

Minutes of the West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Private Meeting

1st Floor Conference Room, Cecil Ward Building
Thursday, 28th August, 2014

Political Members

Alderman Frank McCoubrey (Chair)
Councillor Matt Garrett
Councillor Máire Hendron

Independent Members

Breige Brownlee
Bernie Reilly
Ann-Marie Weir

Statutory Designated Organisations

Tommy Boyle, H&SCT
Carole Carville, PBNI
Davy Harbinson, NIFRS

Inspector Jamie Hughes, PSNI
Aideen McLaughlin, YJA
Chief Inspector Anthony McNally, PSNI

Locally Designated Bodies

Paula Kerr

Staff Present

Alan Wardle, Safer City Coordinator
Katharine McCrum, Partnership Support
Officer

Apologies

Councillor Tim Attwood
Harry Connolly (Vice-Chair)
Sharon Beattie, NIHE

1. Welcome and Routine Matters

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

2. Declarations of Interest

- i. Members were asked to declare any material interests which they may have in relation to any item of business to be considered during the meeting.

3. Minutes

- i. The minutes of 24th July, copies of which had previously been circulated, were taken as read and agreed as correct.
- ii. The Safer City Coordinator advised that he would speak to Councillor Attwood regarding the Divis presentation and then schedule this at a forthcoming meeting.

4. Presentation on the Council's Alcohol By-Laws

(James Ross, Operations Coordinator, attended in relation to this agenda item)

- i. Mr James Ross, Operations Coordinator, outlined the Council's by-laws created under Section 90 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 which make the consumption of intoxicating liquor in a designated place an offence which can result in a fine not exceeding £500.

- ii. Members were advised that Council Officers do not have the power to seize alcohol or take the names and addresses of those observed to be breaking the by-laws, however this can be done by accompanying PSNI Officers who remain primarily responsible for enforcement.
- iii. Mr Ross then guided Members through the enforcement procedure, noting that Officers must witness the consumption of alcohol.
- iv. In response to a query regarding how operational areas were selected, Mr Ross informed Members that the Service was keen to work in local communities as well as at larger events such as Tennant's Vital and Fresher's Week. He advised that Officers had recently been supplied with new uniforms which was helping with visibility and that discussions were ongoing regarding the safety and transport of staff which, once resolved, would help with local deployment.
- v. A Member questioned the protocol with regards to confiscation and observation when the person concerned is under 18. Mr Ross confirmed that a lot of incidents did involve young people however the law still did not permit Council Officers to remove the alcohol as it was considered their property.
- vi. In response to queries about the larger events that Joint Enforcement Operations were carried out at, Mr Ross confirmed that the associated budgets allowed for additional staff and the establishment of 'choke points' to prevent alcohol moving past certain points. He also noted that parading legislation allowed for sealed containers to be confiscated and so these operations were different than the norm.
- vii. A Member noted that of the 27,000 units confiscated so far this year, 16,000 were from Tennant's Vital, and questioned whether the approach was working given the small number of units gathered from other operations.
- viii. Mr Ross advised that as well as confiscating alcohol, the operations also provide the public with reassurance and targeting areas has been shown to disperse the issue. He added that educational work also took place with off-licences and that the team were keen to develop relationships with communities and as such the work and issues are wider than the figures presented.
- ix. At the request of a Member, Mr Ross undertook to gather details on the number of convictions that were secured in the previous year.
- x. In response to a comment regarding re-examining the legislative powers, Mr Ross suggested that the operations would be more effective if Council Officers were in a position to enforce by-laws more fully, noting that it may be a consideration as part of Local Government Reform.
- xi. The Chair thanked Mr Ross for his presentation and he retired from the meeting.

5. PCSP Small Grants

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that of the £45,000 allocated to Small Grants as part of the 2014-2015 West Belfast DPCSP Action Plan, £25,595 had been assigned to Tranche 1 leaving £19,405 for successful applications in Tranche 2.
- ii. He further advised that two Council Officers had scored each of the applications for Tranche 2 and were recommending that 5 of these be considered for funding. He asked that a quorum of 5 Members meet on 2nd September at 9am to verify the scores and

asked the DPCSP to provide delegated authority to this Member Panel to authorise funding to applicants on behalf of the Partnership.

- iii. Alderman McCoubrey, Councillor Garrett, Breige Brownlee and Aideen McLaughlin volunteered to sit on the Member panel and it was agreed that a fifth Member would be sought via email. Members approved the request to provide delegated authority to this Member Panel to authorise funding to applicants on behalf of the West Belfast DPCSP.
- iv. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that if the Member Panel approved the 5 recommended applications, the Small Grants budget would be overspent by £1,812. He went on to outline two options for the reallocation of funds to other budget headings.
- v. Members agreed that option 2 would minimise the impact on front line services and so the following budget variants were approved should they be needed:
 - £500 moved from Effectiveness – Delivery of Strategic Citywide Projects
 - £800 moved from ASB – Reaction Fund to respond to emerging issues
 - £512 moved from Local Delivery – Supporting Existing Community Safety work

6. Update on the current West Belfast DPCSP Action Plan budget

- i. The Safer City Coordinator presented Members with an update on the West Belfast DPCSP budget, noting that the Small Grants budget would soon be finalised and that 2 Policing Committee applications had been submitted for discussion at their next meeting.
- ii. A Member questioned the budget cuts that had been imposed on DPCSPs by the Joint Committee and asked if these had been challenged.
- iii. The Safer City Coordinator advised that the Joint Committee had written to all PCSPs advising that due to cuts to their budget, PCSP budgets across Northern Ireland would be reduced by 2.74%. He added that while he sympathised with Members concerns over the cuts, it had been important to secure funding for the PCSP and DPCSPs as there was a danger of proceeding at risk and delaying service delivery.
- iv. It was suggested that Members may wish to issue a letter to the PCSP voicing Members' concerns, to include a statement regarding the Joint Committee's stipulation that certain strategic themes must be included in Action Plans whilst cutting funding.
- v. It was agreed that the Safer City Coordinator would advise the PCSP of the discussion and encourage a letter to be written to the Joint Committee on behalf of the 5 Partnerships.

7. West Belfast DPCSP Disability Action Plan

- i. The Members approved the contents of the West Belfast DPCSP Disability Action Plan and its submission to the Equality Commission.

8. Annual Report on the West Belfast DPCSP Equality Scheme

- i. Members approved the contents of the West Belfast DPCSP's Annual Progress Report on Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Section 49a of the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO) 2016 and its submission to the Equality Commission.

9. West Belfast DPCSP Annual Report 2013-2014

- i. The Safer City Coordinator presented Members with the West Belfast DPCSP Annual report for the period of 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014. He noted that additional statistical information would be added before it was finalised.
- ii. Chief Inspector McNally noted that the report reflected well upon the work carried out by the Partnership over the last year.
- iii. Members agreed to submit the Annual Report to the Joint Committee and to publish it on the Council website.
- iv. In response to a query regarding photographs, the Safer City Coordinator confirmed that not many were available however this would be addressed going forward.

10. Emerging Issues

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that the PCSP Youth Awards would be launched on 1st September and further information, including an application form, would be forwarded to Members after this date.
- ii. Members were asked to promote the application period, noting that the closing date for applications was 3rd October.

11. Date of next meeting

- i. Members were advised that the next meeting of the DPCSP would be held on Monday, 29th September at 5.30pm in the Conor Room, City Hall.