

**Minutes of the West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership
Policing Committee Meeting**

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

Political Members

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

Independent Members

Breige Brownlee
Bernie Reilly
Ann-Marie Weir

PSNI Representatives

Chief Inspector Anthony McNally, PSNI

Inspector Jamie Hughes, PSNI

Staff Present

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

Apologies

Councillor Tim Attwood
Harry Connolly (Vice-Chair)

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. No declarations of interest were declared.

3. Minutes

- i. The minutes of 5th June, copies of which had previously been circulated, were taken as read and agreed as correct. It was agreed that the actions arising from the meeting had been completed.

4. Policing Committee Grants

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that 2 Policing Committee Grant applications had been received which in turn had been scored by the Safer City Coordinator for West Belfast.
- ii. Members were advised that both had exceeded the minimum score of 60% and that each had positive outcomes in line with the purpose of the funding.
- iii. Members were asked to consider the applications from the PSNI/Lenadoon Community Safety Project (£1,000) and the Albert Foundry Girls Football Club (£995.60) and ratify the decision to approve funding to each group.

- iv. Members approved the funding for both applications from the West Belfast DPCSP Action Plan under Strategic Objection 3 – Supporting Community Confidence in Policing through Policing Committee Grants.

5. Area Commanders Update on Policing

- i. The Area Commander for West Belfast, Chief Inspector McNally, advised Members that he would be led by them on how to provide an update on policing for the area and reminded Members of his drive to ensure that Officers were contactable, visible, reactive and maintained communication with the public, particularly in providing follow up calls.
- ii. He commented on the fact that the 'Service First' programme of change had coincided with the change in Area Commander and the subsequent changes including the establishment of a Case Progression Team and the increase in Neighbourhood Officers on the ground.
- iii. Members were asked to follow the PSNI Facebook page as it was a useful tool for public interaction. Chief Inspector McNally advised that the PSNI web pages had been updated and that the PCSP Chair, Vice-Chair and Safer City Coordinator had been added to the text list to receive updates on emerging issues.
- iv. With regards to visibility, Chief Inspector McNally advised that the mobile police station had been deployed to new areas in recent weeks and would continue to be used in areas of need.
- v. In reference to follow up calls with the public, Chief Inspector McNally advised that this was a key issue for him and that the target of returning calls within 10 days was being met.

Statistics

- vi. With regards to performance against the Local Policing Plan, Members were advised that the outcome rate for sectarian hate crime had increased however overall levels remained low in West Belfast. He noted that the outcome rate for crimes with a domestic motivation was 31% which was positive given that many of these charges were not followed through. He added that funding had been secured for an Officer to work with Women's Aid to support the process from reporting through to conviction.
- vii. Chief Inspector McNally advised that the number of burglaries over the summer period had increased and that around 50% of these were as a result of open doors and windows, particularly at weekends. He added that the outcome rate for domestic burglary was poor as a result of trends not being effectively monitored however this had been addressed and therefore he was hopeful of an increase in the coming months.
- viii. The Area Commander advised that, whether through a lack of reporting or fewer occurrences, the number of drug recorded crimes was down, as was the outcome rate. He encouraged Members to continue to report any concerns to the PSNI.
- ix. With regards to outcomes using appropriate disposal methods, Chief Inspector McNally advised that this had fallen by 3.7% as a result of Service First changes however now that the Case Progression Team were fully operating and training was ongoing, improvements were anticipated.

- x. Chief Inspector McNally closed by saying that reducing violent crime was a key issue for the Area and advised Members that the PSNI were looking at profiles for this type of crime, with further information available at a future meeting.

6. Members Questions

- i. A Member commended the PSNI on the use of the Mobile Police Station and welcomed its deployment in other areas.
- ii. In response to a query regarding the number of Drugs Officers, Chief Inspector McNally advised that 30 Officers, 14 during the day and 14 at night, were available to react to drug related issues.

Tennent's Vital

- iii. Members raised concerns about the anti-social behaviour in residential areas before and after the Tennent's Vital concerts and questioned what planning was done for areas outside of the City Centre for such events, and why intoxicated young people were allowed entry into the venues.
- iv. Chief Inspector McNally advised that he would feed back concerns to the relevant Officers, noting that there was an element of parental responsibility in the issues raised.
- v. The Safer City Coordinator added that Council Officers had been carrying out Joint Enforcement Operations at the concerts and had noted a number of vulnerable young people whose parents had been contacted as a result. He added that work was ongoing regarding the consumption of alcohol on buses and that Officers had confiscated alcohol from people as they left the vehicles.

PSNI Response Times

- vi. A Member gave credit to the PSNI for the positive working relationships which had been demonstrated between Neighbourhood Policing Teams and the community in dealing with drugs related issues. She added that slow response times were having the opposite effect making it difficult to build confidence in the Service and change attitudes in areas that would be traditionally wary of the PSNI.
- vii. Chief Inspector McNally advised that he would look into any specific incident if further details could be provided. He added that if calls were not classed as an emergency, a non-emergency appointment would be scheduled at a later point and asked Members to explain this process to communities.

Visibility of Officers

- viii. A Member advised the Area Commander that police were rarely seen patrolling the areas of Springmartin, Highfield and Ballygomartin and stated that a visible presence would provide reassurance for elderly residents in the area.
- ix. Chief Inspector McNally advised that he had made contact with each of the Political Parties to discuss issues such as this however this had not taken place for this area, but that he continued to be available.

7. Emerging Issues

- i. Members commended the policing operations and the partnership working which had resulted in a quiet and successful summer period.

8. Date of Next Meeting

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that the next meeting of the West Belfast DPCSP Policing Committee would be on Wednesday, 29th October in the 1st Floor Conference Room, Cecil Ward Building,