

Minutes of the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Private Meeting

Conor Room, City Hall
Monday, 24th March, 2014

Political Members	Independent Members
Councillor John Hussey (Chair)	Frank Mulhern (Vice Chair)
Councillor Janice Austin	Valerie Allen
Councillor Patrick Convery	Claire Canavan
Councillor Matt Garrett	Liz Groves
Councillor Deirdre Hargey	John MacVicar
Councillor Colin Keenan	Carmel McKinney
Councillor Adam Newton	John Topping
	Mark Vinton
Designated Organisations	
Chief Superintendent George Clarke, PSNI	Eithne McIlroy, PBNI
Ian McCrickard, NIHE	Patricia Muldoon, YJA
Chief Inspector Mark McEwan, PSNI	Cecil Worthington, H&SCT
Staff Present	Apologies
Alison Allen, Safer City Manager	Alderman Christopher Stalford
Katharine McCrum, Partnership Support Officer	Chief Superintendent Alan McCrum
	Harry Maguire
	Alan Hammill, NIFRS

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 17th February, copies of which had previously been circulated, were taken as read and agreed as correct.

4. Matters Arising and Chairs' Business

- i. The Safer City Manager advised Members that Mr Frank Mulhern had been re-elected by the Independent Members to the position of Vice-Chair of the Partnership for the 2014/2015 financial year.
- ii. Members were also reminded that the launch of the Neighbourhood Watch Campaign would be held in the Waterfront Hall on Tuesday, 25th March, and that a second meeting with representatives from the Criminal Justice Inspection would be held on 8th April as part of their review of PCSPs.

- iii. A Member commented upon the investigation regarding the Bonfire Engagement Programme to which the PCSP had agreed to allocate £15,000 of funding from the PCSP 2014-2015 Action Plan, and suggested that this should be held pending its outcome.
- iv. The Safer City Manager advised that she had recently become aware of the investigation and would seek assurances that adequate governance of audit procedures were in place to protect the reputation of the Partnership.
- v. As this was the final meeting with the current District Commander for A District, the Chair thanked Chief Superintendent Clarke for his contribution to the Partnership and wished him well in his new role.

5. PCSP Communications Strategy

- i. The Safer City Manager advised Members that LK Communications had been successfully procured to assist in the development of a Communications Strategy for the Belfast PCSP and DPCSPs which would look at internal and external communications.
- ii. Mr Mark Vinton asked to be included in the list of Members who had volunteered to be part of the consultation process, and the Safer City Manager advised that LK Communications would be in touch with Members to arrange the first meeting during June, 2014.
- iii. In response to a Members query regarding the distribution of the PCSP Consultation Survey at events, the Safer City Manager advised that she would bring the results and feedback to the June meeting of the Partnership.

6. PCSP Drugs Campaign Update

- i. The Safer City Manager presented Members with the initial campaign performance results for the Drugs Campaign which began on 24th February. She advised that further detail would be available after 3 months and would be presented to Members at their meeting in June, however initial indications were that the campaign had received good coverage and that calls to Crimestoppers had increased.

Legal Highs

- ii. On behalf of the South Belfast DPCSP Chair, a Member raised concerns regarding the use of legal highs in and around the Gresham Street area of the City and commented upon an incident wherein Council Officers were threatened in the area on the weekend of 21st March. He suggested that a Sub-Group of PCSP and DPCSP Members should be convened in order to tackle the issue which had escalated from legal highs to the dealing of illegal drugs, and had the potential to result in deaths.
- iii. Chief Inspector McEwan advised that considerable resources were involved in tackling drugs and stated that the acting Chief Inspector for South Belfast would be available to meet with the aforementioned Sub-Group.
- iv. A Member agreed that a more concerted effort was needed as young people had already died and the problem was simply moving from one area to another as enforcement was heightened.

- v. The Chair of the South Belfast DPCSP advised that issues had heightened and traders in the area were becoming increasingly distressed. She advised that policing resources would need to be reviewed as crowds had increased to approximately 40 people at some times. She reiterated the need for discussions to be escalated to the PCSP rather than the South Belfast DPCSP and commented upon the legislative issues.
- vi. Members agreed to establish a Sub-Group of PCSP, DPCSP and Statutory Members in order to bring about high level action.

7. 2014/2015 PCSP Action Plan

- i. The Safer City Manager reminded Members that a Planning Meeting of the PCSP had been held on 4th March where discussion had focussed on a more strategic plan with clear governance of the DPCSPs, relationship building and measurable outcomes.
- ii. Members were presented with the PCSP Action Plan for 2014/2015 which was developed based on the themes discussed at the Planning Meeting.
- iii. The incoming Chair thanked Councillor Hussey for his Chairmanship of the Partnership over the last year. He noted that the conversations of 4th March had been well captured in the Action Plan but queried the inclusion of the NIPB member of staff supporting the Partnership.
- iv. The Safer City Manager advised that historically the District Policing Partnership's had been supported in this was and that it may be useful to Members going forward.
- v. Chief Superintendent Clarke commented upon the action for the PSNI to provide a narrative report on their contribution to Belfast PCSPs priorities and suggested that, while the police welcomed the opportunity to be open and transparent, reports were already provided on Local and NI Policing Plans and so the reason for another level of monitoring would need to be clear so as to avoid duplication and inconsistency.
- vi. The Safer City Manager advised that this had been included in recognition of the PCSPs legal requirement to monitor policing, but acknowledged that this was easier at a local level and agreed that if there was a sense that this was inappropriate comments would be welcomed.
- vii. Chief Superintendent Clarke suggested that looking at the quarterly DPCSP reports may be more useful.
- viii. In response to queries regarding the Performance Management System, the Safer City Manager advised that this system would be collective and include the Belfast PCSP and the 4 DPCSPs.
- ix. Members welcomed improvements in communications between the PCSP and the DPCSPs but suggested that this could be improved rather than a new measure introduced.
- x. With regards to the Citywide Conference on the contribution that alcohol can make to anti-social behaviour and offending, a Member asked that the Statutory Partners were included in this as they had a great deal of knowledge in this area.

- xi. Another Member asked that once the plan was agreed, actions were set out in a quarterly report to allow Members to effectively monitor progress and to keep on top of the work.
- xii. The Safer City Manager advised that all actions would now be scoped out with the relevant partners.
- xiii. Members subsequently approved the PCSP Action Plan for 2014-2015.

8. Strategic Issues

- i. The Safer City Manager advised Members that a Working Group would be held on 7th April in order to produce a response to the 'Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse' Strategy consultation.
- ii. Members were also advised that a proforma would be circulated to Members in order to produce a response to the 'Human Trafficking and Slavery: Strengthening Northern Ireland's Response' consultation.

9. Date of next meeting

- i. Members were advised that due to the Purdah period, the next meeting of the Belfast PCSP would be held in June, 2014, and that dates would be circulated in due course. Members were also advised that the Chair of the PCSP would be Councillor Colin Keenan as of 1st April, 2014.