

**Minutes of East Belfast District Policing and Community Safety
Partnership – Policing Committee
Conor Room, City Hall, Tuesday, 25th September, 2012**

Political Members

Cllr Claire Hanna (Chair)
Cllr Deidre Hargey
Cllr Mervyn Jones
Cllr Adam Newton
Cllr Niall Ó Donnghaile
Ald Gavin Robinson

Independent Members

Gareth Beacon
Lynda Gibson
Mark Houston (Vice Chair)
Olwen Lyner
Andrew Moorhead

**Police Service of Northern Ireland
Representative**

Chief Inspector Mark McEwan

Staff Present

Suzanne Gowling CSP Coordinator
Sean McCormick DPP Officer
Jo Black, Partnership Support
Officer

Apologies

Richard Williamson, NIHE

1. Welcome and Routine Matters

- i. The Chair, Councillor Hanna, welcomed Members and the representative of the Police Service of Northern Ireland to the meeting of the East Belfast Policing Committee.

2. Apologies and Declarations of Interest

- i. The Chair read out the Declarations of Interest statement to the Members as per Council policy.

3. Policing Committee Procedures and Draft Agenda

- i. The Chair raised the matter of the quarterly statistical analysis provided by the PSNI. She stated she was inclined to use the format of the South District Policing and Community Safety Partnership, with statistical analysis and appendices with qualitative information. There was discussion about the format of reporting and it was agreed that this would be the same format as South DPCSP in consideration that both were within the Policing B District.
- ii. A Member suggested he was reluctant for the format to change as this would restrict previous trends being traced. Chief Inspector McEwan, PSNI Commander of East Belfast, offered to provide 3 and 5 year background

figures in each quarterly report to the partnership to allow comparison to be made.

- iii. A Member requested that the report be circulated in advance of the meeting to allow members to scrutinise prior to the meeting.
- iv. A Member suggested the North Belfast report allowed more detail on arrest figures. The Chief Inspector offered to merge the formats of the North and East reports for the quarterly reports to the partnership. The next quarterly report would be for the November meeting and would be circulated for members' agreement.

Action: PSNI to forward draft Quarterly Report in relation to Local Policing Plan, to include trend lines and good news/successes to be circulated to Members for comment and subsequent inclusion in Members papers.

- v. The draft agenda for future meetings was discussed. It was agreed that item 3 on the agenda would be discussed monthly, the format for written questions being 3 written questions per member submitted 5 days in advance, item 5 on the agenda would be discussed quarterly, item 5 on the agenda would be discussed per the Action Plan.

4. Area Commander's Report

- i. The Chief Inspector gave the report. It had been a good quarter for reductions. Anti-Social Behaviour was down 22%. Burglary had decreased slightly. Drugs analysis would be available at the end of a six month period. Drugs statistics were available in the PSNI reporting and this had been selected as a priority for the DCSP.
- ii. The Area Commander informed Members that looking forward to Halloween the PSNI expected incidents of the illegal use of fireworks and anti-social behaviour. There was work underway to begin to source selling agents and target these.
- iii. The Area Commander addressed the Ulster Covenant Centenary Parade scheduled for 29th September. This was being treated as the policing of many of the parades of the summer and a policing plan was in place.

5. Questions from Members

- i. A Member asked if the Ulster Covenant Centenary Parade passing the Newtownards Road interface would be policed as with the 12th July parades.
- ii. The Area Commander agreed that this was the case.

- iii. A Member asked if the parade would terminate at Templemore Avenue.
- iv. The Area Commander said that it would not.
- v. A Member commented that community and voluntary groups had made plans to move children out of the Short Strand area.
- vi. A Member asked what the Mass Times were at St. Patrick's Church on Donegall Street. A Member stated these were at 10am and 6pm.
- vii. A Member raised the issue of burglaries which he had been a victim of and stated his belief that East Belfast was suffering from burglaries particularly. The Member further asked about lead thefts which were also an issue in the area.
- viii. The Area Commander commented that reduced offending was discussed in the partnership report. He suggested that burglary numbers were likely to have decreased in the 6 monthly figures. He highlighted the text alert scheme which had been operating in the Victoria area for six months as a good news story. He stated that there had been 10 cases of lead thefts prosecuted in court.
- ix. Several Members questioned the Area Commander about the policing of the Odyssey Complex in East Belfast.
- x. The Area Commander explained that offences at the Odyssey Complex had reduced significantly however there had been one incident in the weekend of 21st- 23rd October. He further explained that licensees at the Complex are proactive in cooperating with police planning and Eventsec have recently been appointed as security contractors. He stated that the policing of the area has significant resources and falls under the Get Home Safe Initiative.
- xi. A Member raised that a number of young people were admitted to clubs at the Odyssey Complex who were underage.
- xii. The Area Commander stated that licensees were stringent in applying opening hours in the Odyssey Complex.
- xiii. A Member further raised issues related to fireworks in the run up to Halloween and described a specific incident known to him where an injury had been sustained. The member stated that those selling fireworks illegally should be targeted.
- xiv. The Area Commander explained that a seasonal policing plan was in place. The Community Safety Coordinator pointed out there was a DOJ regional fireworks plan which could be linked to.
- xv. There was discussion about whether the DPCSP was a forum where specific cases would be raised with the Area Commander. The Area Commander

suggested that individual cases could be raised with him by members of the DPSCP however the DPCSP was a forum for discussing policing conditions.

- xvi. There was discussion of point 4 of the draft agenda on Members Supplementary Questions and Input. There was discussion around including a report on thematic issues in this section and the frequency with which this would occur. It was agreed that this would commence in November and a report on the Odyssey Complex would be received at this meeting.
- xvii. There was discussion of point 7 of the draft agenda regarding Function C funding. The DPP Officer explained this was being ratified by the PCSP and an application form would be released for submissions in late October.
- xviii. A Member asked that the minutes record dissatisfaction that the PCSP and DPCSP meetings on 25th October.
- xix. It was agreed to hold the East Belfast DPCSP Policing Committee meeting for one hour prior to the East Belfast DPCSP Private Meeting with the next meeting being Monday 23rd October at 6pm.

On behalf of the East Belfast DPCSP the Chair, Councillor Hanna, thanked Chief Inspector McEwan for his report. Chief Inspector McEwan thanked the Chair for her comments.