

Wednesday 30 July 2008

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**DUP NEWS****Latest News:****MLA WELCOMES SUPPORT FOR FORMER MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY FORCES**

West Tyrone DUP MLA Allan Bresland has welcomed funding which has been allocated by the SEUPB to explore the needs of former members of the security forces. Needs analysis will be carried by a consultant recently appointed by SEUPB in partnership with the Phoenix Group which seeks to serve the needs of former members of the security forces. Mr. Bresland said:

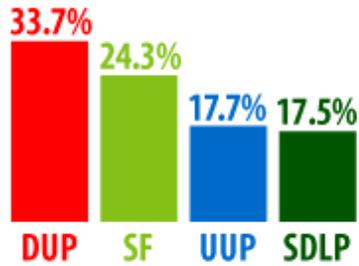
*“Earlier this year I raised concerns with the chief executive of the SEUPB about the level of funding from the European Peace and Reconciliation to projects addressing the needs of former members of the security forces. I was horrified to learn that in a five year period ex prisoner groups received almost sixty times more funding than those who had sought to maintain law and order during the troubles.*

*My staff and I had a meeting with Pat Colgan Chief Executive of the SEUPB and we have had a number of meetings with SEUPB staff and representatives of the West Tyrone Phoenix Group, and I am delighted that SEUPB have responded positively by providing the necessary funding to carry out this needs analysis.*

*The problems and concerns which are experienced by former members of the security forces in West Tyrone are also experienced by those who served in the security forces throughout Northern Ireland, and I am delighted that this needs*

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*analysis will explore the issues affecting those who served in the security forces throughout Northern Ireland.*

*This research project will also include the following areas Armagh, Coleraine, Londonderry, East Tyrone, Fermanagh, and South Down as well as West Tyrone.*

*I am also confident that a regional project can be developed in response to the findings of the needs analysis. I believe that all who served in the security forces should have an opportunity to participate in this needs analysis and not just those who are in existing support groups.*

*It is also important to ensure that those who served in the RIR home service battalions are included in this research. The needs of these younger men and women may be somewhat different to those who are retired or served in the security forces in the seventies and eighties.*

*I am certainly looking forward to the recommendations from this research and I will be pressing SEUPB to come up with additional resources to ensure that the needs of those who served in the RUC, RUC Reserve, PSNI, USC, UDR, RIR and the Northern Ireland Prison Service are fully met under the new Peace 111 programme.*

*The European Union has recognised former members of the security forces as a target group for peace funding along with women, young people, victims, and displaced people and ex prisoners. All the other target groups have been well served with professional groups drawing down many millions under both Peace 1 and Peace 11 programmes.*

*It is now time for the European Union to fully recognise the imbalance in funding within the specific target groups and address this issue. I believe that the needs analysis will play a positive role in starting this process."*

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