

**MINUTES OF THE DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIP PUBLIC MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 8 OCTOBER 2007 AT 7.30PM
IN THE COUNCIL OFFICES, 50 BALLYRONAN ROAD, MAGHERAFELT**

PRESENT Cllr K Lagan, Chairperson
Mr J Conlon, Vice-Chairperson
Cllr P McLean
Ms F Symington
Cllr S McPeake
Mrs M Donnelly
Cllr S Kerr
Cllr J Campbell
Mrs Sue Chada
Cllr G Shiels
Dr Shortall
Mr J O'Doherty
Cllr P Bateson

Also present Chief Inspector P Douglas
Inspector H Johnston
Sergeant J Brodison
Constable S Campbell
Mr J A McLaughlin, Chief Executive MDC
Mr M McCrory, DPP Manager
Ms P Shaw, Secretary

1 Welcome

The Chairperson, Cllr K Lagan, welcomed everyone to the meeting, and especially the new political members from Sinn Féin.

Cllr Shiels asked that Sinn Féin produce names of those who had been involved in acts of violence.

Cllr Lagan stated that this was not on the agenda and that we were here to monitor the police and not each other.

2 Apologies

Cllr E A Forde, Cllr I Milne, Mrs M McCormack and Mrs B Foster.

3 Declarations of Interest

No member had any interest to declare.

4 Confirmation of Minutes

(a) Private Meeting

PROPOSED by Mrs S Chada,
Seconded by Ms F Symington, and

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

(b) Public Meeting

PROPOSED by Dr Shortall,
Seconded by Cllr P McLean, and

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

5 Matters Arising

(a) Private Meeting

Dr Shortall raised that he had also asked about PCSO's.

(b) Public Meeting

Cllr McLean asked had there been any follow up on the suggested joint publicity on drink driving.

Chief Inspector Douglas replied that this had happened with photos and press release in the paper.

6 Report by the District Commander

Chief Inspector Douglas presented the six month report to the District Policing Partnership for the period April 2007 – September 2007. He highlighted that the most significant features were:

- To reduce the number of recorded crimes of criminal damage by 2% - this was not on target.
- To increase the number of arrests for drugs offences - this was not on target.
- To maintain current detection level for careless and dangerous driving - this was on target.

Chief Inspector Douglas highlighted that most of the drug offences were for intent to supply. The two recent seizures were for £5000 and £3000.

With regard to careless driving he stated that this had been reduced by enforcement and also by raising awareness through events such as Motor Madness and going around the local schools.

He added that the new police motor cyclist was now on duty throughout the district.

(a) Mr J O'Doherty asked could the DPP have a breakdown of where the incidents happened.

Chief Inspector Douglas responded that this might be time intensive to research this, however they would do their best.

(b) Cllr Campbell raised the issue that skateboarders had closed the Ulsterbus depot for three hours.

Chief Inspector Douglas stated that he was not aware of this. It was agreed that skateboarders needed somewhere to go without causing any public nuisance, however providing a facility was very costly due to insurance. The Council previously had a facility near Portglenone but this was closed due to high cost of insurance.

The police and Community Safety Partnership are looking at this problem but again cost of insurance may make any project prohibitive.

(c) Cllr McLean asked about the U18 scheme.

Chief Inspector Douglas said it was very positive. Mr M McCrory said that every pupil in all the schools except St Mary's Grammar had availed of free citizens cards which displayed their age.

He added that the Community Safety Partnership were looking into establishing a night time economy group.

(d) Cllr McPeake asked what was the strategy for dealing with fireworks this year.

Chief Inspector Douglas stated that they would look at hot spots from last year, monitor persistent offenders, maintain high visibility and have a comprehensive media strategy.

Mr M McCrory stated that he would be distributing firework safety awareness posters and leaflets to Community Groups in the district.

(e) Mr J O'Doherty asked how many bars were asking for ID.

Chief Inspector Douglas stated that this was all down to good managers and door staff and a lot of goodwill was involved from them.

Cllr Lagan asked how often spot checks were carried out.

Mr M McCrory stated that a joint inspection with the PSNI, Fire and Rescue Service and Environmental Health had occurred recently.

(f) Mrs M Donnelly raised concerns that crime against children was up and that this was worrying.

Chief Inspector Douglas responded that most of this was assaults that occurred outside the home and has reduced last year by 30% from last year.

Cllr McPeake asked would it be possible to get a breakdown of crimes against children e.g. those that involved BEBO and text messaging.

Chief Inspector Douglas stated that he would get this information to him.

Cllr Kerr stated that crime against children conjured up all sorts of images and a break down would be appreciated by age band.

(g) Ms F Symington asked what sanction clearance rate meant.

Chief Inspector Douglas explained that it was the number of crimes sanctions had been taken against.

(h) Sgt Brodison gave a brief talk on hate crime. She stated that the HIPA scheme was operating in the district. It provides door locks, panic alarms, new windows and doors to victims of hate crime.

She stated that last year there were 4 racist assaults but none this year. Last year there had been 11 sectarian assaults and this year there has been 7. She added that these types of crimes were probably underreported.

Cllr Shiels asked did this include attacks on orange halls.

Sgt Brodison said yes it did.

Sgt Brodison also stated that she would personally visit all victims and maintain communication.

(i) Cllr McPeake asked for the definition of clearance rates.

Chief Inspector Douglas replied that this was when action had been taken on a case. He added that not all go to court and some may be cautions.

(j) Mrs S Chada asked had the police gave a talk at English language workshops.

Sgt Brodison replied that she had given a presentation at one last year and was waiting to repeat this once the students had reached the adequate level of English.

7 Questions from the Public

There were no written questions from the public.

Robert Kelly asked about the situation in Leckagh and what was being done to resolve this.

Mr John McLaughlin stated that the Council were developing a Community Relations Plan and that this would be out to consultation by the end of October/November.

Chief Inspector Douglas stated that there were ongoing investigations.

Cllr McPeake stated that they were trying to establish Community Groups in the area to take ownership and help to reduce the problems.

8 Any Other Business

Mr Michael McCrory stated that the Policing Board had asked if the DPP would like to add to the 2008 Public Consultation Survey. Cllr Lagan asked that members interested contact Michael before 15 October 2007.

Mrs S Chada suggested that nationality be added.

Local Policing Plan

The local Policing Plan has to be finalised before Christmas, it was agreed that a meeting be held on Monday 3 December at 7.00pm for private and 7.30pm with meeting with the police.

Mrs S Chada requested that any changes to the Policing Plan structure be forwarded to the DPP.

Cllr McPeake made a statement with regard to Sinn Féin joining the DPP where he hoped that everyone could work together and that every one was entitled to a fair, impartial and transparent police service.

Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the DPP should be held in Maghera Leisure Centre, Coleraine Road, Maghera on Monday 14 January 2008 at 7.30pm.

The meeting concluded at 9.30pm.

J A McLaughlin

The foregoing Minutes are hereby Confirmed.

_____ (Chairman)

_____ (Date)