

**MINUTES OF THE DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIP PUBLIC MEETING  
HELD ON MONDAY 4 OCTOBER 2004 AT 7.30PM  
IN MAGHERAFELT DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES,  
50 BALLYRONAN ROAD, MAGHERAFELT**

**PRESENT** Cllr P McLean, Vice-Chairman  
Mr J Conlon  
Cllr R A Montgomery  
Cllr T J Catherwood  
Mr J Campbell  
Ms S Ewing  
Miss A Scott  
Cllr P McErlean  
Cllr G Shiels  
Ms F Symington  
Cllr J A McBride  
Dr D Shortall  
Cllr J Junkin

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

**1 Apologies**

Cllr K Lagan, Chairperson, Cllr Rev Dr R T Wm McCrea, Mrs M Donnelly and Mrs M McCormack.

**2 Declarations of Interest**

No member had any interest to declare.

**3 Confirmation of Minutes**

Cllr McErlean asked that on page 3, first paragraph, after the motion, that it should read “some of which were”, instead of “most of which were”.

On page 5, paragraph 3, Cllr McErlean said that it should read that “no police cars arrived”, instead of “only two police cars arrived”. The Chief Executive, Mr John McLaughlin stated that he felt that the minute was correct and asked Superintendent Lindsay to confirm whether or not it was correct to say that “only two police cars arrived”. Superintendent Lindsay stated that it was correct to say that “only two police cars arrived”.

On page 4, paragraph 3, Cllr Montgomery stated that instead of saying that this had been achieved through negotiation with the local community, it would have been more correct for the minutes to convey that this had been achieved through negotiations with the local community and wider elements of the local society.

PROPOSED by Cllr Montgomery,  
Seconded by Cllr McBride, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that subject to the foregoing amendments, the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting.

**4 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**5 Discussion on Youth Issues**

Deferred until next meeting.

**6 Youth Project**

Deferred until next meeting

**7 Report by the District Commander**

The District Commander Superintendent John Lindsay introduced to the meeting, Chief Inspector Tom Wiggans, Inspector S Martin and Inspector H Johnston. Superintendent Lindsay explained that Mr Tom Wiggans was the new Chief Inspector, but that he would actually be succeeding Superintendent Lindsay as the new Superintendent when he (Superintendent Lindsay) retired in December.

The District Commander presented his report (Appendix I) for the months of July - August 2004. He highlighted that the most significant features were:

- (a) Domestic burglary - 4 incidents compared to 10 during same period the previous year
- (b) Vehicle crime - 5 compared to 8 during the same period the previous year.
- (c) Drug seizures - 12 compared to 7 during the same period the previous year.
- (d) Criminal damage - 84 incidents compared to 106 during the same period the previous year.

In addition the detection rate for serious crime had been 65% during the July-August period.

**Members Questions**

- (a) Cllr Montgomery enquired how the reduction in the Full Time Reserve would affect policing throughout the district.

In reply Superintendent Lindsay stated that there were 41 Full Time Reserve officers in Magherafelt. He stated however that the police had been planning for such an eventuality over the last four to five years. Better use was now being made of officers' time by making use of the National Intelligence Model.

- (b) Miss A Scott stated that she believed that the reduction of police numbers would manifest itself by fewer officers going on beat patrol. She felt that this would jeopardise a lot of the good work done by the community beat over the last four to five years.

In reply Superintendent Lindsay stated that whilst what Miss Scott was aspiring to was very desirable, one had to realise that Northern Ireland had a higher level of policing per capita than anywhere else in the UK. The public would have to realise that this was going to be reduced. He pointed to one of the Canadian provinces which had a population of 3 million people, nearly twice that of Northern Ireland, but yet it only had 1,100 police officers.

Chief Inspector Wiggans added that it would be one of his priorities to keep police officers on the beat and that community policing would not suffer.

(c) Ms Symington enquired how many of the jobs which were formerly being done by police were now being done by civilians.

In reply Superintendent Lindsay stated that he would prepare a presentation on this for the next meeting.

(d) Dr Shortall asked to what extent that a reduction in police long term sickness would help counteract the reduction of the Full Time Reserve.

In reply Superintendent Lindsay stated that this had the potential to quite significantly counteract the reduction in the Full Time Reserve. He stated that the Magherafelt DCU had the worst sickness level in Northern Ireland. However, matters had improved since he last reported on this subject. Some of the long term sick had now left the force. In fact it had become a feature that quite a significant number of officers do not return to work after long term sickness. He added that he would have a further breakdown of the current sickness levels for the December meeting.

(e) Miss A Scott raised the issue of the demolition of Castledawson Police Station. She reminded the meeting that an agreement had been reached with Superintendent Shevlin that Castledawson Police Station would not be demolished until such time as the PSNI were able to provide another policing office, preferably on the Main Street of Castledawson.

In reply Superintendent Lindsay stated that the money from the sale of Castledawson Police Station would go into the central policing fund and would not necessarily come back into the Magherafelt DCU. However, he would attempt to investigate the situation and try to provide some type of policing office in Castledawson.

(f) Ms S Ewing and Ms F Symington raised the issue of new recruits and asked what percentage they made of the current Magherafelt DCU policing compliment.

In reply Superintendent Lindsay stated that he would bring accurate figures on this matter to the next meeting but said that the allocation of new officers depended on the size of an area, the amount of crime within it, etc.

(g) The Chairman, Cllr McLean enquired if any progress had been made in solving the recent violent robbery in Castledawson, in which a family had been subjected to a terrifying experience.

In reply Superintendent Lindsay stated that the police were still carrying out further enquiries. He could reveal no details, other than to say that this was far from being a dead enquiry.

## **8 Questions from the Public**

The Chairman read out a question/letter from a member of the public, (Appendix II). This letter essentially asked that the Magherafelt DPP pass a motion that no members of the GAA should be allowed to join the PSNI.

In replying Superintendent Lindsay stated that the PSNI was an inclusive organisation and that it needed to reflect all sections of the community. In fact the PSNI welcomed and encouraged all section of the community to apply. Its recruitment policy was well documents and it highlighted that it welcomed applications from all sections of the community.

## **9 Local Policing Plan - Planning Workshop for DPPs/DCUs**

This workshop was to be held on 15 October 2004.

PROPOSED by Cllr Montgomery,  
Seconded by Cllr McBride, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Cllr Lagan and Cllrs McCrea or McLean attend as well as Mr J Campbell and Dr D Shortall.

## **10 Any Other Business**

- (a) It was unanimously resolved to invite those involved in the youth project to the next meeting in order to discuss their work.
- (b) It was unanimously agreed that Ms F Symington, Miss S Scott and Ms S Ewing would represent the Magherafelt DPP at a function hosted by the Secretary of State at Hillsborough Castle on 11 October 2004.

### Date of next meeting

It was agreed that the next public meeting would be held in The Council Office, 50 Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt on Monday 6 December 2004 at 7.30pm.

The meeting concluded at 9.00pm.

J A McLaughlin

The foregoing Minutes are hereby Confirmed.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Chairman)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)