

MEDIA RELEASE

Sinn Fein take their seats on Strabane DPP

31.10.07

Sinn Fein will take their seats on Strabane District Policing Partnership (DPP) on 4th December 2007. At a special meeting of Council held last night (Tuesday 30th October), the allocation of seats for Strabane DPP was agreed.

Under these new arrangements, designed to fairly reflect the political make-up of the council, Sinn Fein will have 5 seats on the partnership, while DUP, UUP and SDLP will have 1 seat each. The seat allocation is based on the D'Hondt principles and the number of first preference votes cast for each party at the last local government elections.

Chairman of Strabane DPP, Councillor Eugene McMenamin said: **“I would like to pay tribute to Councillors who have sat on Strabane DPP for the work that they have completed. Out-going political members have contributed significantly to the work of Strabane DPP from its formation. They can be proud to look back at the DPP’s achievements over that period and to know that they have been part of moving policing forward and ensuring that the voices of local people have been heard and listened to.”**

“Many Councillors will be saddened to leave the DPP, however we welcome Sinn Fein on board and trust that they will continue to progress local policing issues as we have strived to do in the past few years. Working in partnership with the community, Strabane DPP has become a key part of the policing set-up in the

District. DPPs offer communities a way of getting involved in policing and having a real say on how local policing is delivered. We are in a new policing dispensation and we should look positively to opportunities for the future to build safer communities through effective partnerships, which embrace all communities.”

Councillor McMenamin said.

----- Ends -----

For further information, please contact:

Vanessa Russell

Manager

Strabane District Policing Partnership

Strabane District Council

47 Derry Road

STRABANE

Co Tyrone

BT82 8DY

Tel: 028 7138 1333

Fax: 028 7138 1337

E-mail: vrussell@strabanedc.com

Notes to Editors

1. District Policing Partnerships – General Background

The establishment of DPPs was one of the 175 Recommendations made by the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland. Set up by the Policing Board on 4 March 2003, in accordance with the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 they were reconstituted on 2 December 2005. Each DPP covers the same area as the council and Police Service Area Command Unit, except Belfast DPP (see note 6 below).

2 Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Act 2006

Schedule 8 to the Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Act 2006 provides for the reconstitution of DPPs.

At its commencement date, 4 September 2007 - the Board was required, within 15 days, to ascertain whether each DPP met the *'political condition'* laid down in the Act. Schedule 8 Section 20 (2)(6) of the Act states *"the political condition is met in relation to a DPP if the political members of the DPP reflect, so far as practicable, the balance of the parties prevailing among the members of the council on the commencement date."*

3. The Political Condition

In determining the *'political condition'* of each DPP, the Policing Board has found that 23 DPPs did not meet the requirement and will be reconstituted in line with the Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Act 2006. They are:

Antrim DPP	Craigavon DPP	Lisburn DPP
Ards DPP	Derry DPP	Magherafelt DPP
Armagh DPP	Down DPP	Moyle
Ballymoney DPP	Dungannon and South Tyrone DPP	Newry and Mourne DPP
Belfast DPP	Fermanagh DPP	Newtownabbey DPP
Carrickfergus DPP	Larne DPP	North Down DPP
Castlereagh DPP	Limavady DPP	Omagh DPP
Cookstown DPP	Strabane DPP	

DPPs that met the *'political condition'* at this time, and will not be reconstituted are:

Ballymena DPP	
Banbridge DPP	Coleraine DPP

4. Role of DPPs

The duties and responsibilities of each DPP are set out in Schedule 3 Part III of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. Their role is set out in Section 16 and is to:

- **Consult** with the public to find out what issues in relation to policing and crime are of concern within the council district
- **Identify** local policing priorities arising from the consultation and recommend these to the District Commander so that they can be taken into account when the Local Policing Plan is being drawn up
- **Monitor** police performance against the objectives contained in the Local Policing Plan and the Annual Policing Plan as it relates to the district
- **Engage** with the community to obtain the co-operation of the public with the police in preventing crime
- **Act** as a general forum for discussion and consultation on all matters relating to the policing of the district.

5. Membership

In appointing independent members, the Policing Board has a statutory responsibility to ensure that when taken together – political and independent members – the DPP would be representative of the community it serves (Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003 Part 1 Section 14 (1a)).

For more information on DPPs log onto www.districtpolicing.com