

Minutes of the West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Private Meeting

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

Political Members

Alderman Frank McCoubrey (Chair)
Councillor Tim Attwood
Councillor Steven Corr
Councillor Matt Garrett
Councillor Máire Hendron

Independent Members

Breige Brownlee
Bernie Reilly
Ann Marie Weir

Statutory Designated Organisations

Sharon Beattie, NIHE
Tommy Boyle, H&SC Trust
Carole Carville, PBNI
Davy Harbinson, NIFRS
Inspector Jamie Hughes, PSNI

Angela McKeown, BELB
Aideen McLaughlin, YJA
John McLaughlin, BELB
Chief Inspector Anthony McNally, PSNI

Locally Designated Organisations

Michael O'Hara, UFCSF

Staff Present

Alan Wardle, Safer City Coordinator
Paul Cleary, ASB Officer
Katharine McCrum, Partnership Support
Officer

Apology

Paula Kerr, CRJI

1. Welcome and Routine Matters

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

2. Declarations of Interest

- i. No declarations of interest were recorded.

3. Minutes

- i. The minutes of 29th October, copies of which had previously been circulated, were taken as read and agreed as correct.

4. Matters Arising/Actions from Previous Meeting

- i. With regards to the actions from the previous meeting, the Safer City Coordinator advised that;
 - No Members had volunteered to sit on the PCSP Communications Working Group. Councillor Attwood volunteered to represent the West Belfast DPCSP however a second participant was not forthcoming.

- The Safer City Coordinator advised that he would speak to Councillor Garrett regarding reconvening the Lenadoon Working Group.
 - As Extern had been unable to attend the meeting, a presentation on their work would be scheduled at the meeting in January, 2015.
 - Officers would continue to look at options for holding a crime prevention event over the Christmas period. The Safer City Coordinator added that a further public meeting would be held in January in the Highfield area.
 - Contact had been made with the Joint Committee regarding what additional resources would be made available to Belfast given the additional populations which would soon fall within its Council boundaries; however no response had been received.
- ii. A Member noted that with only a few months before the new Council, it would be useful for meetings to commence with existing groups and partnerships in the Lisburn areas that would be moving to Belfast.
 - iii. The Safer City Coordinator agreed to convene a meeting at Members' request, and advised that conversations had begun with the PCSP staff team in Lisburn.
 - iv. A second Member supported this move noting that there would be expectations that the West Belfast DPCSP would continue to fund commitments made by the Lisburn PCSP.

5. Chairs Update on the PCSP

- i. No updates from the PCSP were provided.

6. Anti-Social Behaviour Update

- i. The Anti-Social Behaviour Officer (ASB) advised Members that in the last 3 months, 184 ASB related incidents within West Belfast had been reported to the Council's Community Safety Unit, approximately 37% more than when compared to the previous 3 months. He added that 50% of these occurred in and around the City Cemetery and Falls Park. It was noted that 159 of the incidents were reported by Belfast City Council staff on patrol with the remaining 25 incidents reported by members of the public by telephone, email or at one of the weekly community based ASB clinics.
- ii. Members were advised that the West Belfast ASB Forum was monitoring 37 individuals for ASB related activities and that the Forum was currently in the process of issuing a number of warning letters and progressing 3 anti-social behaviour orders.
- iii. A Member advised that the issues in Falls Park had been well publicised in recent weeks and since this increase in parental awareness, the issue seemed to have lessened. While he welcomed this positive step, he warned that the issue may be moving to Musgrave Park.
- iv. Members discussed the Youth Association Area within Falls Park and asked for clarity on its usage. It was suggested that the initial plan had been for young adults to avail of the services however it was mostly working with younger children.
- v. The Safer City Coordinator advised that the service would begin to offer diversionary activities in the evenings as part of its natural progression. He also advised that

Community Safety Staff had taken part in a Joint Enforcement Operation with police in the Falls Park area on 14th November.

- vi. A Member raised concerns about criminal and anti-social elements in the St James'/Donegal Road area and concerns regarding their tenancy of properties, and asked what steps the forum or DPCSP could take to tackle these.
- vii. The Anti-Social Behaviour Officer advised that the Forum could look at these issues by bringing together the various statutory partners and relevant Housing Association.

7. Update on current Action Plan Budget

- i. The Safer City Coordinator presented Members with an update report on the expenditure of the West Belfast DPCSP Action Plan.
- ii. Members were advised that 15 projects were currently operating with funding from the Policing Committee and Small Grants and that no issues with under spend were anticipated.
- iii. Members noted the contents of the report and approved the reallocation of £110.55 that remained in the Policing Committee Budget to other actions within the Plan.

8. Expenditure Approval Process

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that he hoped to implement an additional financial approval process which could be followed when considering an application for funding in a emergency or time sensitive situation. He added that this was particularly pertinent towards the end of the financial year.
- ii. Members were reminded that the standard protocol was for applications to be endorsed at a meeting of the DPCSP, or a panel, with a quorum of at least 5 Members if this was not possible. He asked that a further step was approved whereby the Safer City Manager, Assistant Manager and Coordinator, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, would be granted decision making authority for spend under £1,000 if neither of the above options was feasible.
- iii. Members approved the financial process for emergency situations as outlined by the Safer City Coordinator.

9. Policing Committee Grant Approval Process

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that the current protocol for the approval of Policing Committee Grants was to present applications which had passed initial quality scoring to a full meeting of the Policing Committee at their meetings held every other month.
- ii. Members were advised that while applicants were asked to submit Policing Committee Applications 8 weeks in advance of activity, this had rarely been done and so approval had been sought from Members via email in many cases.
- iii. The Safer City Coordinator advised that while this was in line with governance arrangements, by adopting two further protocols, the DPCSP would ensure good governance whilst facilitating flexibility around decision making should the need arise.

- iv. In line with the previously agreed protocol, the Safer City Coordinator asked Members to consider granting decision making authority for spend under £1,000 to a sub group of at least 5 Members in the second instance, and to the Safer City Manager, Assistant Manager and Coordinator, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair for Policing Committee Applications in an emergency situation.
- v. Members approved the two additional protocols as outlined by the Safer City Coordinator.

10. Joint Operations in West Belfast

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that Officers took part in a Joint Enforcement Operation with the PSNI on 14th November in order to discourage congregation within Falls Park and City Cemetery which has been leading to criminal damage. The objective of the operation had been to engage with young people whilst avoiding criminalisation.
- ii. He added that further operations had been suggested and to support these, Members were asked to approve £500 to cover 10 hours of CCTV on the periphery of the Falls Park and City Cemetery.
- iii. Members approved this in principle but asked that the Whiterock, Hammer and Lenadoon areas were also included in such operations given the recent disturbances that had occurred following football matches.
- iv. The Safer City Coordinator advised that this could be facilitated if there was political and local support for such operations, but that engagement with local communities was important before commencing.
- v. A Member suggested that it was important that people knew that the football players themselves were not involved in the anti-social behaviour issues.
- vi. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that at a recent joint Parks and Leisure/Community Safety emergency meeting, a proposal had been made for teams to sign up to a Charter of Support for each other.
- vii. Members noted the report and approved the allocation of £500 towards CCTV operations.

11. Update on Policing Committee Funding

- i. The Safer City Coordinator drew Members attention to the list of approved Policing Committee Grants, adding that 2 further applications had since been approved, with project briefs included within the papers.
- ii. He noted that the funding stream had been well utilised and was having a positive impact in the community.
- iii. Members were advised that while the full budget had been utilised, it was possible that additional requests would be submitted which the Partnership may wish to support.
- iv. Members noted the contents of the report.

12. Proposed West Belfast Anti-Social Behaviour Conference

- i. Members were reminded that a West Belfast wide conference on anti-social behaviour would be held in February in City Hall in order to identify issues and to strategise interventions for the DPCSP Action Plan and for other partner agencies. He advised that a legacy report would be produced and several speakers had been invited, with some still to confirm.
- ii. Members welcomed the event but questioned why it was not being held in West Belfast.
- iii. The Safer City Coordinator advised that City Hall had been chosen in order to keep costs down and because the audience size would require a large venue.
- iv. At the Members' request, the Safer City Coordinator agreed to consider other venues including schools, St Mary's University College and Farset International. The latter was suggested by Members to be a good venue for both sides of the community.

13. Community Safety Resource Booklet

- i. Members were advised that in conjunction with the Upper Springfield Resource Centre, a Community Safety Resource Booklet was being produced to tackle issues of anti-social behaviour.
- ii. The Safer City Coordinator confirmed that 5,000 booklets would be produced for distribution across West Belfast. He advised that the estimated cost of production was £2,000 however the Youth Justice Agency had offered support with the design of the booklet and so this could impact on the final price.
- iii. Members were asked to approve the allocation of £2,000 towards the booklets and to set up a working group to oversee the production. Statutory Partners were asked to support its delivery in the future.
- iv. Members noted the report and approved the £2,000 budget as requested.

14. Emerging Issues

West Belfast DPCSP Public Event

- i. The Safer City Coordinator reminded Members that the public event focusing on anti-social behaviour would be held on Thursday, 27th November and that invitations had been circulated. He advised Members that the event would consist of a panel discussion followed by a question and answer session.
- ii. Members were further advised that local residents associations had been invited and so a significant audience was anticipated.

Funding Request

- iii. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that a request had been received from the Greater Falls Community Safety Forum to support a residential to bring together local Community Safety Fora.

- iv. Members were advised that a paper regarding the request would be brought to the next meeting of the DPCSP.

15. Date of Next Meeting

- i. Rather than hold a DPCSP Meeting during December, Members agreed that localised planning meetings with the PSNI, community representatives, Councillors and other statutory organisations would be more effective in the run up to Christmas.
- ii. Members resolved to hold the next meeting of the West Belfast DPCSP on Monday, 26th January at 5.30pm in the Conor Room, City Hall.