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DUP NEWS

Latest News:

SPRATT: NEW OMBUDSMAN NEEDS TO ADDRESS CONFIDENCE ISSUE

South Belfast DUP MLA Jimmy Spratt today urged the new Police Ombudsman Al Hutchinson to take cognisance of the lack of confidence in the Ombudsman's office amongst serving and former police officers. Mr Spratt, a former Chairman of the Police Federation, commented,

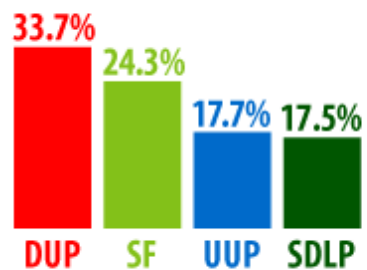


"As commentators offer pats on the back for the work carried out by the Ombudsman's Office under the tenure of Nuala O'Loan there are a few salient points which need to be remembered. The most basic one is that during her term in office the Ombudsman was perceived by many serving and retired police officers as lacking impartiality. This should not be the case for such an important office.

Rather than officers viewing the Police Ombudsman as an independent mechanism to monitor and ensure that the work of the police was of the highest standard Mrs O'Loan's office was perceived to be intent on tarnishing the name of the RUC. For

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this reason many former and serving officers will welcome the appointment of the new Police Ombudsman.

The new Ombudsman, Al Hutchinson, has an important role to play in the development of policing in Northern Ireland in the future. I welcome the fact that he comes free from political baggage and does not have ties to any political party in Northern Ireland. This is a positive step. I trust he will take note that his predecessor did not enjoy full public confidence and that he will take all the necessary steps to address this issue within the Ombudsman's office."

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