

FROM: CHRIS STEWART
23 NOVEMBER 2001

MEMBERS OF THE NORTH BELFAST INTERDEPARTMENTAL GROUP

NORTH BELFAST

1. I attach a copy of a document which was presented by representatives of Glenbryn residents at their meeting with the First Minister and Deputy First Minister yesterday evening. The document describes a range of community safety and other measures that residents wish to have put in place.
2. I understand that the First Minister and Deputy First Minister intend to write to North Belfast MLAs this afternoon with their views on suggestions that have been put to them in recent meetings and papers. Derek Wheeler is preparing a draft letter, and will be seeking advice from colleagues later today.

Chris Stewart

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Enc

cc: PS/First Minister
PS/Deputy First Minister
PS/Mr Loughran
Mrs Sheila Bradfield
Mr Wheeler
Mr Barrington
Mr Campbell
Dr Gudgin
Mr McNarry
Mr Larkin
Mr Logue

Draft Community Safety Package for Presentation to Upper Ardoyne Community

The causes of the current protest on Ardoyne Road have been grossly misunderstood, with the result that there has been a lack of focus on the pertinent measures which need to be implemented in order to bring the protest to an end. In brief, the Upper Ardoyne community does not see protest as a first resort, but a last resort. Having raised a range of community safety, security and stability issues through the appropriate channels over a considerable period of time, the community has seen no tangible evidence of a will to provide them with the normal environment other communities enjoy as of Right.

Having exhausted all of the normal channels, particularly over the last 4 years, without improvement, the community resorted to protest as a last resort. The simple misunderstood fact is that in order to see an end to the protest, the community requires nothing more than concrete evidence that their safety, security and stability is valued and that the Upper Ardoyne area will become a place where existing residents feel safe to remain, lost families feel safe to return and where they can look forward to a degree of normality, and where that normality will be preserved and protected from those who constantly seek to destroy it.

It is clear that a peaceful co-existence in Northern Ireland's most notorious interface will require development of cross-community relationships. It is also clear that to attempt to build those relationships in an environment of conflict and instability would be an impossible and foolish task. It is our view that stabilisation of the Upper Ardoyne community will provide us with a platform from which we can attempt to lead Upper Ardoyne into cross-community mechanisms with confidence. The package of measures which is required to deliver this confidence to the community is outlined in the following paragraphs.

1. Redesign of Ardoyne Road at junction with Alliance Avenue. Design and technical work to be completed by 30 November 2001 (in line with option indicated to Derek Wheeler as favourable). Design to include substantial westward displacement of Ardoyne Road above Alliance Avenue, to form a horse-shoe chicane into Everton complex, terminating in a roundabout at the junction of Alliance Avenue. Conversion of Road between Glenbryn Park and Alliance Avenue to one-way northbound only. DRD approval to be given by 30 November 2001, with submission of planning applications and tender documents on 30 November 2001. Consultation with police, N&W Belfast Trust to commence immediately. Plan to include environmental safety measures such as roundabout screening/fencing and planting from Alliance Avenue corner along new road alignment, and possible rehousing of residents on corner of Ardoyne Road/Alliance Avenue to facilitate tie-in to Glenbryn Park peaceline without projecting into Alliance Avenue. Work to commence by mid December provided that inconvenience over Christmas can be avoided, otherwise 1st week January 2002, to be completed by end January 2002 at latest. Flax Trust property at corner of Alliance Avenue to be fully secured by 26 November 2001. Police to designate and enforce sterile area covering full area of junction of Alliance Avenue and Ardoyne Road. Full community involvement at every stage. 24 hour 7day policing until completion.
2. Hesketh security screen to the rear of Hesketh Road at the edge of Everton complex, 9 meters mesh construction, full length of Everton car-park from east to west. To be completed by Christmas
3. Perspex window shutters for all homes between and including Alliance Avenue junction, Glenbryn Park junction and Hesketh Road. Front and back shutters for Ardoyne Road and top of Glenbryn Park. To be agreed by 30 November 2001, work completed by mid December 2001. Extension of this measure to be agreed should incidents extend beyond the specified scope, with work to be completed within 2 weeks of identification of problems.

4. Traffic calming measures to be in place by 30 November 2001. To include Upper Ardoyne as a whole; Hesketh, Wheatfield, Wheatfield Gardens, Glenbryn, Ardoyne Road and Alliance. Initial temporary measures to include speed ramps, with consideration given to chicanes and islands. Permanent scheme to be approved by end February 2002.
5. Ballysillan Playing Field boundary adjacent to Wheatfield, and Wheatfield 'loney' (pathway at top of Ardoyne Road) to be properly re-secured. Loney to be secured with bollards or stiles, perimeter to be secured with fencing. Work to be approved by 30 November and completed by Christmas.
6. 5 year community transport scheme to in place by 30 November 2001. Immediate bridging scheme to commence immediately. Scheme to include daily scheduled services to shops, amenities and medical facilities. Full community consultation to be ongoing.
7. CCTV consultation to commence immediately (or within 24 hours of completion of security review on 26 November), with work commencing 2nd week December 2001 subject to community consultation in meantime.
8. Turning circle in Holy Cross school, no-stopping zone on Ardoyne Road. Ringfenced police resource to monitor and enforce no-stopping zone on Ardoyne Road, as well as controlling and monitoring build-ups of pedestrians and traffic on Crumlin Road at Hesketh and Wheatfield Gardens. Resource to be agreed and in place by first week of 2002.
9. Appointment of dedicated co-ordinator to commence development of community infrastructure, including capacity building programme, and to map community development for forthcoming years. Appointment to be announced by end of first week of 2002.
10. Further measures to be agreed in principle, with timescales to be agreed:
 - a) Security gates on Ardoyne Road above Alliance Avenue. Subject to completion of security review. In the event that gates do not proceed at this point, commitment to be given to full review involving NIO, police and community at one-monthly intervals until end of 2002, and until further notice thereafter. Effectiveness of Glenbryn Park peaceline to be reviewed regularly.
 - b) Outreach baby clinic to be established by end November 2001.
 - c) Programme for the substantial modernisation of Wheatfield Primary school to at least the standard of Holy Cross Primary school. Full provision for anticipated increase in enrolment as result of Urban Renewal programme. Action plan to be in place by end of January 2002.
 - d) Progress towards establishment of self-supporting community to assist post-conflict regeneration and urban renewal. Consultation to commence on scheme to promote provision of shops, facilities and employment within the area, with plan to be in place for May 2002. To include rent free incentive schemes to promote inward investment in shops and businesses.
 - e) Provision of dedicated team of professionals to explore, plan and assist community to deliver long term housing and regeneration strategy for the area. To be in place by the end of 2001.
 - f) Police community relations programme to be devised in consultation with community. Action plan to be announced by the end of January 2002.

- g) Other one-way systems to be investigated and where agreed, to be implemented by end of January 2002, subject to community consultation.
- h) Pro-active programme to be developed to retrieve past residents who have been intimidated from the area. Action plan to be in place by end March 2002.
- i) Acceleration of Urban Renewal scheme, and comprehensive programme to encourage, promote and assist retrieval of levels of home ownership. Also subsidy for private rental sector. Action plan to be in place for end March 2002.
- j) Comprehensive in-house victim support programme and complimentary post-traumatic stress programme to be developed and in place by end of January 2002.
- k) Programme to address needs of those who have become unemployed, or who are too frightened to leave the area to travel to a place of employment. Possible in-house training and employment programme. Action plan to be complete by the end of December 2001.
- l) Programme including resources, to support introduction, monitoring and operation of Community Charter. Programme to be in place by the end of December 2001.
- m) Full support programme for establishment, promotion and support of cross community forum. Action plan to be completed by end of January 2002.

In summary, we would encourage those in Government to view this situation not as a request to meet the demands of a community, but rather an opportunity to rebuild a community's confidence in local government and central government. Government has let our community down to the extent that over 60% of it has felt that a better quality of life could be attained by moving elsewhere. Confidence in the ability of local Government will not be rebuilt until we see an acceptable level of safety, normality and stability - all of the things which Central Government has dismally failed to provide over the years. The response from this meeting will determine the degree to which that confidence will be rebuilt. One final point - it is the rebuilding of this confidence which may result in the avoidance of security measures in future years, and which may finally deliver the normality and stability many expected to see as the result of the Good Friday agreement, which has up to this point delivered nothing but disappointment to the Upper Ardoyne community.

Finally, as a cosmetic indicator of things to come, it would be encouraging to see a joint lower/upper Ardoyne application for the decoration of Ardoyne Road as a whole for the Christmas period. Let this be our symbolic start on the road to normality.