

**MINUTES OF THE DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIP PUBLIC MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 3 APRIL 2006 AT 7.30PM
IN THE RURAL COLLEGE, DERRYNOID ROAD, DRAPERSTOWN**

PRESENT Cllr P Mclean, Chairperson
Ms F Symington, Vice-Chairperson
Cllr K Lagan
Mr J Conlon
Cllr T J Catherwood
Cllr J Campbell
Mrs B Foster
Mrs Sue Chada
Cllr G Shiels
Dr Shortall
Mrs M McCormack
Mr J O'Doherty
Cllr J Crawford
Cllr Mrs E A Forde

Also present Mr J A McLaughlin, Chief Executive, MDC
Mr M McCrory, DPP Manager
Ms P Shaw, Secretary

1 Apologies

Cllr Rev R T Wm McCrea, MLA and Mrs M Donnelly.

2 Declarations of Interest

No member had any interest to declare.

3 Confirmation of Minutes

(a) Private Meeting

PROPOSED by Cllr J Campbell,
Seconded by Mrs B Foster, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting.

(b) Public Meeting

PROPOSED by Mrs B Foster,
Seconded by Cllr J Crawford, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting.

4 Matters Arising

Chief Inspector Wiggins stated that he wished to clarify an item on page 2 of the minutes and pointed out that Magherafelt had not the lowest, but instead one of the lowest crime rates in Northern Ireland.

5 Report by the District Commander

Chief Inspector Wiggins presented the District Policing Partnership Report for the period April - March 2006 (Appendix 1). He highlighted that the most significant features were:

- (a) Domestic Burglary - Not on target and higher than last year.
- (b) Violent Crime - Not on target and higher than last year.
- (c) Vehicle Crime - Not on target and higher than last year
- (d) Criminal Damage - Not on target and higher than last year (but decreasing since September).

In summary Chief Inspector Wiggins stated that none of the above categories were on target and were all higher than last year. However, he once again reminded members that 2004/2005 had seen dramatic reductions in crime and thus the 2005/2006 statistics were being benchmarked against an exceptionally demanding target.

- (a) Members questioned the police at length over possible trends in the crime rate and reasons for the increases.

Chief Inspector Wiggins responded by stating that some patterns had been established e.g. the pattern of violent crime and burglary in Maghera seemed to be that most of it occurred in the evening, whilst in Magherafelt most burglary seemed to occur during the day.

- (b) In response to a question from Cllr G Shiels, Chief Inspector Wiggins stated that most of the crime took place in urban locations. He also stated that more intelligence was required in order to resolve these crimes.

(c) Members then discussed the merits of mounting an advertising campaign in order to educate the public on how best to protect their homes and property. It was decided that this matter should be discussed by the DPP Manager, Mr Michael McCrory, in conjunction with the Community Safety Partnership.

- (d) Members raised the issue of on street drinking. Mr J O'Doherty stated that publicans seem to be content to sell the "last round of drinks" in plastic beakers and then allow their patrons take this alcohol out on to the street with them.

Chief Inspector Wiggins and Inspector Blemmings advised the Members of the Alcohol Free Zones and of the Council's own bye laws. They also raised the matter of underage drinking and of ID cards for those aged 16 and upwards. They explained to the members how the Under 18 Scheme worked - the licensees were to seek proof of age and identity from all patrons who they were suspicious were under 18 years of age. The police were of the opinion that by and large the licensees were complying with this scheme.

- (e) Cllr J Campbell sought clarification of how areas were chosen to be designated as Alcohol Free Zones. He wanted to know why the signs had not been erected everywhere.

The Police replied by explaining that the Council responded to their request to erect signs in areas which they regarded as hot spots for consuming alcohol in public.

(f) Cllr G Shiels raised the matter of licensing laws being relaxed so that all supermarkets and corner shops etc could now sell alcohol. He felt that this would make alcohol too readily available to underage drinkers. He wished the partnership to pass a motion opposing this possible relaxation of licensing laws. However the members did not feel comfortable passing such a motion until they had an opportunity to further research this matter.

Chief Inspector Wiggins informed the meeting that this was his last Partnership meeting since he would soon be returning to Headquarters.

The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and all the members congratulated Chief Inspector Wiggins on all of the work that he had done since joining the Magherafelt DCU and wished him every success for the remainder of his career.

6 Questions from the Public

There were no questions from the public

7 Subgroup Issues for Approval

Issues raised at the subgroup meeting were approved by the members.

The Chairman informed the members that Mr M McCrory was absent due to the birth of his daughter and on behalf of the members wished to convey everyone's best wishes on the happy event.

8 Strategic Plan for 2006-2009 for Approval

PROPOSED by Cllr Lagan,
Seconded by Mrs B Foster, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Partnership approve the Strategic Plan for 2006-2009.

9 Operation Plan 2006/2007 for Approval

PROPOSED by Cllr Catherwood,
Seconded by Mr J Conlon, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Partnership approve the Operational Plan for 2006/2007.

10 Training Needs

Members were urged to return their training needs form for analysis.

11 Any Other Business

It was Proposed by Ms F Symington,
Seconded by Mrs B Foster, that

The Partnership offer Mr Denis Bradley, Vice-Chairman of the Northern Ireland Policing Board best wishes on his retirement.

Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the DPP should be held in The Council Office, 50 Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt on Monday 5 June 2006 at 7.30pm.

The meeting concluded at 9.05pm.

J A McLaughlin

The foregoing Minutes are hereby Confirmed.

_____ (Chairman)

_____ (Date)