

OVERVIEW OF NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD VISIT TO WASHINGTON

DATE: 12-18 MARCH 2008

1. Introduction

Board Chairman Professor Sir Desmond Rea, Vice Chairman Barry Gilligan and Members Dolores Kelly (SDLP), Alex Maskey (SF) Basil McCrea (UUP), Ian Paisley Jr (DUP) formed the Board's delegation for the visit to Washington and New York. The Deputy Chief Executive and Press and Public Relations Manager accompanied the delegation.

The visit formed part of the Board's Communications Strategy for positioning and informing the work of the Northern Ireland Policing Board. The decision to send a delegation was agreed at the February 2008 Board meeting.

In addition to the scheduled programme of networking events for St Patrick's including attendance at the White House Ceremony, a series of meetings with key influencers were also held including opportunities to learn from policing experiences in the US through meetings with the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) and other policing forums.

This overview has been prepared by officials. Members who attended will wish to add to the Report and, in particular, the overall assessment of the visit (paragraph 4).

2. Visit Aims

The visit had a number of key aims:

- Represent the Northern Ireland Policing Board at the St Patrick's Day White House Reception and other events.
- Outline the role, work and achievements of the Policing Board in moving forward the policing agenda since its establishment; and following reconstitution in May 2007.
- Set out the challenges ahead for policing in advance of devolution of policing and justice; and reaffirm the importance of a strong independent Policing Board.
- Increase the profile of the Northern Ireland Policing Board among key influencers and opinion formers and engender support from those with influence internationally.

- Promote the work of the Policing Board and PSNI in Northern Ireland and the work of the Board as a corporate body.
- Address any negative perceptions of policing.
- To learn from policing experiences in Washington.
- To understand the political interests of those in Washington to policing in Northern Ireland.

3. Meetings Overview

Set out below are details of meetings held and summary of issues discussed.

WEDNESDAY 12 MARCH 2008	
20:30 -22:30	<p>Attendance at American Ireland Fund (AIF) Dinner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to meet key Irish/American interest groups/ Members of Congress and Senate and Administration representatives.
THURSDAY 13 MARCH 2008	
08:00-09:30	<p>Breakfast briefing with Irish Ambassador Michael Collins and political counsellor Orla O’Hanrahan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing and discussion on the role and work of the Policing Board and a wide range of issues relating to policing and the peace process including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Devolution of policing and justice including options on future structures ,relationships and timing - Funding settlement for policing - Police / community engagement and DPP reconstitution - Impact of dissident threat - Normalisation / Dealing with the past. - PSNI / An Garda Siochana co-operation - US contribution to the peace process - May 2008 investment conference - MI5 and National security post transfer - Police recruitment/ composition of the PSNI / vetting standards - NI party inclusivity and political maturity

10:00-10:30	<p>Meeting with Sharon Waxman, Senator Ted Kennedy’s office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing and discussion on the role and work of the Policing Board and a wide range of policing issues including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusivity of Policing Board - Devolution of Policing and Justice and the importance of retaining the position of the Board in a devolved arena - Sustained funding of policing during any transitional period - Engagement with communities not traditionally policed - Building community trust and confidence in policing / securing community ‘buy in’ for policing - Future police numbers - Dealing with the past / public inquiries - Delivery of the police college project
11:30 -12:30	<p>Meeting with Congressman Peter King, Friends of Ireland Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing and discussion on the role and work of the Policing Board and a wide range of policing issues including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public / police engagement in ‘hard to reach’ areas and building confidence in policing - Managing – v – mobilising community expectations in policing - Redressing inconsistency in police service delivery - Devolution of policing and justice including resources and finance available to support in any transitional period - Co-operation from the public with police on major murder investigations (Quinn / McCartney murders) - Collateral influence of the Board - Dealing with the past
15:00 – 16:00	<p>Meeting with Congressman James Walsh, Friends of Ireland Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing and discussion on the role and work of the Policing Board and a wide range of policing issues including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Police funding - Devolution of policing and justice - Quality and consistency of the police service delivery - Northern Ireland peace process and importance of conflict resolution in achieving and building on the peace settlement - Importance of political and economic stability for Northern Ireland

	<p>Congressman Walsh is due to leave office in late 2008 and Members paid tribute for the extensive work completed by Congressman Walsh in support of the peace process; and the success of the reconciliation visa which has over time allowed 1500 young people to participate in the exchange programme.</p>
17:00-18:30	<p>Briefing on the role and work of the Northern Ireland Bureau by Director Norman Houston</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion focused on the following key issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Day to day operation and staffing of the Bureau and relationships with the Assembly, Executive Departments and agencies - Key challenges facing the bureau and targets set for inward investment / strategy for the May 08 investment conference - Implications for the Bureau arising from the future devolution of policing and justice - Future opportunities for promoting Northern Ireland
18:30 – 20:00	<p>Attendance at Joint reception hosted by the Northern Ireland Bureau and the Irish Embassy for participants in the American, Business Management and Internship Training Programme (AMBIT) community leadership programme.</p>
<p>FRIDAY 14 MARCH 2008 – WASHINGTON</p>	
08:30 -10:30	<p>Meeting with local and federal policing representatives at the Police Executive Research Forum.</p> <p> Mark Williams, First Secretary, British Embassy Brett Chapman, National Institute of Justice Winnie Reed, National Institute of Justice Shanetta Cutlar, US Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division Pam Cammarata, Bureau of Justice Assistance Josh Ederheimer, Assistant Chief of Police, DC Metro PD Patrick Burke, Commander, DC Metro PD Tim Quinn, Chief of Staff, COPS office John Jasik, US Department of State Bill Tegeler, Deputy Director, Management Services PERF Craig Fraser, Director, Management Services PERF Elizabeth Sanberg, Research Assistant PERF Chris Koper, Deputy Director of Research PERF Jessica Toliver, Research Associate PERF Anthony Bellerio, Research Assistant PERF Rebecca Neuburger, Operations and Membership Adm. PERF Andrea Luna, Chief of Staff PERF </p>

	<p>With discussion facilitated Chuck Wexler, Executive Director of PERF the following key themes were explored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenge of effecting policing change in Northern Ireland - Building trust and confidence in policing - Community representation in policing / lateral entry - Lateral entry - Terrorist threat - Building confidence in the justice system and ensuring 'joined up justice' - The Northern Ireland peace process - Conflict resolution and NI learning for other countries
11:00 – 13:00	<p>Visit to Washington Metropolitan Police Department</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at crime briefing with Assistant Chief Groomes and local district commanders on the police response to crime issues. • Briefing followed by question and answer session with Assistant Chief Ederheimer and Assistant Chief Peter Newsham on the challenges facing policing in the US, professional development of police officers and the work of the Internal Affairs Bureau (and particularly sanctions imposed on officers)
14:00-17:00	<p>Visit to Prince William County Police Department</p> <p>Briefing and discussion with Major Steve Hudson, Captain TA Rudy and local officers on the police enforcement response to illegal immigration followed by a tour of the police facilities.</p> <p>Discussions focused on the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Police oversight and accountability arrangements - Police approach to community engagement and consultation - 'operational' independence - Interactions with other law enforcement and criminal justice agencies on the issue of illegal immigration
19:30	<p>Dinner with Chuck Wexler from the Police Executive Research Forum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing for Members on the role and work of PERF in the US. • Follow up discussions on opportunities for US learning from the Northern Ireland policing experience and possible participation in a meeting of US police oversight commissions in San Francisco.

SATURDAY 15 MARCH 2008	
10:00	Scheduled visit to FBI Training Facility – Cancelled
11:00- 17:00	<p>Visit to the Special Operations Department of the Metropolitan Police Department.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting and tour of facilities with officers from the Harbour Unit and Air Support Unit.
SUNDAY 16 MARCH 2008	
18:00 - 22:00	<p>Dinner hosted by the British Ambassador for the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland at the residence in Washington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide range of NI and US opinion formers in attendance at the dinner with opportunity to inform on key issues. • Secretary of State paid tribute to the peace process in Northern Ireland to date, the leadership of political representatives, the importance of policing and the work of the Board and the future devolution of policing and justice.
MONDAY 17 MARCH 2008 – WASHINGTON	
08:00-10:00	<p>Northern Ireland Bureau Breakfast ‘Investing in Northern Ireland’ at US Chamber of Commerce Hall of Flags</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to network with a wide range of invited US business, congressional and senate representatives and various Irish American interest groups. • Addresses delivered by Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness, Minister for Social Development Margaret Ritchie and Junior Minister Rt Hon Jeffrey Donaldson MP MLA.

10:00 -13:00	<p>White House Shamrock Ceremony attended by Policing Board Chairman/ Vice Chairman and Board Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key invited guests at the ceremony provided Members with the opportunity to network and inform. • Taoiseach and Presidential address referred to the success of the Northern Ireland peace process and the future devolution of policing and justice to the Northern Ireland Assembly.
12:30-14:30	<p>Speaker’s Lunch Capitol Hill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board’s Chairman and Vice Chairman attended the Speaker’s lunch on Capitol Hill. Hosted by the Speaker of the House of Representatives Nanci Pelosi for the Taoiseach the event hosted 70 invited guests and was attended by the President of the United States along with Senate and Congressional Representatives. <p>Speeches referred to the peace process, the restoration of the Assembly and the future devolution of policing and justice.</p>
15:00-15:30	<p>Meeting with John Mackey, Clerk to the Committee on International Relations (Chairman and Vice Chairman only)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Future opportunities for IFI funding. - Composition of the PSNI - Devolution of Policing and Justice - Dealing with criminal and drugs gangs
16:00-17:00	<p>Meeting with Congressman Richie Neal, Friends of Ireland Group.</p> <p>Discussion and update on key issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Devolution of policing and justice to the Northern Ireland Assembly - Funding implications for policing and police numbers - Community engagement strategy for hard to reach groups / use of IFI funding Building social capacity. - Role and work of District Policing Partnerships / success of community policing. - Composition of the PSNI. - Future size of the Policing Board / options for a smaller civilian police commission board

18:30 – 20:00	<p>Attendance at Irish Ambassador’s Reception</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Members had the opportunity to meet with the Taoiseach, members of the US Congress and staffers, key Irish / American opinion formers; and representatives from various other Northern Ireland statutory and non statutory bodies attending the Reception.
20:00-22:00	<p>Delegation review dinner with Metropolitan Police Department Assistant Chief of Police Patrick Burke, Police Oversight Commissioner Al Hutchinson, Northern Ireland Bureau Director Norman Houston and Deputy Director Debbie Sweeney.</p>
	<p>Programme concluded</p>

4. Visit Assessment

Officials have drafted the following points to provide an initial assessment of the visit. Members who attended the visit will wish to add to these points.

- The key aims and objectives set for the visit were realised through the programme of events / meetings completed.
- Board Members were well received with significant recognition for the progress made on policing including the delivery of full political support for policing; and the achievements of the Northern Ireland Policing Board and the Police Service of Northern Ireland.
- The devolution of policing and justice to the Assembly was a common theme in discussions and the speeches delivered at key events. There was also considerable interest in the issue of police funding and police numbers post devolution. The Board delegation presented a unanimous view in respect of future funding requirements.
- The meetings both formal and informal provided a platform to promote and inform the work of the Board; and key challenges ahead for policing.

5. Follow Up

The following actions are being progressed as follow up to the visit:

- Thank you letters issued to all involved in meetings.
- Literature to be forwarded to interested groups as requested during the visit.

- Potential for Board involvement in a PERF event in San Francisco on 29 May 2008 to be explored.
- Follow up meetings to be considered for US representatives participating in the investment conference in May 08.
- Travel costs for visit totalled £35,167.59

EXTERNAL RELATIONS DIRECTORATE
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