

Minutes of the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Private Meeting

Lavery Room, City Hall
Monday, 9th June, 2014

Political Members

Councillor Colin Keenan (Chair)
Councillor Janice Austin
Councillor Mary Ellen Campbell
Councillor Matt Garrett
Councillor Mervyn Jones
Councillor John Hussey
Alderman Jim Rodgers

Independent Members

Frank Mulhern (Vice Chair)
Valerie Allen
Claire Canavan
Liz Groves
Harry Maguire
Carmel McKinney
Mark Vinton

Designated Organisations

Chief Superintendent Nigel Grimshaw, PSNI
Eithne McIlroy, PBNI

Patricia Muldoon, YJA
Geoff Somerville, NIFRS

Staff Present

Alison Allen, Safer City Manager
Lorna Somers, Safer City Assistant Manager
Katharine McCrum, Partnership Support Officer

Apologies

Councillor Kate Mullan
Alderman Christopher Stalford
John MacVicar
John Topping
Chief Superintendent Alan McCrum
Trevor Murphy, BELB
Cecil Worthington, Trust

1. Welcome and Apologies

- i. The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and noted the apologies provided.

2. Declarations of Interest

- i. No declarations of interest were recorded.

3. Minutes

- i. The minutes of the Belfast PCSP meeting held on 24th March, copies of which had previously been circulated, were taken as read and agreed as correct.
- ii. In response to query from a Member, the Safer City Assistant Manager advised that the minutes did not refer to people by name due to the sensitive nature of discussions and the fact that they were in the public domain.

4. PCSP Action Plan Progress Report

- i. The Safer City Manager advised Members that a progress report on the 2014/15 Action Plan was provided within Members' papers.
- ii. With regards to developing the PCSP Youth Awards 2014, the Chair, Councillor Colin Keenan and Mr Harry Maguire volunteered to represent the PCSP on the proposed working group.

5. PCSP Drugs Campaign

- i. The Safer City Manager presented Members with an evaluation report of the 'Drug Dealers Don't Care' campaign which reported an increase in calls to Crimestoppers of 85%. Members were also reminded that an Assets Recovery Community Scheme (ARCS) grant application had been successful in securing £50,000 of funding for the delivery of the campaign again in January, 2015 with an added televisual element.
- ii. In response to a query from the North Belfast DPCSP Chair regarding the different levels of monetary contribution from each partner, the Safer City Manager advised that the level of engagement and coverage in an area was dependent on the funding provided.
- iii. The Safer City Assistant Manager agreed to provide a further breakdown of the activity that took place in North Belfast and advised that a full breakdown for all areas would be provided in at the August meeting.
- iv. In response to a query regarding the images that would be used as part of the television campaign, the Safer City Manager advised that there were no plans to establish another working group as the previously agreed images would be used again and there was no additional funding available for re-branding. It was noted that perhaps this could be looked at for the educational strand.
- v. A Member raised concerns that the images would now be ignored if the message was not changed in some way and queried why the campaign was to run on television. The Safer City Assistant Manager advised that the request had been made by the initial working group and submitted, and hence agreed, as part of the ARCS application.
- vi. Members subsequently agreed to provide delegated authority to the PCSP staff to develop the campaign.
- vii. Members also agreed to provide delegated authority to the PCSP Staff in order for them to proceed with the development of the ARCS funded 2FAST2Soon Car Simulator and the Cage Soccer projects.

6. PCSP Communications Strategy

- i. The Safer City Manager advised Members that LK Communications, the company who were commissioned to develop the PCSP Communications Strategy, had met with Members and stakeholders, and that a first draft of the strategy was due presently.

- ii. Members were further advised that the Working Groups would be reconvened to review the first draft with a revised draft available in late August, and that the PCSP and DPCSPs had allocated money within their Action Plans to deliver the Strategies outcomes.

7. Legal Highs Update

- i. The Safer City Manager reminded Members that the South Belfast DPCSP had asked the PCSP to take the strategic lead in tackling the use of legal highs in Belfast. Members were advised that the first multi-agency meeting took place in April where information sharing was considered and a lead agency assigned for each young person. Members were further advised that work was ongoing with Public Health Agency (PHA) Support Services, needs were being mapped and detached youth work was being delivered. The Safer City Manager confirmed that meetings with local traders were also continuing on a 6 week basis.
- ii. In response to a Members query regarding product safety regulations, the Safer City Manager advised that enforcement was ongoing with some success however there were ongoing legal proceedings which prohibited further comment.

8. Safer Belfast Coordination Team

- i. The Safer City Manager advised Members that following a review of the get Home Safe Partnership, the previous stakeholders and partners had met to form a new 'Safer Belfast Coordination Team'. Members were advised that a report on the rebranding of their activities would be brought to a future meeting of the PCSP for recommendations.
- ii. Members noted the contents of this report.

9. Strategic Issues

Hate Crime

- i. Members were advised that Assistant Chief Constable Kerr had written to the PCSP Chair regarding the recent spate of hate crimes across Belfast, and following on from this, working groups had been established to consider good practice, service provision, underreporting and communications.
- ii. The Vice-Chair commented upon the recent rally held in Belfast which was well attended showing that the majority of Belfast was appalled by the attacks.
- iii. In response to a suggestion that money should be redirected from the PCSP Action Plan to appropriate front line services, the Safer City Manager advised that the budget allocation from the Joint Committee was likely to be reduced by 2.7% and so at this stage a coordination role would be more appropriate than to provide additional funding. She added that once the working groups had developed action plans bidding for additional money or reallocating funds could be considered.
- iv. Members discussed the Hate Crime Conference that was budgeted for within the PCSP Action Plan, noting that this would encompass all forms of hate crime, not just the current incidences of racist hate crime.

10. Matters Arising and Chairs Business

- i. The Safer City Manager reminded Members that the launch of the UN Gift Box which aims to awareness of human trafficking would be held on 13th June at 4.30pm in City Hall. Members were encouraged to attend.
- ii. In response to a query regarding the Good Relations Bonfire Scheme, the Safer City Assistant Manager confirmed that the Scheme would be going ahead and that the proper governance procedures were in place.
- iii. A Member expressed his thanks to the NI Fire and Rescue Service for their work in tackling a blaze at a Carpet Right store near Connswater. Geoff Somerville, NIFRS thanked the Member for this acknowledgement.
- iv. The Chair of the North Belfast DPCSP noted that concern had been raised by Members that the allowances paid to Chairs and Vice-Chairs were now higher than those of the other Members and that the cap of 20 paid meetings per year was not enough given the number of additional working groups that were organised.
- v. The Safer City Assistant Manager advised that this issue had been raised in January 2013 and again in March 2013 at which point a letter had been sent to Joint Committee outlining these concerns. A survey regarding expenses was then conducted by the Joint Committee who, based on the returns, stipulated that 'PCSP members will continue to be able to claim £60 per meeting up to a maximum of 20 times per year. Chairs and Vice Chairs will now be able to claim £60 per meeting up to a maximum of 30 times per year.'
- vi. The Safer City Assistant Manager added that Members had agreed the protocol of paying for Private, Policing Committee, Public meetings as well as training in order to ensure quorums were met at meetings where decisions were required.
- vii. Members suggested that the growing frustration with the time spent on DPCSP work without recompense may result in the loss of experienced Members. A Member commented upon the allowances paid to DPCSP Members in comparison to those of the NI Policing Board Members.
- viii. It was also noted that initially no allowances were to be paid to Members, and that while the current situation was unsatisfactory, there was a shortage of funds across the board.
- ix. The Safer City Manager agreed to write to the Justice Minister regarding the issue.

11. Date of Next Meeting

- i. Members were advised that the next meeting would be held in August, details of which would be circulated to Members.