



Cookstown

***District Policing
Partnership***

Local people shaping local policing

Report

on

Meeting in Public Session

held on

Monday 25 September 2006

in

Burnavon Arts & Cultural Centre, Cookstown

*In accordance with Section 6 of the District Policing Partnerships
Code of Practice on Functions and Responsibilities*

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1. Attendance

1.1 List of DPP Members & Secretariat Present

Present:	I McCrea, Esq. Chairman
Members:	Baker, Baxter, Cassidy, Glasgow MBE, McCartney, Mellon, McGarvey, Quinn, Wilson
Other Representatives	Cookstown District Council Clerk & Chief Executive DPP Manager PSNI Chief Inspector Brian Williamson Inspector P Naylor Sgt. F Ferry Constable M Allen
Apologies	Doyle, Eastwood, Marshall, Pickering.

1.2 Approximate number in public gallery

55

2. Agenda

- Apologies
- Introduction from Chairman
- Adoption minutes of Business Meeting held on 4 September 2006
- Matters Arising

Meeting in Public Report – 22 June 2006

- Members to receive report of meeting in public held on Thursday 22 June 2006 in the Hanover House, Coagh

Events & Correspondence

Monitoring Police Performance

- Presentation of District Commander's First Quarter Report on the policing of the district (April 2006 – June 2006)
- Questions from DPP Members on District Commander's Report and general questions on the policing of the district
- Questions on the report from the Audience
- Oral answers to questions formally submitted by public
- Any Other Business

Question Time – Holy Trinity College & Cookstown High School

- Questions from Students on the Policing of the District & on the District Policing Partnership
 - *Answers to be delivered by local police and DPP Members*

Interactive Consultation Session & Discussion – Keypads

- Consultation Session with Students from Holy Trinity College and Cookstown High School - facilitated by Marty Allen, Community & Schools Involvement Police Officer

Concluding Remarks from Chairman

- Cllr Ian McCrea

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting – 4 September 2006

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2006, a copy of which had been previously circulated were ADOPTED on the proposal of Councillor Cassidy seconded by Mr Mellon.

MATTERS ARISING

Councillor McCrea informed Members that a meeting took place between Inspector Alex Speers, Mr L Cunningham, Roads Service, Members Cassidy, Eastwood and himself to discuss traffic management in the town and changes following the de-criminalisation of parking offences.

It was AGREED that the District Policing Partnership Manager write to the Divisional Roads Manager, Mr P Doherty requesting an update on the imminent changes to parking regulations in Northern Ireland.

4. District Commander's Report

Please see **Appendix 2** for a copy of the District Command Units report and presentation. (The report is attached as a separate document in the form of a Power Point file when this report is sent by e-mail).

4.1 General Policing Issues from DCU Report

The Chairman welcomed Chief Inspector Brian Williamson and his team to the meeting in public session.

Chief Inspector Williamson delivered the District Command Unit's three-monthly brief on the policing of the district for the period April 2006 - June 2006, which reflected steps being taken by the District Command Unit to progress regional and local policing plan targets and a summary of recorded crime/ clearance rates within the district. The report was delivered using Microsoft Power Point. The Chief Inspector also produced the 'traffic light performance system' used by Cookstown District Command Unit to illustrate performance against associated targets referred to above. The Report for the period April 2006 – June 2006 is set out in **Appendix 2**

4.2 Questions Arising from the District Commanders Report

Questions asked and answers given during the meeting, including those arising from the District Commanders Report are detailed at section 5.3.

5. Questions and Oral Answers from District Commander

5.1 Questions received from public by theme

Drug Abuse (drug dealing, drug use)	Alcohol Abuse (drunken driving, underage drinking, public drunkenness)	Theft (vehicle crime, domestic burglary)	Public Nuisance (Vandalism, Young people causing a nuisance, road traffic issues, public disorder, bogus callers)	Violence (assaults, child abuse, domestic violence, sexual attacks, paramilitary activity, hate [racial/homophobic] crimes)	Operational Matters (police resources, deployment of officers, response to calls)	Other
0	0	0	1	1	1	0

All questions submitted by the deadline received an oral answer by the Chief Inspector based on the policy of Cookstown District Policing Partnership on the submission and answering of questions at meetings in public. Those who submitted a question received a written response within five working days of the meeting taking place (this policy is detailed at **appendix 3**).

The Chairman informed any member of the public at the meeting, if they had submitted a question and wished to ask it of the District Commander they could do so. The Chairman also informed those members of the public who were in attendance and had submitted a written question that they could make supplementary comments based on the answer given by the District Commander.

The Chairman also informed members of the public present that they could ask a question(s) of the Chief Inspector if they so wished. He did however, stress that this should be directed through the Chair.

5.2 Questions submitted by the public dealt with orally

<p>Q. 1 Can the District Commander provide me with the number of motorists who have been issued with Fixed Notices and Advice and Warnings for Illegal Parking offences in Cookstown during the period April – August 2006 compared with April – August 2005.</p> <p>Of these offences, how many were specifically 'booked' for double parking in Cookstown Town Centre over the same period.</p>	<p>Action by (if applicable)</p>
<p>A. <i>The number of Fixed Penalty Tickets issued for parking offences in Cookstown for the period April – August 2005 was 209 compared to 172 for the period April – August 2006. The above figures do not include 'Advice and Warnings' which were issued and which are not routinely recorded. The only search on the Fixed Penalty Process Centre system that could be done was for 'Parking Offences' as opposed to 'Double Parking' specifically. These figures are not available.</i></p>	<p>DPP Manager to forward written response to questioner</p>

<p>Q. 2 As a member of the community I would like to know the number of cases in which a person or a number of persons have been sexually assaulted in Cookstown and District since April 2004, by rural sector and urban sector.</p> <p>Please inform me if the perpetrators have been apprehended and/or prosecuted for all offences committed since this date.</p>	<p>Action by (if applicable)</p>									
<p>A. Sexual Assault covers a wide remit of offences as follows which are recorded in following categories:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Rape. (ii) Attempted Rape. (iii) Buggery. (iv) Gross Indecency. (v) Indecent Exposure. (vi) Unlawful Carnal Knowledge of a Girl Under 14 Years. (vii) Unlawful Carnal Knowledge of a Girl Over 14 Years. (viii) Indecent Conduct Towards a Child. (ix) Indecent Assault on a Female Child. (x) Indecent Assault on a Male Child. (xi) Indecent Assault on a Female. (xii) Indecent Assault on a Male. <p>In Cookstown District the following number of allegations were made in each account year:-</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">(a) April 2004 – March 2005 Clearance Rate 78.6%</td> <td style="vertical-align: middle;">-</td> <td style="vertical-align: top;">14 – All in Cookstown Urban Sector.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">(b) April 2005 – March 2006 Clearance Rate 34.8%</td> <td style="vertical-align: middle;">-</td> <td style="vertical-align: top;">20 in Cookstown Urban Sector. 3 in Rural Sector.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">(c) April 2006 – To date Clearance 14.3% to date</td> <td style="vertical-align: middle;">-</td> <td style="vertical-align: top;">5 in Cookstown Sector. 2 in Rural Sector.</td> </tr> </table>	(a) April 2004 – March 2005 Clearance Rate 78.6%	-	14 – All in Cookstown Urban Sector.	(b) April 2005 – March 2006 Clearance Rate 34.8%	-	20 in Cookstown Urban Sector. 3 in Rural Sector.	(c) April 2006 – To date Clearance 14.3% to date	-	5 in Cookstown Sector. 2 in Rural Sector.	<p>DPP Manager to forward written response to questioner</p>
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(c) April 2006 – To date Clearance 14.3% to date	-	5 in Cookstown Sector. 2 in Rural Sector.								

<i>Q.3 Why are the surveillance cameras in the vicinity of Cookstown Police Station not fully operational?</i>	Action by (if applicable)
A. A number of security cameras are in position around the Cookstown Station complex. Periodically some cameras can default and as such are reported for repair.	DPP Manager to forward written response to questioner

5.3 Questions asked and answers given during the meeting

The following questions were asked of the District Command Unit on the policing of the District.

<i>Q. Councillor Baker referred to the increase in Violent Crime on the same period last year inquiring what initiatives were being undertaken to address the matter.</i>	Action by (if applicable)
A. Chief Inspector Williamson said such crimes tend to take place at weekends and include domestic violence incidents/ offences. He informed the meeting that the District Command Unit had acquired the use of a CCTV van with the aim of maintaining high profile visibility to reduce such crime. He added that the sharp increase was not reflected in the 2 nd quarter figures.	No further action required

<i>Q. Councillor Baker inquired as to the 60% of crimes not cleared and requested what was being done to reduce this percentage.</i>	Action by (if applicable)
A. Chief Inspector Williamson informed the Member that the Great Britain average clearance rate was 20% and the Police Service of Northern Ireland was around 30% but Cookstown District Command Unit was currently sitting at a 40% clearance rate which continued to rise. He added that some crimes could not be cleared as some complaints are withdrawn by those who originally report them.	No further action required

<i>Q. Mrs Baxter inquired as to what the increase in domestic burglaries were attributed to.</i>	Action by (if applicable)
A. Chief Inspector Williamson said the District Command Unit was focusing on known criminals and was lobbying for stricter bail conditions for such individuals. He said these figures were not reflected in 2 nd Quarter figures.	No further action required

Q. <i>Councillor Cassidy in referring to 4.2.1 of the report asked if it was difficult to 'police' underage drinking when adults were purchasing alcohol for juveniles from off-licences.</i>	Action by (if applicable)
A. Chief Inspector Williamson said his officers still continued to take juveniles home to their parents when found consuming alcohol, and referred those concerned to the Youth Diversion Officer.	No further action required

Q. <i>Councillor Quinn in referring to 3.1.3 and 3.1.4 asked how police dealt with the under - reporting of such crimes.</i>	Action by (if applicable)
A. Chief Inspector Williamson agreed that there was an under-reporting in these areas and said the Ethnic Liaison Officer encouraged the reporting of both Hate and Sectarian crimes.	No further action required

Q. <i>Councillor Quinn asked if there was a link between flags, graffiti, emblems and crime.</i>	Action by (if applicable)
A. Chief Inspector Williamson said he could not link these issues with crime levels in the district but the display of flags and emblems in the district had been reduced.	No further action required

Q. <i>Councillor McCrea reiterated Councillor Cassidy's comments on underage drinking indicating that he had recently been contacted by some concerned parents.</i>	Action by (if applicable)
A. Chief Inspector Williamson confirmed that some young people had been reported during the weekend prior to the meeting	No further action required

Q. <i>The Chief Executive inquired as to the levels of illegal substances/ drug activity in the district and if there would be a point when their availability would level out.</i>	Action by (if applicable)
A. Referring to the recent uncovering of a cannabis factory in the district Inspector Naylor said that there was now a shortage of certain drugs in the community and 60 – 70% was now being home produced to meet demand.	No further action required

Q. <i>Councillor Wilson asked the District Commander for an update on the policing of parades throughout 2006.</i>	Action by (if applicable)
A. Chief Inspector Williamson indicated that no significant problems occurred and fewer officers were used to police such parades than on previous years, without the support of Tactical Support Groups. He acknowledged that they had received positive support from parade organisers in 2006 and in recognition of this had sent letters to the same thanking them for their support.	No further action required

Councillor Cassidy requested police to encourage organisers to start their parades earlier in the evening so as not to coincide with Saturday night religious services.

Councillor Wilson said that he was not aware of any such parades held on Saturday nights in Cookstown and asked the Chief Inspector to provide him with the number of Saturday night band parades held in Cookstown in the past 12 months.

Questions from Members of the Public on the District Commander's Report

Following questions from Members the Chairman opened the meeting to questions from members of the public in attendance.

Q. <i>A Member of the public asked why targets were set so low for example a 2% reduction.</i>	Action by (if applicable)
A. Councillor McCrea said these were set by the Northern Ireland Policing Board in conjunction with Chief Constable and Chief Inspector Williamson said that in reality they strived to improve upon targets set centrally.	No further action required

Q. <i>A Member of the public inquired as to why there was no target on speeding.</i>	Action by (if applicable)
A. Chief Inspector Williamson said that targets in the current plan focused on the reduction of those killed or seriously injured of which speeding detection in the District Command Unit played an integral part.	No further action required

5.4 Were all Members' questions satisfactorily answered at the meeting?

Yes No

Following the meeting the DPP Manager reminded the District Commander in writing of the outstanding issues to be addressed and assurances given, as agreed at the meeting.

6. DISCUSSION & CONSULTATION – HOLY TRINITY COLLEGE & COOKSTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

The Chairman opened the meeting for questions from students in attendance from Holy Trinity College & Cookstown High School. He emphasised that they could ask questions of either the PSNI District Commander or the District Policing Partnership.

A student inquired as to what the role of Cookstown District Policing Partnership was and how Members were selected to sit on the Partnership.

The District Policing Partnership Manager provided the student with an outline on the role of the Partnership and Councillor Wilson gave a summary on the appointments process.

A student asked if Members got paid for fulfilling their role.

The Clerk/ Chief Executive provided the questioner with an answer detailing the remuneration received for duties performed for being a District Policing Partnership Member.

A student asked about the future of Cookstown District Policing Partnership in light of the changes proposed under the review of public administration.

Councillor McCrea responded by indicating that the Partnership had made representations to the Northern Ireland Policing Board on this matter.

A student inquired as to what the District Command Unit was doing to reduce crime.

Chief Inspector Williamson outlined the measures the District Command Unit were undertaking to reduce crime including the use of media coverage on SIX FM, encouraging the establishment of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, provision of advice from the Crime Prevention Office and highlighting the CrimeStoppers number.

A student asked how young people could input into the District Policing Partnership

Councillor McCrea responded by stating that the views expressed at this meeting would inform the Partnership on what should be included in the 2006/ 2007 local policing plan. Councillor Cassidy reiterated the points made by Councillor McCrea

INTERACTIVE KEYPAD CONSULTATION SESSION

The students and members of the public in attendance participated in an interactive consultative session with discussion facilitated by Constable M Allen using the District Policing Partnership's Interactive Keypads and pre-prepared presentation.

During the consultative session students discussed issues such as the accessibility of police officers and their safety in Cookstown particularly at weekends.

Participants were informed that the information recorded from the consultative session would be used to inform the District Policing Partnership's 2006 Consultation Report, and be reflected as much as possible in the list of policing priorities forwarded to the District Commander to be considered for inclusion in the 2007/ 08 local policing plan.

7. Details of Next Meeting

Date:	Thursday 16 November 2006
Time:	7pm
Location:	Ballyronan Marina Centre

Appendix List

- Appendix 1 Minutes of DPP Meeting – 4 September 2006
- Appendix 2 District Commanders Report
- Appendix 3 Policy on the Submission & Answering of Questions at meetings in Public

Appendix 1

Minutes of Meeting – 4 September 2006

COOKSTOWN DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIP

Minutes of proceedings of **COOKSTOWN DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIP** in business session held in Cookstown District Council offices on Monday 4 September 2006 at 5.30pm.

Chairman	Cllr I McCrea, Chairman
Present	Baxter, Cassidy, Doyle, Eastwood, Glasgow MBE, Mellon, McCartney, McGarvey, Scott-McKinley, Wilson
Other Representatives	Cookstown District Council DPP Manager Director of Corporate Services PA to Clerk/ Chief Executive

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Baker and Quinn, Mrs Marshall and Mrs Pickering, Mr McGuckin, Clerk/ Chief Executive.

2. MINUTES OF DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIP MEETING – 22 JUNE 2006

a. Matters Considered

Mr Doyle NOTED that Mrs Pickering left the meeting before Councillor Wilson and that this be reflected in the minute as a matter of accuracy.

Mrs Baxter NOTED that the numbering of the minutes was incorrect commencing at page 2.

b. Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the above amendments the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2006, a copy of which had been previously circulated, were adopted on the proposal of Councillor Wilson and seconded by Councillor Glasgow.

3. MATTERS ARISING

a. Foreign Nationals

A letter dated 1 September 2006 was received from Assistant Chief Constable Judith Gillespie regarding the release and sharing of criminal records of foreign nationals residing or planning to reside in Northern Ireland.

It was noted that criminal records are only disclosed of individuals from European Union Member States if arrested and charged with a criminal offence in Northern Ireland under Article 3 of EU Council Decision 2005/876/HJA.

It was AGREED to write to the Northern Ireland Policing Board requesting that they progress the matter as it is one which could only be dealt with at a strategic level, to make it a requirement that the PSNI (and District Command Units) be informed of any criminal records held by foreign nationals residing in Northern Ireland/ Districts, irrespective of which jurisdiction they come from.

- b. A letter dated 29 August 2006 was received from Chief Inspector Brian Williamson advising that the number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued for mobile phone detections for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 July 2006 was 320.

Chief Inspector Williamson also reported that there were two trained motorcyclists within the District and one motorcycle in use. Members were also informed that both were attached to the rural neighbourhood policing teams.

It was AGREED to write to Chief Inspector Williamson requesting that a more pro-active approach be taken with the use of the motorcycle as it was felt that its visibility would have an impact on crime and the fear of crime within the district.

- c. The District Policing Partnership Manager informed the meeting that there were plans to re-run the 'Knife Amnesty' Scheme in the Autumn.

4. Traffic Matters

A letter dated 30 June 2006 was received from Inspector Speers in response to traffic matters raised at the Business Meeting of the District Policing Partnership held on 5 June 2006.

Councillor Wilson referred to the issue of illegal parking/ double parking in Cookstown and the need for a greater clampdown on such activity by police. The Chairman said that he intended to question the District Commander on this matter at the next meeting in public.

It was AGREED that a delegation consisting of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Councillors Cassidy and Wilson and Mr Eastwood meet with Chief Inspector Williamson and a representative of DRD Roads

Service to discuss traffic management in the town prior to the next meeting of the District Policing Partnership.

5. PUBLICATIONS

Members NOTED receipt of:

(i) DPP News 2006 Summer Edition

(ii) Leaflet on the District Policing Partnership. It was AGREED that the District Policing Partnership Manager proceed with the printing and distribution of the leaflet

(iii) District Policing Partnership 2005/09 Strategic Plan. It was AGREED that the District Policing Partnership Manager proceed with the printing of the strategic plan

(iv) Custody Visiting Leaflet

(v) The Northern Ireland Policing Board report on effectiveness of the District Policing Partnership 2005/006. Members AGREED to the content of the draft report and that the District Policing Partnership Manager inform the Northern Ireland Policing Board of the amendments made to the original document

6. FEEDBACK FROM MEMBERS - TRAINING

a. Review of Public Administration - ECOS Centre, Ballymena

Messrs Eastwood and Mellon advised the meeting that they attended a briefing event held in the ECOS Centre, Ballymena on 27 June 2006 and gave a brief update on the event.

7. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

a. Castle Villas & Castle Court, Cookstown

The District Policing Partnership Manager gave an update on the establishment of a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in the Castle Villas/ Castle Court area of Cookstown and on a public meeting held with residents in July 2006 following a survey of the area.

Members AGREED to applications from Mr Colin Charles and Mr Ignatius Shaw as the Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators for the area.

b. Wellbourne Crescent/ Place, Coagh

Councillor McCrea declared an interest in the matter to be discussed.

Members AGREED to the appointment of Mrs Wanita McCrea, Ms Wendy Marion Junk and Ms Caroline Whinnery as Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators to the Wellbourne Crescent/ Place Neighbourhood Watch Scheme (Coagh).

- c. The District Policing Partnership Manager provided an update on the joint DPP, CSP and DCU application to the Community Safety Unit for financial assistance to organise a drama to promote neighbourhood watch in the district.

Members NOTED that the scoring panel would meet to discuss the application on 15 September 2006.

Mr Eastwood and Councillor Cassidy informed the meeting that they had been contacted by members of the community about the establishment of neighbourhood watch schemes within their localities and any further interest expressed from the same would be forwarded to the District Policing Partnership Manager.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Members NOTED receipt of correspondence from Michael Rea, Equality Commission Northern Ireland confirming the adoption and approval of the District Policing Partnerships Equality Scheme.
- b. Members NOTED receipt of correspondence from DPP Member Mr Eastwood regarding traffic flow in Cookstown. It was AGREED that the matters raised in the correspondence be dealt with at the meeting with the District Command Unit and Roads Service.
- c. Members AGREED to forward the response drafted by the District Policing Partnership Manager on the implications for District Policing Partnerships within the Review of Public Administration to the Northern Ireland Policing Board, subject to reference being made that there should be no formal structure beneath any future 'regional' District Policing Partnerships.
- d. Members NOTED correspondence from Mr David Hanson MP on Liquor Licensing reform in Northern Ireland.

9. MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Members AGREED to the schedule of forthcoming events tabled at the meeting and presented by the District Policing Partnership Manager.

Councillor Wilson referred to the meeting in public scheduled to take place on 25 September 2006 commencing at 11am stating that the timing of the event did not suit those who had work commitments, and that this should be taken into account in the organisation of future events.

10. UPDATES

The District Policing Partnership Manager in referring to the 2006-07 Operational Plan indicated that many of the issues contained within it had been dealt with throughout the meeting. Reference was however made of:

Profiling of the District Policing Partnership: It was AGREED that Members would inform the District Policing Partnership Manager of any events taking place within the district as an opportunity to place a display stand at them.

Consultation: Members NOTED that the District Policing Partnership had engaged the services of Venture International to undertake two consultative focus groups on policing, focusing on young people and ethnic minorities.

11. EVENTS

Members NOTED the following events being organised by the Northern Ireland Policing Board:

- (i) Launch of Human Rights Annual Report on 5 September 2006
- (ii) Local Policing Plan & Community Consultation on 5 September 2006
- (iii) Community Planning & Review of Public Administration on 12 September 2006

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a. Policing Board Member Mentoring Scheme

The District Policing Partnership Manager advised members of a 'mentoring scheme' being set up by the Northern Ireland Policing Board which involved the District Policing Partnership being paired with a Member of the Policing Board.

He informed the meeting that Mr Joe Byrne, Independent Member had been assigned to shadow Cookstown District Policing Partnership.

b. District Command Unit Senior Officer Turnover

Councillor McCrea referred to correspondence received from Acting Assistant Chief Constable Edward Graham concerning the length of time senior officers must serve before being considered for transfer from Cookstown District Command Unit.

It was AGREED that a copy of the letter and a copy of the response to Councillor Wilson's question raised at the June Meeting in Public regarding service time spent within Cookstown District Command Unit be forwarded to all Members.

The meeting concluded at 6.25 pm

Chairman

DPP Manager/ Secretary

Date

Appendix 2

District Commanders Report

(attached as a separate Powerpoint file when this report is sent by an e-mail)

Appendix 3

Policy on the Submission & Answering of Questions at Meetings in Public



Policy on Submission & Answering of Questions at Meetings in Public Session

Adopted May 2003

Amended & Adopted 24 May 2004

**Cookstown District Policing Partnership
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6. Questioning of the District Commander by DPP Members

The purpose of this paper is to act as a guide on the areas surrounding the submission of questions by members of the public to be answered by the District Commander of Cookstown at meetings in public meetings of the District Policing Partnership.

This paper will be used by the DPP Manager, Members of Cookstown DPP, the District Commander and forwarded to members of the public on request. A digest on the submission of questions has been included on the form which can be used by the public when submitting a question to be answered.

1. Context

- 1.1 Paragraphs 4.2, 4.7, 4.13, 4.14 and 4.15 of the District Policing Partnerships Code of Practice on the Functions & Responsibilities set the context for the submission of questions to the DPP by the public to be considered for a response at a meeting in public by the District Commander.
- 1.2 **Paragraph 4.2** states “The DPP should also ask the police questions that may have been forwarded to them by members of the public”.
- 1.3 **Paragraph 4.7** states, “At least eight working days before the meeting of the DPP the police District Commander should be informed of any issues which have been raised in written questions where the police would be expected to provide an answer”.
- 1.4 **Paragraph 4.13** states “a written question will be accepted from any person living or working in the district or any person directly affected by the policing of the district. If a person wishes to have their question acknowledged, they need to include their name and address”.
- 1.5 **Paragraph 4.14** states “Any member of the public may choose to ask a member of the DPP to raise an issue or ask a question on their behalf. If the member of the DPP considers that the information being sought falls within the categories listed in 4.15, they should seek guidance from the Chairman of the DPP” (see Appendix 1).
- 1.6 **Paragraph 4.15** details the instances in which an answer may not be provided to a question submitted by the public or asked of the District Commander from a Member of the DPP (see appendix
- 1.7 It is therefore in this context which the following procedures have been developed by Cookstown District Policing Partnership for dealing with the submission and answering of questions at meetings in public.

2. Submission of Questions

- 2.1 On consulting the District Policing Partnership Code of Practice and Standing Orders the following paragraphs have been adopted.
- 2.2 Any one who resides or works in Cookstown District, or any person directly affected by the policing of the district may submit a question to the DPP Manager to be considered at the nearest available public meeting.
- 2.3 Question(s) should be submitted in writing to the DPP Manager 10 calendar days before the public meeting is due to take place. There is a text phone facility available through Cookstown District Council for those who may have difficulty in submitting a question in writing (Tel: 028 8676 5827). Should the question(s) arrive with the DPP Manager outside the 10 calendar day deadline, its inclusion at the public meeting will be at the discretion of the DPP and the District Commander. See paragraph 3.2.
- 2.4 If a question(s) arrives outside the deadline and it is not considered for inclusion at the meeting in public it will automatically be included on the list of questions for answering by the District Commander at the next available public meeting. In this instance the questioner(s) will be notified in writing stating this. In this case the questioner(s) will have the option of withdrawing the question at any time, and seek another avenue for receiving an answer to the question, see paragraph 6.1.
- 2.5 For a question to receive a written response to a question submitted for oral answer at a meeting in public the questioner(s) must supply the DPP Manager with his/ her name and address to which an answer may be forwarded. A written response will be forwarded within 5 working days of the meeting taking place.
- 2.6 If a question is on the list of questions to be answered by the District Commander at a meeting in public and time runs out for it to receive an oral answer the questioner will automatically receive a written response within 5 working days of the meeting taking place. This is subject to paragraph 2.5 above.
- 2.7 A person may only submit two questions at any one public meeting, unless otherwise determined by the DPP.
- 2.8 On the submission of a question(s) from a member of the public only the question(s) will be forwarded to the District Commander for his consideration at the meeting in public. At no time will questions be attributed to a member of the public, unless stated otherwise.

3. Cookstown DPP & Cookstown District Command Unit

- 3.1 The DPP Manager will forward all questions received by the deadline to the District Commander no later than eight working days before the public meeting is due to take place.
- 3.2 In the event of a question(s) being received by the DPP outside the deadline for submission, the DPP Manager with authority from DPP Chairman/ or Vice-Chairman will liaise with the District Commander on the possibility of its inclusion in the batch of questions being considered for oral

answer. If the question(s) are unable to be included then they will be dealt with in the manner set out in Paragraph 2.4.

3.3 In order to obtain the running order of questions being addressed at any meeting in public the DPP Manager shall obtain, when possible, a copy of the same from the District Commander in which questions will be dealt, 24 hours before the meeting is due to take place. In obtaining a copy of the questions being addressed and their running order, copies will be made for Members of the DPP and the attending public so they may follow the District Commander when answering the questions.

4. Answering of Questions

4.1 There may be circumstances in which the District Commander may decline to answer a question(s) forwarded by the DPP Manager. Circumstances in which this may occur are when the question(s) may fall under one of the categories in paragraph 4.15 of the District Policing Partnerships Code of Practice. If this is the case the District Commander should inform the DPP Manager, who will subsequently inform the questioner(s), if personal contact details were forwarded. In this instance the DPP Manager will encourage the questioner(s) to rephrase the question and resubmit it for answer at a future meeting in public. The DPP Manager will also inform the questioner(s) of the procedure for asking a question at a public meeting (see paragraph 5.1).

4.2 If the questioner(s) rephrases and resubmits the question(s) it will be added to the list of questions to be considered for answer at the next available meeting in public.

4.3 On reaching the agenda item for the answering of questions submitted by the public the Chairman will request the District Commander to work through the list of questions which has been supplied to the DPP Manager in advance of the meeting taking place (see paragraph 3.3).

4.4 There may be instances in which the District Commander may wish to only provide a written response to a question submitted through the DPP. In this instance the question will still be on the list of questions submitted prior to the meeting taking place. But on reaching this question on the list the District Commander will note the fact that a written answer will be forwarded to the questioner through the DPP Manager, and briefly state why it is not being dealt with orally.

5. Questions submitted beginning & during a meeting

5.1 Members of the public attending the meeting may ask a question of the District Commander by forwarding it to the DPP Manager or other nominated person, complete with a name and address.

5.2 A member of the public may also be allowed to ask the District Commander an oral question on the policing of the district at the discretion of the Chairman. In this instance, questions should be asked through the Chairman and be relevant to the policing of the district.

5.3 Questions at 5.1 and 5.2 will be dealt with when DPP Members questions, and those previously submitted by the public have been received.

5.4 At the meeting the District Commander may not have all the information to answer a question described at 5.1 and 5.2 on the night of the meeting. In this instance a written response will be

forwarded to the questioner within 10 working days of the meeting takes place, subject to a name and address being supplied.

5.5 Also see Section 16 of Cookstown District Policing Partnership Standing Orders.

6. Questioning of the District Commander by DPP Members

6.1 As set out in 4.14 in the District Policing Partnerships Code of Practice members of the public may approach a DPP Member to ask a question on their behalf. Once the District Commander has answered the questions on the list (see paragraph 4.3) the Chairman will then move to taking questions from Members of the DPP.

6.2 The Chairman may rule on such questions if they fall within the categories outlined in 4.15 of the District Policing Partnerships Code of Practice (**see appendix 1**)

Appendix 1

Section 4.15 states that there may be circumstances in which information cannot be provided to a question. This may occur if:

1. it is in the interests of national security
2. it would endanger the security of one or more individuals
3. it relates to an individual and is of a sensitive personal nature
4. it involves information that the police are holding in confidence from another agency
5. it would, or would be likely to, prejudice proceedings which have been commenced in a court of law
6. it would, or would be likely to, prejudice the prevention or detection of crime or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders

Enquiries regarding any aspect of this document should be addressed to:

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