

**Minutes of the North Belfast District Policing and
Community Safety Partnership
Policing Committee
Wednesday, 12th March 2014, 5.00pm
1st Floor HR Conference Room, Cecil Ward Building, Belfast**

Members Present	
Councillors	Independents
Councillor Patrick Convery (Chair)	Ms. Jennifer Cornell (Vice Chair)
Councillor Mary Ellen Campbell	Ms. Bronach Graham
Councillor JJ Magee	Mr. Winston Irvine
	Mr. Pat McLarnon
	Mr. Ian McLaughlin
PSNI	
Chief Inspector Robert Singleton	
Inspector Gavin Kirkpatrick	
Inspector Robin Watton	
Staff Present	Apologies
Richard McLernon, Safer City Coordinator	Councillor Guy Spence
Andrew Charles, Project Officer	Councillor Naomi Thompson
Saranne Gallagher, Partnership Support Officer	

1. Welcome & Routine Matters

- i. The Chair, Cllr Patrick Convery, 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. 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 26th February, of which copies were previously circulated, were taken as read and correct.
- ii. The Safer City Coordinator circulated to Members a written response to the PSNI questions that had been submitted at the last North Belfast DPCSP Meeting.
- iii. Members requested for the written responses to be circulated electronically.

4. Area Commanders' Update Report

- i. The Area Commander formally introduced himself to Members.
- ii. A Member asked the Area Commander what had been his impressions of North Belfast.

- iii. The Area Commander commented that he is still getting to know the area. However, he has a well established inspectors team and these teams will be valuable going forward. He further commented there will be a challenge to increase confidence in the police within the local community.
- iv. A Member commented that PSNI Neighbourhood Teams do a lot of work within local communities, however when PSNI Tactical Support Group are brought into the local community to assist with issues such as public disorder, there seems to be a change in attitude towards the local community which impacts on relationships and confidence within the community. He asked the Area Commander how he proposed to make TSG blend in with local communities and help build confidence.
- v. The Area Commander commented that in this situation there would be a need to ensure that Neighbourhood Policing Teams are present in the local community where a sensitive issue is. He also commented that there is a need to address attitudes.
- vi. The Chair commented that there had been recent incidents on the North Circular Road where taser's had been used. He asked the Area Commander what the PSNI had intended on doing in relation to the incidents.
- vii. The Area Commander advised Members that a taser is a prohibited weapon and is treated on the same power as a firearm.
- viii. The Chair further asked what if the taser had been used for personal protection. The Area Commander commented that this would not be a lawful excuse and still be treated seriously.
- ix. A Member asked if taser's can be purchased in any outlets in Belfast.
- x. The Area Commander commented that he had only been aware of three in the last year, however taser's are not commonly used in Northern Ireland.
- xi. A Member asked if the PSNI had lost any taser's. Inspector Gavin Kirkpatrick commented that the PSNI had never lost any, they are only used by a special team and they are always signed in and out.

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

- i. A Member commented on a recent incident in West Belfast where young people carrying hurls had been stopped by PSNI for carrying offensive weapon. She asked for the PSNI to be mindful of how they approach young people and cultures within local communities.
- ii. The Area Commander commented that he had not been aware of the situation and will take on board how the PSNI engage with local young people.
- iii. The Chair asked if any arrests had been made following the recent incidents in North Circular. The Area Commander commented that no further update at this stage as the investigation is still ongoing but will report back to Members when an update is available.
- iv. A Member asked if an update on hate crime incidents could be provided. The Area Commander that there had been 113 racially motivated incidents recorded and 12 arrests had been made.

- v. A Member commented that the categories used in the PSNI crime mapping exercise are misleading as the facts provided could be interpreted incorrectly. He asked if the PSNI would be separating categories.
- vi. Inspector Kirkpatrick advised Members that the categories used are Home Office Categories and they cannot be changed.
- vii. A Member suggested that as the PSNI now have the Service First Programme in place, can the categories not be amended to reflect real life issues. The Area Commander commented that this would need to be reviewed and agreed by the Policing Board.
- viii. The Area Commander advised Members that a meeting had been held to review neighbourhood boundaries and informed Members that the boundaries will change. The Area Commander commented that he would like to consult with Members in relation to how these changes will affect them and also how it will change policing.
- ix. Inspector Gavin Kirkpatrick commented that an update on changes and maps will be circulated to Members in the forthcoming weeks.
- x. The Chair advised Members of the forthcoming Policing in Confidence Conference and the opportunity for two Members to attend. Members requested that information regarding the conference to be circulated electronically.

6. **Forthcoming policing events/issues**

- i. A Member asked what additional PSNI resources would be in place for the forthcoming event at Custom House Square. The Area Commander commented that there would be enhanced PSNI resources both in North and West Belfast to prevent any incidents.

7. **Members Written Questions and Responses**

- i. No written questions submitted.

8. **Date of next meeting**

- i. The date for the next North Belfast DPCSP Meeting to be agreed and circulated to Members.
- ii. Members congratulated Cllr Convery on his role as Chair and thanked him for his contribution to the Partnership.