

**Minutes of the North Belfast District Policing and
Community Safety Partnership
Policing Committee
Wednesday, 13th August 2014, 5.00pm
1st Floor HR Conference Room, Cecil Ward Building, Belfast**

Members Present	
Councillors	Independents
Councillor Mary Ellen Campbell (Chair)	Ms. Bronach Graham
Councillor Pat Convery	Mr. Ian McLaughlin
Councillor JJ Magee	
Councillor Naomi Thompson	
Councillor Guy Spence	
PSNI	
Chief Inspector Robert Singleton	
Inspector Gavin Kirkpatrick	
Chief Superintendent Nigel Grimshaw	
Staff Present	Apologies
Richard McLernon, Safer City Coordinator	Mr. Pat McLarnon
Edele Cleary, Project Officer	Mr. Winston Irvine (Vice Chair)
Alison Allen, Safer City Manager	Ms. Jennifer Cornell

1. Welcome & Routine Matters

- i. The Chair, Cllr Mary Ellen Campbell, welcomed Members to the Policing Committee of the District Policing and Community Safety Partnership and noted Members apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest

- i. The Chair highlighted the declarations of interest policy.
- ii. A member raised a question. If you have a declaration of interest do you withdraw from the conversation or do you withdraw from the room while the discussion is ongoing.
- iii. The Chair clarified that if a member has a declaration of interest they must state what the declaration is and then leave the room while the matter is being discussed.
- iv. No declarations of interest were recorded.

3. Minutes of North Belfast DPCSP Policing Committee

- i. The Minutes of the North Belfast Policing Committee Meeting held on 24th June, of which copies were previously circulated, were taken as read and correct.
- ii. Action from 24th June- "PSNI to provide an update in relation to burglaries". PSNI stated that there has been a 20% decrease in domestic burglaries compared with the same period last year.

4. Area Commanders' Update Report

- i. Inspector Gavin Kirkpatrick provided Members with an update on crime statistics.
- ii. Inspector Kirkpatrick commented that there had been increase in overall crime by 5%.
- iii. The Inspector commented that there had been a 10% increase in violent crime in North Belfast which remains a concern for PSNI.
- iv. The Inspector commented that non-domestic burglary has decreased by 56%.
- v. The Inspector stated that there has been a decrease of 7% in the number of reports of ASB in North Belfast

5. Review of the previous month's policing

- i. The Inspector informed the partnership that Whiterock Parade on 26th June 2014 and The Somme parade both passed off without incident.
- ii. The Area Inspector felt that the 11th and 12th of July had been the most peaceful in recent history.
- iii. He advised Members of the public meetings which occurred within the New Lodge in relation to the Internment bonfire. The community feel statutory agencies need to work together to prevent the bonfire occurring in the future. PSNI felt the removal of bonfire material proved difficult. An Anti-Interment Parade was held on 10th August.
- iv. The Inspector informed Members of a drugs death within North Belfast on 9th August 2014 as well an attempted murder in Duncairn Gardens on 4th August 2014.
- v. The Inspector informed Members of successful policing operations over the previous month. PSNI stopped a driver for driving while unfit. PSNI searched the car and seized a quantity of drugs and cash. PSNI also made an arrest at the scene of a burglary at Fortwilliam Shops. On 1st August PSNI arrested a male in relation to two sexual offences.

6. Forthcoming policing events/issues

- i. Emerging issues for PSNI to focus on include burglaries, hate crime and sexual assaults.
- ii. The Inspector informed Members of future parading dates including the Royal Black District Church Parade and Henry Joy McCracken Parade.

7. Members Questions and Responses

- i. A member raised a question related to the drugs seizure. Is there an indication of the type of drugs currently being used in North Belfast? Are legal highs an issue in North Belfast?
- ii. Chief Inspector Singleton said that drugs searches are carried out based on intelligence received. He informed Members that legal highs are an issue in North Belfast however the drug of choice remains cannabis. There is a legal high issue around Smithfield Market and PSNI are continuing to work with PSNI to address the issue.
- iii. A member questioned Chief Inspector Singleton about the drugs death within North Belfast. The Chief Inspector stated that the death was as a result of drugs poisoning and there is an

ongoing investigation by CID however at this stage there is no indication of a specific drug or pattern of concern.

PSNI don't believe that drug use has increased within North Belfast.

- iv. A member posed a question to police in relation to drugs searches. In cases where repeat searches are not proving successful do the PSNI review their intelligence sources to eliminate cases of personal vendetta?
- v. Chief Inspector Singleton assured Members that there is quality assurance around all intelligence received. PSNI carry out further investigation for e.g. a community impact assessment is carried out about the likely impact of a search on the community. PSNI ensure that intelligence and searches are dealt with sensitively.
- vi. Chief Superintendent Nigel Grimshaw informed Members that he would try to attend North DPCSP Meetings however Inspector Kirkpatrick and Watton would attend on a month to month basis.
- vii. A member asked Chief Superintendent Grimshaw his assessment of Service 1st since it was introduced in April 2014?
- viii. The Chief Superintendent responded stating that it was a work in progress. There have been some positive changes witnessed along with some challenges and future conversations are required.
He continued to state that Service 1st is not an initiative; it is about how to improve delivery and achieve efficiencies within fewer resources, while providing the best possible service to service users. The resource challenge is due to get more difficult. Service 1st is ultimately about improving district policing in a sustainable way.
Belfast is moving towards having one policing district and Service 1st is the start of this process.
Since Service 1st has been introduced investigations have been quicker and PPS have said that investigations are getting better.
- ix. A member asked if there has been an increase in outcomes.
- x. The Chief Superintendent stated that outcomes rates are going down which is slightly concerning. Crime is up however this is related to the time of year. There had been a slow turnaround time for investigations which was frustrating for victims however this is improving with the introduction of Service 1st.
- xi. A member expressed their frustration with the newly introduced 101 number. The member informed PSNI that he was directed three times before the issue was recorded.
- xii. Chief Superintendent Grimshaw informed Members that the 101 number was introduced as the previous number was too long to remember. The 101 number is to make PSNI more accessible. PSNI welcome any feedback on the use of the service.

- xiii. A question has been pending since March 2014 in relation to DPCSP Members role at parades. Is the role of a DPCSP Member recognised and are they allowed to observe the policing operation.
- xiv. Chief Inspector explained that DPCSP Members did not receive any additional privilege however if North DPCSP wish to discuss this matter PSNI could be involved in discussions. A request should come from PCSP and DPCSP's with cross community support.

The issue had been raised at Community Partnership Committee at NI Policing Board however it didn't go any further.
- xv. A member stated that members of NIPB are allowed to observe parades.
- xvi. A member responded to the PSNI stating that he appreciated that they had taken the time to respond to the written questions however he feels that the issue still remains unclear.
- xvii. Chief Inspector Singleton explained that the Committee had to request permission from the Board. Authorisation was not given to observe parades therefore DPCSP need to engage with NIPB and DOJ. PSNI are happy to be involved in these discussions.
- xviii. A member explained that it seems Bronze and Silver Command works on discretion. In some cases members are not allowed to observe at interface areas. In other cases PSNI require members support therefore members are allowed to access and prevent issues of disorder.
- xix. Chief Superintendent Grimshaw explained that PSNI want to acknowledge the work of the DPCSP Members at preventing issues of disorder. He also stated that the determination of parades adds another dimension to parading issues. Superintendent Grimshaw appreciates why DPCSP members want to be engaged however it is not within his power to provide full resolution.
- xx. Alison Allen agreed to explore the issue with the NIPB as the issue will impact on all of the DPCSP's across Belfast.
- xxi. A member requested clarity on DPCSP members role e.g. on a street scenario. There was a discussion on the health and safety of observers and personal safety of DPCSP members. The Member does not see their role at parades or at public order issues.
- xxii. Alison Allen agreed to take the issue forward and will table a report for the next meeting.
- xxiii. Chief Inspector Singleton reminded Members that North, East and West have their own unique set of circumstances therefore be mindful when drawing up a report for all DPCSP's.
- xxiv. A member asked how do observers get permission to enter the "sterile area"?

- xxv. The Chief Superintendent explained that in legal terms Human Rights observers, political representatives and community representatives don't have any standing over any other member of the public. A decision is made by Silver or Bronze command on whether to permit them entry.
- xxvi. Four written questions were submitted prior to the meeting.
- xxvii. A letter was presented from Chief Inspector Singleton in response to a letter received from the Chair of North DPCSP in April 2014. The Chair wished to seek clarification around Members access to contested space during parades and other events. Chief Inspector Singleton continued to explain that The Crumlin Road was not a sterile area on the morning of 12th July. Furthermore the Crumlin Road was under determination. There had not been any notified protests and as a result there is an investigation underway into the protest which took place.
- xxviii. A Member informed the partnership that GARC withdrew their application to protest. On the 12th July GARC members were present and in uniform as GARC. The Member asked PSNI why these individuals were not arrested at the time.
- xxix. Chief Inspector Singleton informed the partnership that they formally warned the person they believed to be the organiser of the protest.
- xxx. A member asked if the Parades Commission has been made aware of GARC and their supporters.
- xxxi. Chief Superintendent Grimshaw informed members that the Parades Commission has been made aware of GARC and they were identifiable with bibs. This information is being taken forward in their investigations.
- xxxii. A member felt that by denying free access across the road associates each side of the road to a religion.
- xxxiii. Chief Superintendent Grimshaw said his officers have to deal with the legislation and conditions within the determination. The issue applies equally on both sides of the community when a parade takes place.
- xxxiv. Chief Inspector Singleton reassured members that it was not a lack of respect or appreciation of the work of the DPCSP members carry out.
- xxxv. A member has submitted four questions to the PSNI and requests a written response for the next meeting.

8. **Policing Committee Funding**

- “Men of the North” application was approved for £1000.
- Request from Dean Clarke Foundation for £500 towards cross community cookery classes. BCC officers scored the application 68/100 as the application was weak on evidence. Members agreed to fund Dean Clarke Foundation £500 for cookery classes.
- Members had discussion on the submission dates of applications. The member expressed the difficulty in getting members together at short notice to assess applications. It was suggested that applications should be received at least 3 weeks before the event is scheduled to take place.

9. **NI Policing Plan Update Consultation**

Members were asked to review the Policing Plan and submit comments by Tuesday 30th September 2014.

10. **Date of Next Meeting**

- i. Members noted the date the next North Belfast DPCSP Policing Committee/ Private meeting as Wednesday 24th September, 5.00pm.