

# **Down District Policing Partnership (DPP)**

## **Meeting in Public**

**held on**

***19 October 2006***

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## 1. Attendance

1.1 Approximate number of public members in attendance.

18
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## 2. Agenda

### **DOWN DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIP**

**Agenda for Partnership Meeting to be held in the Market House, 16 The Square, Ballynahinch on Thursday 19 October 2006 at 7.00 pm.**

### **BUSINESS**

1. Apologies
2. Chairman's Remarks
3. **FOR CONSIDERATION**
  - (a) Minutes from 28 September 2006.
  - (b) Actions arising from 28 September 2006.
4. District Commander's Report
5. Questions from the District Policing Partnership
6. **FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION**
  - (a) **Correspondence from outside bodies and boards**
    - (1) Consultation on the Northern Ireland Policing Board's Review of the Code of Ethics for the Police Service of Northern Ireland
    - (2) The SPEC Newsletter of Criminal Justice Inspection October 2006
    - (3) Young People and Licensed Firearms - Consultation
  - (b) **Relevant items of which notice has been given.**

There are no relevant items.

### 3. Minutes

#### **DOWN DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIP**

**Minutes of Down District Policing Partnership Meeting held in public  
The Market House, Ballynahinch  
Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2006 at 7.00pm**

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**Chairman:** Eamonn O Neill

**In attendance:** Peter Bowles, Audrey Byrne, Dermot Curran, William Dick, Roy Edwards, John Huddleston, Una Kelly (Vice-chairman), Jack McIlheron, John Noble, Kay Nellis, Desmond Patterson, Margaret Ritchie, Kathleen Stockton and Patrick Toman

**Also in attendance** Norman Stewart, Director of Corporate Services, Liam McLernon, District Policing Partnership Manager and Nancy Connolly, Committee Clerk

**Also in attendance** Mr Alex Atwood, N Ireland Policing Board

**PSNI attendance:** Superintendent Ralph Taggart, District Commander, Chief Inspector Peter Loughins, A/Inspector Donnelly, Rowallane Sector and Constable Keith Beattie, Ballynahinch Community Beat Team

The meeting ended at 10.00pm

#### **BUSINESS**

##### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received on behalf of Colin McGrath and Carmel O'Boyle.

##### **2. Chairman's Remarks**

###### **Allocation of a Policing Board member to each DPP**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Alex Atwood who had agreed to act at the Partnership's liaison with the Policing Board. His appointment will increase communication between Down DPP and the Policing Board.

###### **Director of Corporate Services**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Norman Stewart to the meeting. Mr Stewart had taken over from the Council Chief Executive to monitor the administration and operation of the Partnership.

### **Demonstration of Police Vehicles**

The Chairman advised that two Police Vehicles were on display in the Square outside the Market House.

#### **3(a) Minutes of meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2006**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> September were agreed on the Proposal of J McIlheron, Seconded by K Stockton.

#### **3(b) Actions arising from meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2006**

The Action Sheet was noted.

#### **4. District Commander's Report**

The District Commander clarified that his report covered the period April to September 2006 and areas covered included:

- Overall crime – reduction of 2.4%
- Domestic burglary – reduction of 1.5%
- Vehicle crime – reduction of 11.9%
- Violent crime – reduction of 7.9%
- Criminal damage – increase of 21.6%
- Theft – reduction of 9.7%
- Clearance rate for violent crime – 38.2%

Chief Inspector Loughins outlined the Rowallane Sector performance:

Overall crime in the sector showed a reduction of 0.3%

Overall crime in Ballynahinch showed a reduction of 4.3%

The Chairman stated that there was clearly good work being done in many areas but shared the District Commander's concern with the increase in criminal damage.

During discussion with Partnership members, areas covered included:-

- Deployment of Community Beat Teams to tackle anti-social behaviour in Malone Drive and the Meadowlands estate in Downpatrick.
- Incidents of vandalism at St Patrick Centre – eight arrests made awaiting court.
- 119 reports of under age drinking across the district.
- Distribution of car crime leaflets by the Community Beat Teams in car park hotspots in Newcastle during the summer months.
- The enforcement of the 'Chill Out' campaign in partnership with the Council and licensees resulted in 1000 hours per month in additional overtime over the summer months in Newcastle, Ballynahinch and Downpatrick.
- 'Chill Out' campaign in Ballynahinch resulted in eleven people being reported.
- Clarification of long term youth diversionary schemes.

The District Commander referred to the Mobile Station manned and displayed in the Market Square. Although owned by Newry and Mourne DCU, Down DCU can avail of its use. He encouraged members to examine its many features being fully equipped to serve during events such as parades, scenes of serious crime and as a point of contact for the public not served by the police. The second smaller vehicle known as the Cub Vehicle is used to transport perpetrators from scenes of disorder to the custody suite in Downpatrick.

The Chairman welcomed the vehicles as a useful addition to PSNI resources.

## 5. Questions from the District Policing Partnership

The Chairman advised that due to the interruption of the previous meeting, two questions, No 5 and No 6, had not been taken and written responses had been supplied by the District Commander which would be displayed on the screen.

**Q5. *There has been a rising level of vandalism taking place in Killyleagh specifically in the area of the First Presbyterian Church which itself has had 34 panes in a number of its windows broken on three separate occasions this month (August). All the details have been reported to the police. Can the District Commander please outline the steps being taken to:***

- ***Apprehend the culprits***
- ***Reassure the community that such activity will not be tolerated***

Written response to Question 5:

We condemn these recent incidents of criminal damage to the First Presbyterian Church and reassure the community that we are doing all in our power to bring the culprits to justice. The Killyleagh community will have noticed a significant increase in patrolling by police following these incidents. This appears to have the desired effect of deterring any further offences of this nature.

However the degree of damage caused to Church property would suggest that they were prolonged attacks which would have caused a certain amount of noise when carried out. Despite the Church being in close proximity to residential Limetree Hollow, Kerry Wynd estate, The Old Mill and Plantation Street, none of these incidents were reported to Police at the time nor have any witnesses subsequently come forward. We would like to remind the local community that any information they may have regarding this or any crime can be reported either to their local Police Station or confidentially using the free phone Crime Stoppers number.

We would also wish to reassure the Killyleagh community that the level of criminal damage in Killyleagh has not recently risen, as suggested by the author. Between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2006 there were 22 incidents of criminal damage reported in Killyleagh. This is a reduction of 3 crimes on the same period last year and equates to a 12% reduction at a time when the DCU as a whole experienced a 21% increase.

In response to Partnership queries, the District Commander outlined the restructuring of Community Beat Teams supported by Part Time Officers. Teams

## Down DPP Meeting in Public

now work back to back with a proactive policing unit active at weekends. All officers have mobile phones and are contactable by the Downpatrick station. He agreed with the partnership suggestion that it would be useful to update Neighbourhood Watch coordinators on how to alert the PSNI.

**Q6. *In each of the last three years how many petrol, pipe and paint bomb attacks have been in the Killyleagh and Shrigley areas? How does this compare to other towns and villages in Down District in the same period?***

***Do the police have intelligence to suggest the majority of these attacks are being carried out by elements claiming affiliation to the UDA, UVF or any other organisation or are they purely criminal in their nature?***

***What can the people of Killyleagh do to support the efforts of the police in stopping the actions of these Mafia-style gangsters in the Killyleagh area?***

Written response to Question 6.

The details of the number of petrol and pipe bomb attacks in Killyleagh and Shrigley over the last three years are as follows:

2004	3 pipe bomb attacks
2005	1 petrol bomb attack
2006	2 petrol bomb attacks (related incident)

These figures are not significantly higher than any other town or village in Down District. Whilst not being in a position to discuss intelligence matters, the District Commander stated that the incidents outlined had been carried out by criminal elements. He added that in a number of cases, arrests were made and persons charged with criminal offences.

Any information members of the public have in relation to such attacks or criminal activity should be reported directly to the police through the 999 system, to Down District Police at 028 4461 5011, or alternatively by using the Crimestoppers number 0800 555 111. Police in Down District are committed to ensuring that the public live in a safe environment, free from such criminal activity.

Members welcomed the fact that arrests had been made and the attacks were not as prevalent as public perception.

During questions from members of the public, it became evident that there was some confusion over which police telephone number to use. Discussions arose over when to use the non-emergency number, 999, or Crimestoppers, and which lines were confidential.

The following questions were received for submission to the current meeting.

**Q1. *People in Newcastle have been commenting on the lack of policing on the ground in the Town. Expectations were raised when police on bicycles were launched last Easter and although having proved to be very***

***effective and popular, their presence is sporadic. The same experience is being voiced by people in Ballynahinch who would like to see more of the Community Beat Teams out and about. There is a rumour going about that the police station in Ballynahinch is to close.***

***Can the District Commander state what is needed to address these concerns, is it***

- ***Extra resources eg men and equipment?***
- ***Better use of existing resources?***

***Can he outline what are his plans to restore the faith of local people by having an effective, consistent, highly visible police presence?***

The District Commander stressed that there were no plans to close Ballynahinch Station. Indeed major renovation work is to be undertaken shortly to improve the facilities in line with Patten recommendations.

In terms of finance and personnel, all police districts have a finite number of personnel and financial resources. Down DCU will not be getting any additional resources at this time. Hopefully in the future additional Part Time Officers or Police Community Support Officers will be allocated to the District. Resources are deployed at periods of peak demand and in identified hot spot areas. In addition to response crews Community Beat Teams rotas have been restructured to ensure there is always coverage until at least 3am on Friday and Saturday nights. He commended the dedication and hard work of Community Beat Officers.

With regard to the unique problems of Newcastle during the summer months, additional resources were made available as part of the Chill Out Campaign. A bid was made for additional Tactical Support Group resources but this was unsuccessful. He clarified the reasons why officers on bicycles would not always be available and stated that the PSNI were working with the Partnership to provide additional bicycles.

At weekends resources are maximised with Part Time Officers as part of high visibility patrolling. The Crime Team has also been used to supplement the local officers especially at weekends.

During discussion with Partnership members, issues covered included:

- Relief was expressed that the police station is to remain but disappointment that opening hours are not to be extended. The PSNI stated their preference to have officers out on patrol as the most cost effective way of serving the public.
- Down DCU has only one senior and one part time traffic warden. Responsibility for traffic wardens comes under the remit of DRD Roads. There will be a need to look for additional resources for the 12<sup>th</sup> July parade in Ballynahinch in 2007.
- The inconsistency of police on bicycles in Newcastle was highlighted and the need for the business community to commit to at sponsoring further bicycles was stressed.

## Down DPP Meeting in Public

- It was confirmed that Alcohol Free Zone signs for Drumaness had been requested through Council's Building Services section.
- Constable Beattie outlined the proactive activities of Community Beat Officers in the Ballynahinch estates on Friday and Saturday nights.
- Inspector Donnelly reported on arrests for fireworks offences.

**Q2. *In discussion with a group of people in Ballynahinch it was mentioned the difficulty being encountered when they contacted their local police station. It was impossible to contact anyone by phone in the police station and when put through to Downpatrick station there was very little action taken and feedback is very scarce.***

***The Commander has stated in the past this was an area which he was keen to address by ensuring officers gave their name and when incidents were reported some form of feedback would be provided even if it was only to tell the person that no action could be taken.***

***Can he advise what is being done to address the current situation regarding the taking of calls from the public and the provision of feedback?***

The District Commander stated that the Ballynahinch Station is open to the public between 5pm and 7pm Monday to Saturday. All unanswered calls to Ballynahinch are automatically diverted to the Newcastle Station which operates on a 24 hour basis. If a member of the public is trying to contact an officer not on duty, switchboard operators are directed to send an email to the officer to ask them to contact the caller. Community Beat Officers have mobile phones and answering machine facilities in each of their locations. All officers have been instructed that it is a requirement to provide their name to a caller which is no more than common courtesy.

Each officer receives training on the handling and management of calls from the public. Controllers have been directed to advise callers when a response will not be immediate together with an expectation of when police will be available.

In response to a member of the public, Chief Inspector Loughins confirmed that officers answering the telephone should give their name on request and where this was not done to advise the PSNI.

The Chairman called for a short break to enable members and visitors to see the police vehicles referred to earlier on display in the Market Square.

**Q3. *At the last public meeting the District Commander highlighted that clearing of crime figures was being adversely affected in a negative way. Members of the public who although willing to contact the police to report a crime were unwilling to make a statement, therefore making it impossible to progress or resolve the crime.***

***Can the Commander put a figure on the number of cases in Down District where people have been unwilling to make a statement?***

***What in his opinion can be done to address this issue and encourage members of the public to take the next step after reporting a crime by making a statement?***

The District Commander explained that Home Office rules changed in relation to what is referred to as Non Sanctioned Clearances. Crimes that do not result in an offender appearing in court fall into this category. From April this year there are 276 occasions when persons reporting crime declined an investigation, accounting for 12.5% of overall crime.

He outlined the reasons why people were reluctant to make statements and highlighted the knock on effect of lack of deterrents leading to re-offending. He encouraged all those who report a crime to pursue an investigation and gave an assurance that police will do all they can to progress a case to court where evidence exists.

In response to members queries, the District Commander clarified:

- Down DCU were currently pursuing two ASBOs in Downpatrick and working with the Council and Housing Executive in identifying further ASBOs in Rowallane and Ballynahinch..
- Perception of the public that it is enough to report a crime and the need for the PSNI and the DPP to encourage people to make statements.
- Clarification of disclosure documents being made available if a case is contested and intimidation of a witness is an arrestable offence.

During questions from the public, many issues of anti-social behaviour, boy racers and youths causing annoyance were highlighted in Crossgar . Inspector Donnelly gave an update on initiatives being taken by the Community Beat Teams in Crossgar to tackle these issues and advised that he would speak to individual members of the public about their concerns after the meeting. Partnerships members stressed that their remit covered the entire district and issues in Crossgar were as important as any of the larger towns.

***Q.4 Could the Commander outline if there are any cases of child informers in Down District? If so, how many? Could the Commander provide the PSNI's policy on child informers and give the definition of a child informer, including:***

***Whether or not they are paid?***

***How they are recruited?***

***What types of information they convey?***

***How the PSNI verifies this information?***

Chief Inspector Loughins outlined the legislation and regulations which govern the gathering and use of intelligence. He stressed that the word informant is no longer used and those persons who provide intelligence are referred to a Covert Human Intelligence Sources or CHIS. The Home Office Code of Practice governs the use of a CHIS. Under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act, a juvenile source is a person under the age of 18. The legal limitations are very restrictive and the use of a person under 18 must be

authorised by an Assistant Chief Constable or above. This authorisation can only last for one month when it must be reviewed. A parent or guardian must be present at all meetings with a source under 16. There is also a requirement for a risk assessment to include any risk of physical injury or psychological distress to the source.

During discussion the Chief Inspector declined to expand on his response as it would not be appropriate to discuss the specific use of intelligence sources. The Chairman agreed that the issue was an operational matter.

**Q.5** *Sir, why are the PSNI in the Ballynahinch area not taking action against the running of illegal drinking dens ie the youth club in the Langley Road estate which is being run by paramilitaries to boost their funds. No later than Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October there was a large gathering at this location with drink being openly sold to all ages.*

*The River Walk is also a hot spot for the younger person to be seen drinking openly, the Windmill Hill area is another. These are a few, there are more. Are we going to see the PSNI put a stop to this illegal drinking by underage persons and are we going to see these illegal clubs etc whatever they are called, closed?*

The District Commander clarified that the Youth Club incident came to the attention of the police only after the event. Appropriate action will be taken by the Sector Inspector and the Community Beat Officers to prevent a re-occurrence.

Police are committed to tackling the problem of underage drinking which is an issue not just within Ballynahinch but throughout Northern Ireland. During the summer Chill Out Campaign a total of 39 young persons were reported to the Youth Diversion Scheme and 11 of these were from the Ballynahinch area.

In addition, police have worked closely with licensees to try to prevent persons over 18 buying alcohol for young people. Community Beat Officers have a good relationship with young people in the area and have on occasion entered into partnerships with parents, phoning them directly if their children are drinking or misbehaving. Many parents privately thank officers for this action. Unfortunately not all parents have such a responsible attitude and police alone cannot prevent underage drinking.

The Chairman thanked the PSNI for their responses to the questions.

**6(a) Correspondence from outside bodies and boards:**

**(1) Consultation on the N I Policing Board Review of the Code of Ethics for the PSNI**

The Chairman referred to the enclosed document which sets out the principles to govern the conduct of all police officers of all ranks on and off duty. He reminded members of the deadline date for submissions as Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November.

**(2) SPEC Newsletter of Criminal Justice Inspection October 2006**

The Chairman referred members to the enclosed newsletter and the number of key reports pending.

The SPEC newsletter was noted.

**(3) Young People and Firearms consultation**

The Chairman referred members to the enclosed consultation document. He reminded members that at their meeting on 29 June the Partnership agreed to support that the minimum age for supervised shooting be lowered to twelve. The age restriction is clearly understood to be in respect of possession of the firearm and not the purchase or acquisition of firearms.

**6(b) Relevant items of which notice has been given**

There were no relevant items.

The Chairman thanked all present for their contributions and brought the meeting to a close.

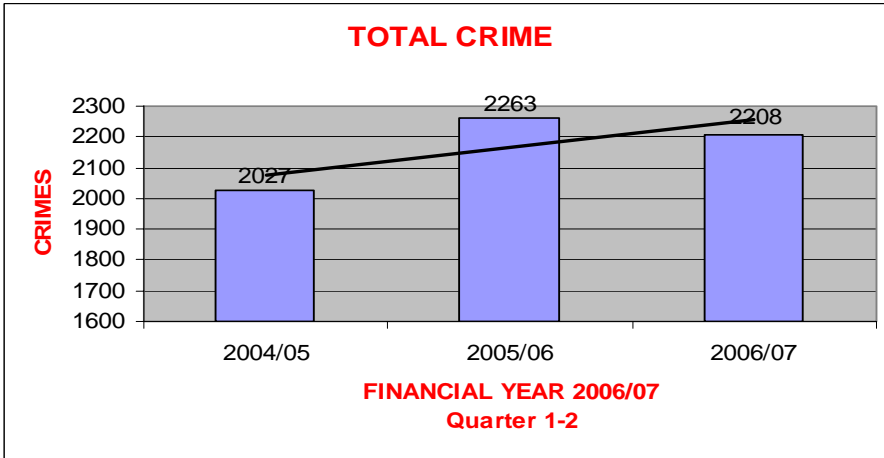
**Down District Policing Partnership Meeting  
held in the Market House, Ballynahinch  
On Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2006**

**ATTENDANCE**

	<b>IN</b>	<b>OUT</b>
<b>BOWLES, Peter</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>10.00pm</b>
<b>BYRNE, Audrey</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>10.00pm</b>
<b>CURRAN, Dermot</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>8.40pm</b>
<b>DICK, William</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>10.00pm</b>
<b>EDWARDS, Roy</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>10.00pm</b>
<b>HUDDLESTON, John</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>10.00pm</b>
<b>KELLY, Una</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>10.00m</b>
<b>McGRATH, Colin</b>	<b>APOLOGY</b>	
<b>McILHERON, Jack</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>10.00pm</b>
<b>NELLIS, Kay</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>8.30pm</b>
<b>NOBLE, John</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>10.00pm</b>
<b>O'BOYLE, Carmel</b>	<b>APOLOGY</b>	
<b>O NEILL, Eamonn</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>10.00pm</b>
<b>PATTERSON, Desmond</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>10.00pm</b>
<b>RITCHIE, Margaret</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>10.00pm</b>
<b>STOCKTON, Kathleen</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>8.30pm</b>
<b>TOMAN, Patrick</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>10.00pm</b>

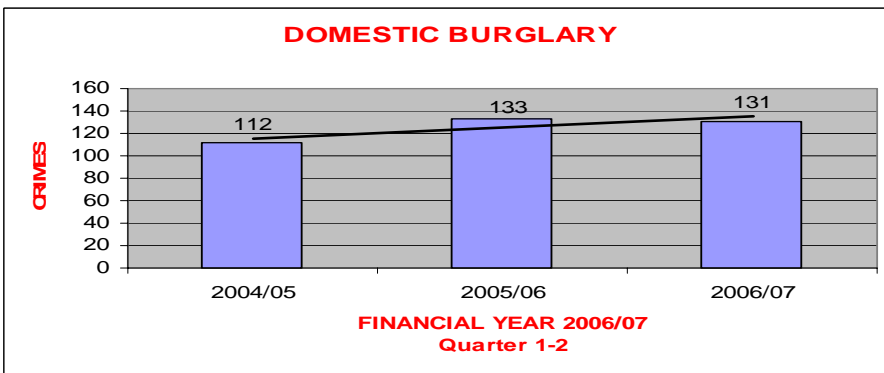
#### 4. DC Report

#### OVERALL CRIME



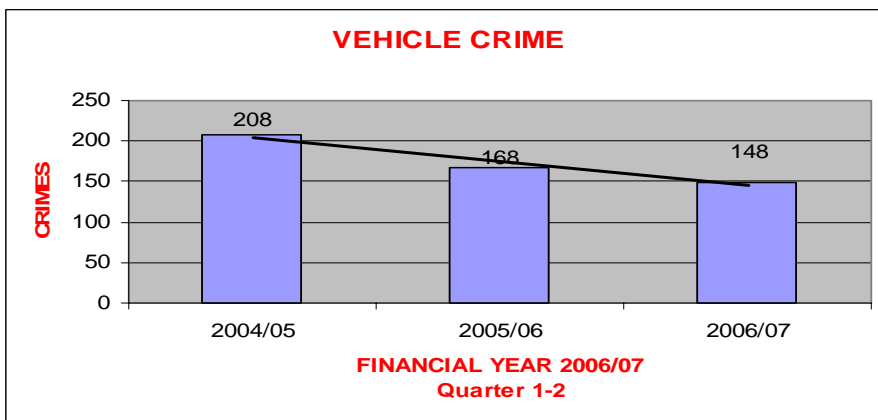
REDUCTION FROM 05/06 = 2.4%

#### DOMESTIC BURGLARY



REDUCTION FROM 05/06 = 1.5%

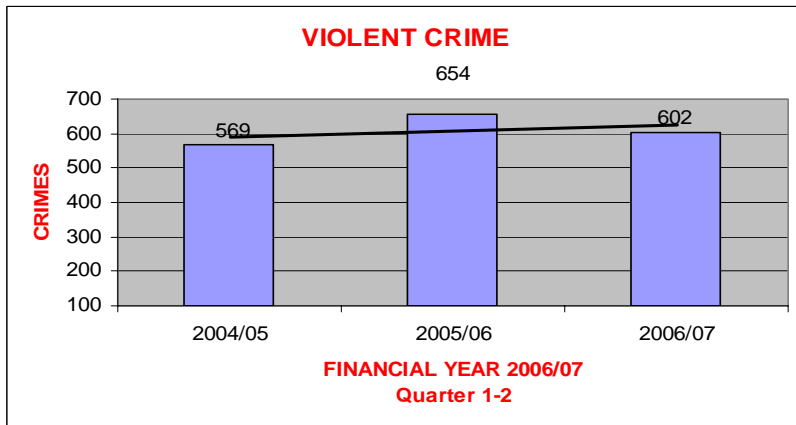
#### VEHICLE CRIME



REDUCTION FROM 05/06 = 11.9%

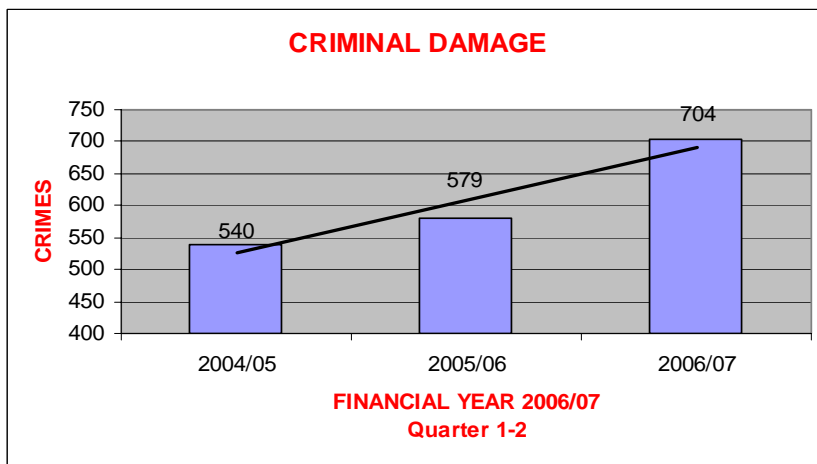
## Down DPP Meeting in Public

### VIOLENT CRIME



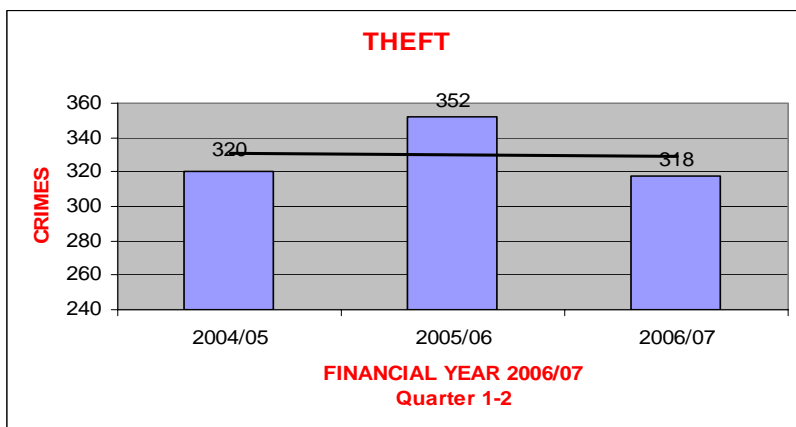
REDUCTION FROM 05/06 = 7.9%

### CRIMINAL DAMAGE



INCREASE FROM 05/06 = 21.6%

### THEFT



REDUCTION FROM 05/06 = 9.7%

### CLEARANCE RATE FOR VIOLENT CRIME

- Total number of violent crimes recorded Apr-Sept 06 = 602
- Total number of violent crimes cleared Apr-Sept 06 = 230
- **Clearance Rate = 38.2%**

**ROWALLANE SECTOR PERFORMANCE**

**ROWALLANE SECTOR includes:**

**TOWNS: Ballynahinch**

**VILLAGES: Saintfield, Crossgar, Killyleagh, Drumaness**

**% CHANGE IN CRIME IN ROWALLANE SECTOR**

	2006/07	2005/06	% CHANGE
DOMESTIC BURGLARY	37	39	-5.1%
VEHICLE CRIME	38	44	-13.6%
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	174	154	13.0%
THEFT	73	71	2.8%
VIOLENT CRIME	177	180	-1.7%
OVERALL CRIME	572	574	-0.3%

**% CHANGE IN CRIME IN BALLYNAHINCH**

	2006/07	2005/06	% CHANGE
DOMESTIC BURGLARY	22	20	10.0%
VEHICLE CRIME	20	19	5.3%
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	68	68	0.0%
THEFT	39	42	-7.1%
VIOLENT CRIME	81	90	-10.0%
OVERALL CRIME	266	278	-4.3%

**5. Summary**

5.1 Summary of questions received since the last meeting in public according to theme.

For example:

<b>Drug Abuse</b> <i>(drug dealing, drug use)</i>	<b>Alcohol Abuse</b> <i>(drunken driving, underage drinking, public drunkenness)</i>	<b>Theft</b> <i>(vehicle crime, domestic burglary)</i>	<b>Public Nuisance</b> <i>(Vandalism, Young people causing a nuisance, road traffic issues, public disorder, bogus callers)</i>	<b>Violence</b> <i>(assaults, child abuse, domestic violence, sexual attacks, paramilitary activity, hate [racial/homophobic] crimes)</i>	<b>Other</b> PSNI statistics, Fear of Crime target, CCTV, Flags & emblems, Parking Laws, PSNI sick absence
	4				4