

**Minutes of the North Belfast District Policing and
Community Safety Partnership
Policing Committee
Wednesday, 24th September 2014, 5.00pm
1st Floor HR Conference Room, Cecil Ward Building, Belfast**

Members Present	
Councillors	Independents
Councillor Mary Ellen Campbell (Chair)	Ms. Jennifer Cornell
Councillor Patrick Convery	Ms. Bronach Graham
Councillor JJ Magee	Mr. Pat McLarnon
Councillor Guy Spence	
PSNI	
Chief Inspector Robert Singleton	
Inspector Gavin Kirkpatrick	
Inspector Roy Watton	
Staff Present	Apology
Alison Allen, Safer City Manager	Councillor Naomi Thompson
Richard McLernon, Safer City Coordinator	
Saranne Gallagher, Partnership Support Officer	

1. Welcome & Routine Matters

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

2. Declarations of Interest

- i. The Chair highlighted the declarations of interest policy.
- ii. 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 13th August, of which copies were previously circulated, were taken as read and correct.
- ii. A Member asked with reference to the minutes (Pg 5, Point 25) if any other formal actions had been taken. Chief Inspector Robert Singleton commented that PSNI investigations were still ongoing.

4. North Belfast Policing Committee Parade Observers Report

- i. The Safer City Manager provided Members with an update on discussions held with the Northern Ireland Policing Board regarding Members observing at parades.

- ii. Members sought clarification as to whether the views conveyed to the Policing Committee were the views of the Board itself or of members of staff within the Northern Ireland Policing Board.
- iii. The Safer City Manager suggested for the Partnership to write formally to the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Policing Board regarding this issue.
- iv. A Member commented that caution should be taken regarding Members observing at sterile zones at parades, as a situation at a parading operation could get out of control easily and therefore observers could be at risk.
- v. A Member further commented that if Members were allowed to observe at parades, the Partnership should discuss what the role of the observer would be.
- vi. The Chair requested the Safer City Manager to draft a formal letter to the Northern Ireland Policing Board on behalf of the DPCSP and for Members to review the draft letter at the DPCSP Public Meeting on Wednesday 15th October.

5. **Area Commanders' Update Report**

- i. Chief Inspector Singleton provided Members with an update on crime statistics and PSNI performance against the Local Policing Plan.
- ii. Chief Inspector Singleton advised Members that there had been an increase of 1.8% in crime in comparison to the same time last year. He further advised Members that there has been an increase of 2.2% in crime with domestic motivation.
- iii. He informed Members that there had been a decrease in domestic burglary and reports of ASB had decreased by 9.26%.
- iv. The Chief Inspector commented that following recent burglaries in the Ballysillan area, a number of arrests had been made and commended the officers involved.
- v. He commented that the political environment had changed during the last twelve months and as a result of this there had been a 17% decrease in the number of allegations against police officers.

6. **Review of the previous month's policing**

- i. The Chief Inspector advised Members of recent events and commented that the events had all passed off without any major incidents.
- ii. The Chief Inspector provided Members with an update on good news stories. He advised Members that there had been a number of arrests made following recent incidents, including two males arrested in relation to a robbery of a 77 year old male, one arrest made following a recent hate crime incident, and one male arrested in connection with a drug search.

7. **Forthcoming policing events/issues**

- i. The Chief Inspector advised Members of forthcoming policing events. He informed Members of PSNI's priority areas.

- ii. He advised Members of a court case in Belfast for a preliminary enquiry which had been turned over to the Crown Court. He informed Members the court case had been in relation to the theft of £53,000.
- iii. He informed Members of the 'Scratch and Sniff' Launch on Thursday 25th September, City Hall, Belfast.
- iv. He also informed Members of forthcoming parades and provided an overview of police operations at the parades.
- v. A Member commented that the information provided in relation to trends had been very useful. She asked in relation to the figures provided regarding policing performance what actually had been measured? The Chief Inspector commented that he would review this information and provide an update at the next DPCSP Meeting.
- vi. A Member asked in relation to the overall outcome rate, could the DPCSP support the PSNI in any way to reduce this? The Chief Inspector commented that with the implementation of Service First there needed to be a few tweaks made to ensure that Service First allows for the achievement of better results. He suggested an officer from the Case Progression Team could attend a future DPCSP meeting and provide Members with an update on logistics. Members welcomed this suggestion.

8. **Members Written Questions and Responses**

- i. The Chief Inspector provided Members with an update on the written questions submitted.

What Groups did the Police meet with in the lead up to the Anti-Internment League Parade on Sunday 10th August?

Response - Police met with a broad range of groups including the Parades Commission, Belfast City Centre Traders and the organisers of both notified protests. Discussions were also held with senior figures from the Democratic Unionist Party, Sinn Fein and other local councillors. Police also held meetings with the residents of Brown Square. In addition to these formal meetings police also held discussions with other senior loyalists. As always the purpose of this engagement was to understand the intentions of all those involved and affected by the event and to establish lines of communication for the day itself.

In terms of the parade organisers contact with them was primarily through their legal representatives. This was maintained in the lead up to and indeed immediately prior to the event.

How many officers and vehicles were part of the operation on Sunday 10th August for the Anti-Internment League Parade?

Response - Sunday the 10th was a significant policing operation with a significant policing footprint at significant cost - it is the policy of PSNI to avoid specific details on operational deployments

How did Police officers measure the quantity of protesters present on Sunday 10th August; can the Police provide a figure of how many protesters were present in each allocated protest location?

Response - The numbers of protesters present was monitored by the Sergeant in charge of the evidence gathering operation and was essentially a manual count. Police are aware

that some individuals were refused access after 400 persons were confirmed as being present. Our feeling is this could have been avoided had the protests been more organised and assembled early at a designated point. Significantly more protestors were in the area notified for the LPP - this is perhaps down to protestors feeling safer when grouped together.

After reviewing the event of Sunday 10th August have the Police identified any breaches in the Parades Commission determination or Code of Conduct? If so what are they and what action will the Police be taking?

Response - Police have identified a number of suspected offences and a full criminal justice investigation is underway based on video evidence collected on the day as well as further material obtained from subsequent social media coverage. PSNI would anticipate criminal proceedings based on some of the material seen.

- ii. A Member thanked the Chief Inspector for the responses provided to the written questions submitted.
- iii. A Member asked with reference to the question how police officers measure the quantity of protesters, if there had been any way scientifically of recording this information. The Chief Inspector commented that there had been an officer with a clicker measuring the number of protesters present.

9. **Policing Committee Funding**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator provided Members with an update regarding an application received for Policing Committee Funding.
- ii. He advised Members that an application had been received from the New Lodge Youth Centre requesting a total of £823.
- iii. Members agreed to support the application and fund the requested amount.
- iv. Following discussion, a Member suggested for training sessions to be held with low capacity community groups to assist them when completing funding applications forms in the future. Members welcomed this suggestion and agreed for the Safer City Coordinator to lead on this.

10. **Date of next meeting**

- i. Members noted the date of the next North Belfast DPCSP Policing Committee/ Private meeting as Wednesday 29th October, 5.00pm.