

## SP&R Briefing, Monday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2010

### Suggested questions which Members might wish to raise

1. The model for Belfast appears very cumbersome. It was hoped that the new approach would streamline the current partnership arrangements but what is proposed is five partnerships, each with a distinct policing committee. The Council has considerable concerns about the administrative burden that the new model will impose on Belfast City Council. It is also likely to place additional burdens on other agencies, particularly the PSNI.

It would be helpful if the Department could clarify the rationale behind this model for Belfast and outline what real and tangible benefits they believe the new Belfast model will produce? What differences will it make to improved safety and reduced crime?

2. It is noted that the Bill states that the Policing Board and the Department *may* make a grant to the Council. The Council took on responsibilities in relation to policing partnerships and community safety in good faith on the understanding that the Department would provide ongoing financial support.

What assurances are there that there will be no real cut in financial terms to the costs of administering the new partnership in Belfast?

Will there be a requirement, as at present, for a percentage of funding to be met by the Council and what is that likely to be? (currently for DPPs this is 25% of administrative costs).

3. It is our understanding that the new partnership will be a statutory body in its own right. Could the Department therefore clarify whether the Council will be held accountable for any aspects of the new partnership, and if so how?

Also, in light of this, what degree of oversight will the Council have for the new partnership and what relationship is it likely to have with the new joint committee?

4. Independent Members and Elected Representatives currently receive allowances for membership of the DPP. However it would appear that there is no specific allowance for this in the proposed new legislation. Is it the case that there will be no financial support for members (elected or independent) of the PCSP or Policing Committee other than reimbursement of expenses?
5. Can the Department clarify if there will be any change to how independent members are appointed under the proposed

arrangements and how can it be assured that these Independent members reflect the communities they represent?

6. Can the Department provide an assurance that there will be adequate provision and resource made available to support the training and development of the new partnerships?
7. Will the new arrangements with a new Joint Committee representing the DoJ and the Policing Board, mean that reporting requirements in respect of finance and performance will be streamlined?
8. What consultation on the model for Belfast has taken place to date and does it allow sufficient flexibility to ensure it can operate in a flexible way, particularly at a local level with a focus on integration, delivery, and engagement (as well as monitoring)?
9. How will the new structures allow for more effective community / public engagement at a local level?