

Minutes of the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Specially Convened Private Meeting

Conor Room, City Hall
Monday 21st December, 2015

PCSP Political Members

Councillor Matt Garrett (Chair)
Councillor Janice Austin
Councillor Declan Boyle
Alderman Jim Rodgers
Councillor Stephen Magennis

PCSP Independent Members

Michael O'Hara
Anne-Louise Toal

PCSP Designated Organisations

T/Superintendent Bobby Singleton, PSNI
Eithne McIlroy, PBNI
Helen Russell, NIHE

Staff Present

Lorna Somers, Safer City Assistant Manager
Alan Wardle, Safer City Co-ordinator
Alyson Crompton, Partnership Support Officer

PCSP Apologies

Susan Russam
Carmel McKinney
Mary Lambe

West DPCSP Political Members

Councillor Stephen Magennis (Chair)
Councillor Matt Garrett
Councillor Brian Heading

West DPCSP Independent Members

Elizabeth Groves VC West DPCSP
Breige Brownlee
Lauren Slane

West DPCSP Designated Organisations

C/Inspector Anthony McNally, PSNI
Inspector Alan Swann, PSNI
John McLaughlin, EA
Tommy Boyle, H&SCT
Sharon Beattie, NIHE
Karol McKee, Upper Springfield CF
Michael Donnelly, Greater Falls CF

West DPCSP Apologies

Claire Canavan
Davy Harbinson, NIFRS
Michael George, Collin CF
Paula Kerr, Upper Falls CF

1. Welcome and Apologies

- i. The Chair welcomed Members of the PCSP and the West Belfast DPCSP to the specially convened meeting and noted the apologies provided.

2. Declarations of Interest

- i. The Chair advised Members that they were required to declare any material interests that they may have in relation to any items on the agenda.
- ii. No declarations of interest were declared.

3. Chair's Update

- i. The Chair advised the Members that the purpose of the meeting was to offer the support of the PCSP to the West Belfast DPCSP following the recent murder in West Belfast.
- ii. The Chair informed the Members that he had received a request from the MLA Jennifer McCann and Mr Gibney to attend the meeting. Accordingly no objections were noted and the MLA Jennifer McCann and Mr Gibney entered the meeting.

4. Discussions on multi-agency measures to support West Belfast DPCSP

- i. The Chair of the West Belfast DPCSP outlined the reason for the meeting, was to explore the support that could be provided by the PCSP following the recent tension in the area in the aftermath of the murder.
- ii. He detailed the support provided by the community reps and the engagement between the community and the PSNI, in an aim to bring the perpetrators to justice, as very positive.
- iii. However he raised concerns about the ongoing social media character assassinations on individuals, including comments and photographs, of those who may or may not have been involved. He also had concerns about dissidents becoming involved. A further incident had taken place when an individual had been attacked in the area at 1.30am on Sunday morning, possibly in retaliation.
- iv. The Chair acknowledged the positive work by youth providers, community reps and the PSNI who have been engaging with local youths in the area since the murder; he asked if there was anything further the PCSP could do using a multi-agency approach given the concerns over potential tensions and reactions, following today's funeral.
- v. The PCSP Chair asked Chief Inspector McNally to comment.
- vi. Chief Inspector McNally detailed the PSNI response to the murder in West Belfast and acknowledged the tensions in the area. He advised the Members that the ongoing investigation had resulted in 11 arrests, with three individuals being charged and eight individuals being dealt with by other means. These individuals/parents have also been advised to be aware of their own safety given the social media attention.
- vii. He further outlined that engaging with the young people was vital and that the PSNI need the continued support of the specialist youth providers, including Colin Safer Neighbourhood who have been very supportive.
- viii. He confirmed that two young men had been attacked in the incident on Sunday morning; the names of a number of individuals in the area at the time had been recorded for follow up and the Grandfather of one of the individuals was complimentary of the PSNI response.
- ix. Operation Kinsey is also now in progress which has given an increased Police presence across the City. He advised the Members that the Colin area has been prioritised with over 40 officers in the area over the past weekend. The PSNI agreed to provide the PCSP with a list of the officers in charge over the Christmas period and requested that similar information is provided by Belfast City Council and the other Statutory Partners in relation to other resources available on the ground during this period.

- x. The PCSP Chair agreed with Chief Inspector McNally that communication between the partnerships was important particularly at key times.
- xi. MLA J. McCann thanked the Members for the invitation to the meeting and Chief Inspector McNally for the update, she then asked a number of questions:
 - a. The community have given the PSNI a name of an individual who was a key person with a knife, why has he not been arrested?
 - b. The attack on Sunday morning has also resulted in a name being handed in, why has he not been arrested?
 - c. The names of suspects have been circulated on social media can something be done about this?
 - d. Since the murder, the family and others have been approached by masked men/dissident republicans. What is the threat level in the area, young people are being demonised and I'm afraid that someone else will be murdered?
- xii. Chief Inspector McNally responded to the questions:
 - a. He will relay the information and concerns to the investigation team.
 - b. He is aware of the individual named and is awaiting the victims statements this afternoon.
 - c. The PSNI do not routinely monitor and intervene on concerns over social media however the people concerned need to make a complaint to the PSNI directly and then it can be investigated.
 - d. He expressed concern over the threat level and asked to speak with the MLA after the meeting; he also would encourage any threats to be reported to the PSNI or Crimestoppers.
- xiii. Mr Gibney commended the PSNI and the community on the response to date, he then asked a number of questions:
 - a. In the ongoing investigation into the murder, with 11 arrests and three individuals charged, we had been told 20 arrests had been made, can you clarify?
 - b. Following the second attack a proactive response from the PSNI needs to be seen by the public, can you comment?
 - c. The Collin area has been demonised; this is normally a peaceful area, the PSNI need to thank the community for coming forward with information.
- xiv. Chief Inspector McNally responded to the questions:
 - a. With regard to the 20 names he will ask the investigation team for an update.
 - b. The investigation is proactive; the victims are being interviewed and will submit statements this afternoon.
 - c. With regard to the Collin area the PSNI have been in the area on a daily basis and have been acknowledging and thanking the community for their assistance; he also asked that the PCSP as a collective express their thanks.
- xv. Superintendent Singleton asked how the meeting with the investigation team came about; the MLA confirmed that she had requested it.
- xvi. The PCSP Chair asked the West Belfast DPCSP Members if they had concerns regarding any other areas of West Belfast.

- xvii. A Member stated that a few incidents have occurred in the Divis area; these incidents historically peak over the Christmas period, with early release or parole. What will BCC do to address this?
- xviii. The Safer City Assistant Manager outlined the Safer Neighbourhood Officer (SNO) resources over the Christmas period; with annual leave on Friday 25th and Monday 28th December and Friday 1st and Monday 4th January there would be no cover on these days. However Tuesday 29th – Thursday 31st December there would be a max of 3 SNOs on shift to cover Citywide each day from 2.00pm – 10.00pm.
- xix. The Safer City Co-ordinator outlined the allocation of £1,000 by the West Belfast DPCSP to the Colin Glen Trust over the Christmas period for engagement with the youth providers and the young people of the area. The SNOs will also be in the area to engage with the young people.
- xx. The Chair of the West Belfast DPCSP asked if a named contact for the SNOs could be provided to enable engagement as and when required.
- xxi. The Safer City Assistant Manager advised that this would be provided as part of the Operational Brief.
- xxii. The Chair of the West Belfast DPCSP also provided information on other highly trained youth providers including The Saints Youth Centre which will remain open to engage with local young people over the Christmas period; he then asked is there anything that can be resourced from the PCSP to back this up.
- xxiii. The PCSP Chair asked can we approve funding from the PCSP?
- xxiv. The Safer City Assistant Manager advised that the PCSP can allocate a sum of money to the West Belfast DPCSP through a proposal agreed at this meeting.
- xxv. The PCSP Chair advised that the West Belfast DPCSP had no funds available but that the PCSP have and asked if the Chair of the West Belfast DPCSP can identify areas of funding required?
- xxvi. The Chair of the West Belfast DPCSP stated that the focus should be on the Collin area in particular; two other Members mentioned issues in Turf Lodge including dissident activity, burnt out cars and other tensions. Upper Springfield was another area of concern with a possible vigil tonight in a tense community; Divis was also an area of current tension. The Chair of the West Belfast DPCSP requested that funding of £5,000 from the PCSP be considered to facilitate the opening of youth facilities and engagement with young people.
- xxvii. The Chair of the South Belfast DPCSP offered any assistance that the South Belfast DPCSP could provide in relation to supporting the West Belfast DPCSP at this difficult time. The PCSP Chair thanked the Chair of the South Belfast DPCSP for his offer of assistance but at this time the PCSP has available funds.
- xxviii. Superintendent Singleton advised that the PSNI have a plan of action in place to cover the Christmas and New Year period, which will cover Divis and the entire West Belfast area.
- xxix. The PCSP Chair thanked the partners for their commitment and concluded that the PSNI had plans in place for the Christmas period; BCC will look at additional resources including park wardens and the Youth providers had projects in place. He proposed that the PCSP provide funding of £5,000 to the West Belfast DPCSP in support of these

plans with any under spend to be returned to the PCSP. The Members agreed the proposal.

- xxx. The PCSP Chair also proposed that the PCSP establish a Briefing Order for the Christmas period including contact details for all agencies/partners on the ground, information to be collated by Safer City Co-ordinator and forwarded to Members for their information only, details are not to be forwarded to any other party. This was agreed by all the Members.
- xxxi. It was agreed that the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) will provide details of individuals released on Christmas bail to the PSNI so that bail conditions can be monitored.
- xxxii. The Chair of the West Belfast DPCSP proposed that a photograph of the Special Meeting of the PCSP and the West Belfast DPCSP on 21st Dec 2015 be taken and posted on social media; to show partnership working together for the benefit of the community in West Belfast. This was agreed by the Members.

5. Date of Next Meeting

- i. Members were reminded that the next Private Meeting of the PCSP would be held on Thursday, 14th January.