



Northern Ireland Office
Castle Buildings
Belfast BT4 3SG
Telephone 028 9052 7577
Facsimile 028 9052 2655
www.nio.gov.uk

Appendix 2(a)

Chairperson, Northern Ireland Policing Board
Council Chief Executives
Chairpersons, Community Safety Partnerships
Chairpersons, District Policing Partnerships
CSP Managers
DPP Managers

17 July 2009

Dear colleague,

I wrote to you on 19 March inviting your views on the future delivery of Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and District Policing Partnership (DPP) functions. In response to requests that I extend the consultation period to allow for proper consideration of the many important issues contained in the consultation document, I subsequently agreed to split the consultation into two parts so as to give you more time to respond on the detail of a future model for partnership working.

I am now writing to you regarding the outcomes of the first phase of the consultation, in which we asked you to let us have your views on the following issues:

- whether you agree in principle that we should be aiming to create fully integrated partnerships at local level as the new councils come into being in May 2011; and
- what practical measures could be taken immediately to more closely align existing CSP and DPP arrangements.

You will see from the attached summary that there is clear support for bringing the existing functions together into a single partnership, with a

substantial proportion of respondents indicating they believe this to be the right way forward. While I am greatly encouraged by the overwhelming support for the principle of a single partnership, I have looked closely at the reasons why others felt they could not agree. These centred mainly on a belief that the respective roles of these partnerships are distinct and a fear that integration would, in particular, dilute the existing arrangements for ensuring that the police are accountable to their local communities. There were also concerns expressed that we are proceeding with developing our plans ahead of a framework for community planning being in place. It would be wrong of me to set these concerns aside, and I am happy to confirm that we will be very mindful of these important considerations as we take this work forward.

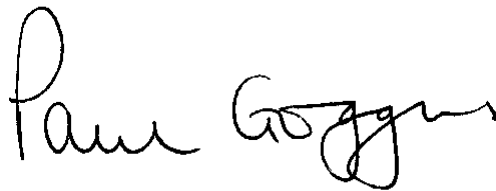
We also received a number of useful suggestions on how we can build upon the co-operation that already happens between CSPs and DPPs. I am reinforced in my view, therefore, that we should move quickly to further align the existing partnerships and the attached paper sets out how we intend to achieve this. I have taken into account that some changes might take more time, and that there are variations in current practice. We must also ensure that we complement as far as possible the transition process for the creation of the new councils. But the many examples of good practice that have been put forward clearly show that close co-operation is not just possible but is beneficial to the local communities which these partnerships serve. We need to maintain momentum, and it is my expectation that by this autumn we will have reached the first staging post described in the paper.

A Local Partnership Working Group has now been established, and includes officials from the NIO, the Policing Board, the police and local government. The group also includes a representative of the DOE's Local Government Policy Division, in order to ensure that we are working with the grain of the development of community planning as we take this review forward. The Working Group has looked at the outcomes of the first phase of the consultation and produced the proposals in the attached paper, which I have accepted. I have decided to keep the membership of this group relatively

small, but I am conscious of the need for us to continue to engage with all of the key stakeholders and I have asked my officials to ensure that you are kept fully informed. To this end, we are planning to hold a stakeholder event in the early autumn to brief you on progress and allow you to continue to contribute fully to this important debate.

I am very grateful indeed for the high level of response and for the quality of the submissions received. It is evident that a great deal of serious thought has gone into the responses and that you are as committed as I am to ensuring we put the right plans in place to meet future challenges.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Goggins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a long, sweeping underline.

**RT HON PAUL GOGGINS MP
MINISTER OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

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