at £300 to £400 a throw. My concern would be, maybe without such a programme as is being perhaps discussed now with the colleges, that you would not be capturing the society in its totality and perhaps preferential treatment is being given to one section of the community as opposed to representativeness. Particularly across working class areas and I think if you are going to have Service that is reflective of the community, it needs to be both working class, middle class as well as having Irish language speakers and others in the Service. So, I would be concerned if that were true and that is why I am raising it today.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Michael Cox.

Mr Michael Cox:

Just to respond to the first point about contact with the colleges. We are looking to future recruitment arrangements and we are looking to see how we might streamline the process. We are very fully aware that any type of coaching should be available to all society and it will be done across that, and just to repeat what I said earlier, there is no formal endorsement and there would never be formal endorsement of any of that for all the reasons you say.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you very much. Final question Alastair Ross, question 7, it is to do with recruitment for the future Mr Cox.

Q7 - To ask the Chief Constable how many officers they will be recruiting in each of the next five years?

Deputy Director of Human Resources, Mr Michael Cox:

Yes, thank you Chairman. As I said a moment ago, the current cycle finished on 27 March 2011 and we are now looking at how to move it forward and look to the future. I cannot give a simple answer to that simple question, because much would depend on wastage rates and affordability looking forward and we will continue to keep the Board informed as the thinking becomes apparent.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Alastair Ross.

Mr Alastair Ross:

Could I just say on the issue and I would preface my remarks by saying, that recruitment in the future, I hope that we do see recruitment from the entire community of Northern Ireland. From those sections of the community who maybe in the past did not want to come forward and I think the weekend's events, it needs to be reasserted and we need to say it again, that we want to see a police force which is reflective of the whole of the Northern Ireland society. That said, I think it should be done on merit and merit alone, and I did not like the fact for the last decade, that members of the

community that I represent were discriminated against on the basis of where they went on a Sunday morning or the background that they came from. So, I welcome that since the last Board meeting, the 50:50 recruitment practice has been phased out, but I do want to see people from right across the community come forward to the police.

I know that efforts have been made to get more police officers from behind desks and out onto the streets, and have more visible policing and that is something that I would certainly support. But we are in a position now where we have a much smaller police force. We have seen the Full-Time Reserve now phased out and it was based on a more normalised society in Northern Ireland that we all hoped we would have. Whilst we have come on leaps and bounds over the last decade in terms of the kind of society that we have, I think we need to be realistic in that we have a severe terrorist threat, and over the last 24 months we have seen more and more attacks on police officers and on police stations. With that in mind, would the Chief Constable envisage that he would be looking to revise the types of figures of the police force that he would see in the coming years, and does he believe that there will be significant recruitment over the next 5 years into the Police Service?

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

We spent the last 18 months doing 2 things. One is making the case for the resources we need following years of churn to actually create a 4 to 5 year programme of capability building that work is being done. We have some of the finest facilities for dealing with serious harm, both people, technology, everything we need out the top drawer and the quarter of a billion pounds to have achieved that, alongside the Board in a time of recession, has been a significant achievement and all that money is going into that. So, we are not lacking in resources here. We got support, full support for a quarter of a billion pounds. I do not know of any other organisation that has achieved that, whether that is public sector or other organisations.

Secondly, we have been very purposeful in freeing up police officers time. I have challenged on the back of that excellent strategic review, every bit of our policing business, that is why we have got 611 more people on the streets. We have challenged everything to make sure that we have the right capabilities to deal with the day to day policing, tackling serious harm, tackling roads and the resources are there to

do that. The bit of the jigsaw that is missing is sufficient information, but that will come because I am very reassured of that having seen what I saw yesterday. There have been some tough choices. I have not been afraid to grab the nettles. I have not been afraid to go into that controversial space with colleagues to my left and right and sometimes that has not been without some degree of how can I put, heated debate. But we are now with a 4 year plan to tackle security. We have a significant uplift in our ability to do so. We have reduced crime, improved confidence and put more people on the street as well as giving police officers back commonsense. You know something, I think that is a pretty firm achievement actually, and on the back of this tragedy we are going to redouble our efforts to make that work even more. Thank you.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Ian McCrea, do you want come in on that?

Mr Ian McCrea:

A lot has been said about the number of additional officers on the streets. I, on behalf of the Board, attended a session with the District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) in Cookstown, and one of the concerns that a number of people there were expressing from a DPP perspective was, not seeing those police officers on the actual streets, especially in the rural areas and I suppose I can speak from some experience as two thirds of my constituency is a rural constituency. But given the dissident threat that there is, how do you feel the neighbourhood policing can actually tackle the job as you see it, or we all see it, trying to do given the fact that most of the dissident activity is carried out in rural areas or they are known to be more rural and when officers are going out they are having to go out in teams and removing the rest of the officers from actually being able to tackle the job in the areas that they are assigned to. Therefore, I suppose in ending this, it is more or less around trying to ensure that we get officers seen on the streets and giving people that reassurance that they need at this time.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Ian McCrea, can I ask you, is there a question in that?

Chief Constable, Mr Matt Baggott:

Well, I think you could be, amongst the sadness of the past few days, reassured by seeing PSNI officers standing alongside young Gaels, standing alongside that community, that policing with the community is entirely the right place to be. As I said before, in 2 weeks time, every household in Northern Ireland will receive a really comprehensive set of commitments. It will tell people what we are about, what we are doing, and what sort of police they want. Why is that important? Because that is what the fundamental bit of policing is. It is to protect people and keep people safe, and we have moved leaps and bounds under Alex Maskey's support and leadership of the Community Engagement Committee and others involved, in setting out some very clear standards. Policing with the community is not an ad hoc, inconsistent thing we do. It has standards, it has accountability, and that is the step change we have made.

There will be over 700 police officers involved in neighbourhood policing, and they are now as we speak, and ACC Kerr has taken that work forward, we guarantee to have police officers available. Yes, of course we have to be mindful of their safety. Nothing I am saying here compromises the safety of my colleagues, we are very, very mindful of that and we will be cautious in how we do this. But, the only place to take the piece forward, is by police officers being known, knowing relationships, confident in them and all of that involves our policing with the community and our personal policing. So, you will get no dropping back from me on this, you have my reassurance on that. There will be absolutely no dropping back on policing with the community because that is part of dealing with the problem that we face, and we have the resources to do that and I have the people to do that, and we have the commitment to do that as well.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you Chief Constable. Basil McCrea, have you a question on the Policing Plan, I understood you had?

Mr Basil McCrea:

That is right, but move on Chairman.

Acting Chairman, Mr Brian Rea:

Okay, thank you. Then that brings us to the end of all the questions.

Just in conclusion, whilst this is the last meeting in public before the Board is reconstituted in May 2011, today we publish a new Board Corporate Plan for 2011 – 2014. This Plan sets out priorities for the next 3 years and will be driven forward by the new Board when it is appointed.

In developing this new Corporate Plan, we have drawn on the experiences and lessons learnt in the past 10 years. To refocus priorities and strategies; to ensure the Board's important independent oversight work continues; to deliver improvements to the Policing Service for the benefit of the community. In looking forward we know there will be challenging issues to manage and resources will be in an area of ongoing priority. Devolution of Policing and Justice has delivered a new era of accountability and provides new opportunities for the Board to ensure that it continues to deliver on its important statutory responsibilities in shaping the future of policing.

As mentioned earlier by Professor Rea, ACC McCausland has left the Police Service of Northern Ireland. His significant contribution to policing is recognised, not only locally in Northern Ireland, within these islands and right across the world, I believe the name of Duncan McCausland is known, and it is known for his contribution to good policing.

But I would also like to mention, as I said earlier in my concluding remarks, that there are others who are leaving the Board and I am paying tribute to my fellow Members for their contribution and work on behalf of the community during the life of this Board. Particularly those who leave after longer service, indeed 4 Members who have been here from the very beginning, Professor Sir Desmond Rea; Barry Gilligan; Rosaleen Moore and Suneil Sharma. Their names are synonymous with holding policing to account and I would wish them well in the future and maybe we will see them pop up in other guises.

Finally, in conclusion, I would like to wish all of the political Members success in the election and then we will see what happens after that. Thank you very much indeed.