

Media release on behalf of the Belfast District Policing Partnership

September 17 2004

For immediate use

Belfast DPP voices concern at Full Time Reserve cuts

The Belfast District Policing Partnership, at its special meeting last night (Thursday September 16), passed the following resolution:

“The Belfast District Policing Partnership expresses its deep concern at the decision of the Chief Constable, Hugh Orde - which was taken without consultation with District Policing Partnerships - to reduce at the current time the numbers of the Full Time Reserve and the effect which his decision will have on policing in Belfast. Given the ongoing paramilitary threat and the increase in ordinary crime and the fear of crime being experienced by the public in general and older people in particular, the Belfast District Policing Partnership finds the Chief Constable's decision totally unacceptable.

“The District Policing Partnership calls on the Chief Constable to review his decision, since its effect will be to erode the confidence of the public, the District Policing Partnership and indeed police officers themselves in his ability to provide effective policing to safeguard and respond to the needs of the people of Belfast.

“The Belfast District Policing Partnership calls upon the other District Policing Partnerships in the Province to review the Chief Constable's decision, satisfy themselves as to whether the Police Service of Northern Ireland has sufficient resources to provide effective policing and, if not, to make their views known to both the Chief Constable and the Northern Ireland Policing Board”.

The Chairman of the Partnership, Councillor Ruth Patterson said:

“At the Partnership's meeting yesterday there was a full and frank exchange of views on this most important topic. Although the decision was not a

unanimous one, it was supported by the overwhelming majority of members present.

“The Chief Constable and the Northern Ireland Policing Board would be well advised to take full note of the terms of the Partnership’s resolution and should not in any way underestimate the concern and anger which the decision on the Full Time Reserve has caused within the Partnership and the wider population of the City,” she said.

Councillor Patterson said the Partnership would await a reply from the Chief Constable and the Policing Board before considering the matter further.

However, the Partnership is to write to Assistant Chief Constable McCausland requesting details of how the proposed cutback in the Full Time Reserve will affect the four District Command Units in the City, particularly with regard to the provision of an adequate number of officers for frontline and community policing.

RELEASE ENDS

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