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Justice and Equality  
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I am Assistant Chief Constable Alan Todd from the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), currently heading the Operational Support Department and based at PSNI Headquarters in Belfast.

I have had senior responsibility for the delivery of local policing for over 12 years, as the Operational District Commander for Newry, Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon, and as both the Chief Superintendent and Assistant Chief Constable for local policing across Northern Ireland. I am also the National Lead in the UK for Police Contact Management and am a Director with the Police ICT Company in London.

I have had the privilege to work closely with An Garda Síochána (AGS) over many years on cross-border investigations, cross border operations and cross border major event planning. I am a graduate of the AGS Executive Development Programme with The Smurfit Business School at UCD, and am the co-author of the Cross-Border Strategies involving AGS, PSNI and the respective Justice Departments.

Since Early 2018, I have been involved in a review of Local Policing within PSNI. This review became necessary because, our society is changing, crime is changing and how we deliver policing is changing.

While crime in NI has reduced significantly over the last ten years, we know from experience, that the complexity and type of work faced by policing has become more challenging, including;

- Public protection work - increasing vulnerability in society is also having an impact on policing. PSNI regularly deal with around 150 calls for service each day every day linked to a person with identified mental health issues or related vulnerability.
- The growth of cyber enabled crime

- More diverse communities and
- An ageing population

In addition to these changing and growing demands, we have a reducing police budget and fewer police officers and police staff.

These impacts are felt right across policing and indeed our partners. I would, however, contend that the biggest impacts are likely to be felt in local policing, where there is something of a triple impact.

The first impact is, that in organisations where resources are under pressure, then local policing, as a resource intensive area, will be required to make savings/reduce numbers. This may also be accompanied by consolidation or centralisation of some functions/resources to achieve economies of scale.

The second impact is that, with the increasing complexity in demand, more specialists skills and roles are being deployed within policing to meet these demands. This increase in specialism (public-protection, cyber-crime, inter-agency working) inevitably serves to draw further resources away from local policing.

The third impact, is that with increasing demands and reducing resources, the amount of reactive service provision required to be delivered through local officers and its increasing complexity, does put added pressure on proactive & preventative work and community engagement roles. It is my view that is reflected in;

- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire and Rescue services (HMICFRS) National Effectiveness Review 2017 – Recommendation #1 on the functions of Neighbourhood Policing Teams,
- The United Kingdom's College of Policing's 'Modernising Neighbourhood Policing' guidelines published in 2018
- The Police Foundations Report – The Future of Neighbourhood Policing also published in 2018

Whilst these choices have a sound basis in 'Threat, Risk and Harm' and in policing keeping people safe, the inevitable reduction in the visibility of local police, perhaps combined with local station closures has an impact of public confidence in policing and satisfaction in local services previously based on visibility, accessibility and familiarity. I think it can also be argued that some of these impacts are felt more in Rural Communities including Rural Border Communities. In recognition of this PSNI have had, for some years a 'Rural Crime Lead' who oversees the PSNI's Rural Crime Strategy & related delivery. This sits alongside established relationships and practices established under the original Cross Border Policing Strategy and which the refreshed Cross Border Policing Strategy seeks to further develop under a specific strand of work;

## Policing with the Community in Rural Areas

- 3.1 Continue to build on existing practical cooperation to develop a joint An Garda Síochána / Police Service of Northern Ireland Crime Prevention Strategy for the border region which will assist the joint An Garda Síochána / Police Service of Northern Ireland Tasking and Coordination group.
- 3.2 To share training and experience in relation to liaison with minority communities, including joint-training of Ethnic Liaison Officers.

In conclusion, funding for policing is a political choice. There are pressures, there are challenges but there are also opportunities and answers. Policing will need to change. Service delivery will need to change. Choices will have to be made. Communities and other stakeholders need to be part of that discussion. It is my view that there are opportunities which if properly considered and well delivered can continue to keep people safe and continue to build confidence in policing.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely



**ALAN TODD**