

Minutes of the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Private Meeting

Lavery Room, City Hall
Monday 7th December, 2015

Political Members

Councillor Matt Garrett (Chair)
Councillor Janice Austin
Councillor Declan Boyle
Councillor Carole Howard
Councillor John Hussey
Councillor JJ Magee
Councillor Stephen Magennis
Alderman Jim Rodgers

Independent Members

Debbie Hammill (Vice-Chair)
Mary Lambe
John MacVicar
Carmel McKinney
Michael O'Hara
Susan Russam
Anne-Louise Toal

Designated Organisations

Chief Superintendent Nigel Grimshaw, PSNI
Eithne McIlroy, PBNI
Patricia Muldoon, YJA
Helen Russell, NIHE

T/Superintendent Bobby Singleton, PSNI
Geoff Somerville, NIFRS
Cecil Worthington, H&SC Trust

Staff Present

Alison Allen, Safer City Manager
Lorna Somers, Safer City Assistant Manager
Katharine McCrum, Partnership Support Officer

Apology

John Loughran

1. Welcome and Apologies

- i. The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and noted the apology provided. Lesley McCombe, DOJ, attended the meeting in an observational capacity.

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. John MacVicar declared an interest in Item 6, Citywide Project Proposals.

3. Minutes

- i. The minutes of the Belfast PCSP Meeting held on 15th October, copies of which had previously been circulated, were taken as read and agreed as correct.

4. Chair's Update

- i. The Chair advised Members that, along with the Safer City Assistant Manager, he had met with the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) to discuss the potential for regular engagement with the PCSP. He advised that it had been agreed that the PPS would attend PCSP Meetings on a quarterly basis in order to look at shared areas of work.

- ii. Members agreed to invite the PPS to the PCSP Meeting on 14th January.
- iii. The Chair advised Members that the Joint Committee had released additional funding to the Partnerships and that this would be discussed in detail under Item 6.

ID Cards/Business Cards

- iv. Members were advised that staff had investigated the cost of providing Members with ID or business cards and were asked which option they would prefer.
- v. A Member stated that the ID cards had proved useful in the past when engaging with the PSNI at events and protests.
- vi. It was agreed that each Member would determine their own needs in relation to business cards or an ID card, and that Members should contact the PCSP Office to request their choice of identification. It was also agreed that the ID card would have an expiry date on it.

Safety and Security

- vii. The Chair advised Members that threats had been made against the Chair of the West Belfast DPCSP, Councillor Stephen Magennis, and so a discussion regarding the safety and security of Members was necessary. Councillor Magennis left the room for the duration of this conversation.
- viii. The Safer City Manager advised Members that it was believed that the threats were linked to Councillor Magennis' work with the DPCSP and policing. She reminded Members that threats had been a problem for District Policing Partnership Members in the past.
- ix. Members were advised that the PSNI's Crime Prevention Officer had reviewed Councillor Magennis' property and a number of suggestions to improve security had been made. Members were further advised that no security scheme was in place for PCSP Members should such issues arise, and so Members were asked to consider what practical measures could be put in place when threats were issued against PCSP and DPCSP Members.
- x. Members condemned the threats made against Councillor Magennis and his family, and it was suggested that a package of support should be made available should this happen to a PCSP Member.
- xi. The Safer City Manager advised that staff would be guided by the professional advice of the Crime Prevention Officers in terms of need and asked the Partnership to provide approval for this policy going forward, should it be needed.
- xii. T/Superintendent Singleton stated that the PSNI take such threats seriously and suggested that the incidents described may be eligible for the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) Home Protection Scheme. He also urged Members to make sure any threats were reported to the PSNI.
- xiii. The Safer City Manager advised that she would raise this with the Member in question and would draft a letter of support from the Chair if the Member decided to avail of this Scheme.

- xiv. Members agreed to fund a package of support, as directed by Crime Prevention Officers, should threats be issued to PCSP and DPCSP Members.

5. Update regarding Statutory Designated Partners

- i. The Safer City Manager advised Members that meetings had taken place with the 7 Statutory Partners at which an agreed process for providing a short formal report on their Community Safety issues had been agreed.
- ii. The following 3 update items were agreed:
 - Alignment of priorities
 - Any significant events of note, and
 - Emerging issues and themes.
- iii. The Safer City Manager noted that this approach had been agreed with the aim of increasing joined up working, accountability and feedback to Members.
- iv. Members agreed to the process as outlined by the Safer City Manager.

6. PCSP Funding Update/Citywide Project Proposals

- i. Members were advised that on 20th November, the Joint Committee advised the Belfast PCSP that additional money had been made available to the DOJ, and as a result, a further £223,323 was now available for PCSP project costs during the current financial year.
- ii. The Safer City Assistant Manager circulated an updated paper in relation to the funding update and drew Members attention to each Partnership's Operational Spend to Date, noting the funds that still remained unspent. She also reminded Members of the procurement rules that would impact how the PCSP could allocate the additional funding, noting that there was not enough time to carry out tender exercises before the end of the financial year.
- iii. Members were presented with 10 project proposals (8 Citywide projects and 2 district proposals) totalling £180,595 and asked to approve the allocation of funds as outlined within the paper.
- iv. In response to the suggestion that DPCSPs had not been made aware of this additional funding, the Safer City Assistant Manager advised that the topic had been covered at each of the DPCSP meetings and emails had also been circulated requesting project proposals. The Chair added that while he would be keen to have most of the funding directed to the DPCSPs, all of the proposals before Members would have an impact locally.

Safe City Status

- v. In relation to the 'Safe City Status' Project, a Member requested a breakdown of what resources would be purchased. The Safer City Manager agreed to provide a breakdown of the costs in question.
- vi. In relation to a query regarding which organisations would receive 'Safe Place' Training, and how they would be selected, the Safer City Manager advised that groups had been identified by each of the DPCSPs based on their level of training to date.

Drug Dealers Don't Care Campaign

- vii. Members were advised that this campaign had been delivered for the last 2 years with financial support from the Assets Recovery Community Scheme (ARCS) Funding. Members were further advised that the campaign had been a great success with a reported 600% increase in calls to Crimestoppers.
- viii. Members questioned what the local dimension of the Campaign would be in terms of the routes that branded taxis would take and what local activities would take place.
- ix. The Safer City Assistant Manager said that she hoped that the coverage would allow for 1 black taxi for each area of the City, and stated that the Campaign would be supported through local DPCSP work such as themed public events and promotion of drug bins.
- x. A Member welcomed the inclusion of local media in the delivery of the Campaign and asked if the images were to be refreshed in any way.
- xi. The Safer City Assistant Manager advised that the 2nd year of the campaign included a televisual element, which would be further developed subject to additional funding from PCSPs across Northern Ireland. She advised that updated imagery could be considered if the campaign was to run for a 4th year.
- xii. In response to queries about the level of funding being allocated to the Campaign, the Safer City Assistant Manager advised that the evaluation of the project in previous years had been very positive and therefore represented good value for money. She agreed to circulate the latest evaluation to Members.
- xiii. In response to comments that the funding may be better spent on services, the Safer City Manager added that the Campaign was designed to complement the services of other partners working in the field, including the PSNI's Operation Torus.
- xiv. A Member stated that while she understood the concern regarding the costs, the PCSP had a moral obligation to promote the message.
- xv. In response to a question about the profile of prescription drugs within the Campaign, the Safer City Assistant Manager advised that while this aspect was not specifically covered, partners such as the Public Health Agency rolled out their own elements to compliment the 'Drug Dealers Don't Care' Campaign which itself focuses on the PCSP remit of criminality, the PSNI and encouraging reporting.
- xvi. At the suggestion of the Chair, the Safer City Assistant Manager agreed to investigate whether Council vehicles could be used to promote the campaign.

Graffiti Removal Initiative

- xvii. Members raised concerns about the appropriateness of the PCSP funding such an initiative, to which the Safer City Assistant Manager advised that the People and Communities Committee within Council had suggested that the issue be referred to the PCSP for discussion. She added that the pilot scheme was based on the broken windows theory linking initial disorder within a community to subsequent occurrences of serious crime.

- xviii. The Safer City Assistant Manager also advised Members that as the Council did not have a remit for the removal of graffiti, and ahead of possible contentious issues, the PCSP was in a position to be ahead of any arising concerns.
- xix. Eithne McIlroy added that the Probation Board had applied for ARCS funding to develop a Graffiti Bus Initiative which would work with offenders.
- xx. Several Members voiced their support for the project given that Council did not have a remit to remove graffiti from private property, while others felt that thought would need to be given to what graffiti would be removed with consideration to community notice boards and community consultation.
- xxi. The Safer City Assistant Manager confirmed that as the pilot was rolled out, such sensitivities would be addressed and community consultations carried out.

Targeted Anti-Burglary Campaign

- xxii. A Member commented on the small amount of funding dedicated to this project. The Safer City Assistant Manager advised that the funds had been calculated using crime statistics however if Members felt that additional funding should be allocated to the project, this could be amended.
- xxiii. Following further discussion, Members agreed to add an additional £5,000 to this campaign. It was also agreed that a further £10,000 should be allocated to a campaign focusing on the impact of burglary, a suggestion which had been raised at the Policing Committee meeting.

Project Approval

- xxiv. Following discussions on each of projects, Members approved funding for the Citywide projects listed below:
- Safe City Status - £10,000
 - Drug Dealers Don't Care Campaign - £60,000
 - Graffiti Removal Project - £30,000
 - Four Tier Security Scheme/Handyperson Scheme - £29,000
 - RADAR Educational Programme - £3,600
 - Belfast PCSP Promotional Materials - £10,000
 - Safer Belfast Coordination Team - £8,000
 - Targeted Anti-Burglary Campaign - £10,000
 - Impact of Burglary Campaign - £10,000
 - Community Support Initiative (West Belfast DPCSP) - £14,995
 - Interventions in the wider University Area (South Belfast DPCSP) - £10,000

Total Funding: £195,595

7. (D)PCSP Members Meetings Expenses

- i. The Safer City Assistant Manager advised Members that due to additional funding being made available from the DOJ, the cap on Members Expenses had been increased to £60 per meeting for up to 15 meetings per year, and up to 25 meetings per year for Chairs and Vice-Chairs. The number of induction/training events run by NIPB that can be claimed for remains at 5.

- ii. Members agreed with the recommendation that the Belfast PCSP extend the eligible meeting criteria for what Members are entitled to claim meeting expense payments for to include community engagement/consultation events and working group meetings to the list of already agreed meetings/events.

8. (D)PCSP Action Plan Progress Reports

- i. The Safer City Assistant Manager presented Members with Progress Reports for the PCSP and each of the DPCSPs providing progress to date against each project, as well as future actions.
- ii. Members noted the contents of the reports.

9. 2016/2017 PCSP Action Plan Development Update

- i. Members approved the 6 PCSP priorities that were developed as a result of a joint PCSP/DPCSP Planning Session held on 9th November, and a specific PCSP Planning Session held on 23rd November, namely:
 - Alcohol and Drugs
 - Anti-social behaviour
 - Burglary and Theft
 - Criminal Damage
 - Organised Crime
 - Violence against the Person/Sexual Offences
- ii. It was agreed that the Planning Working Group would continue to formulate the 2016/2017 Action Plan with a final draft presented to Members at the February meeting.
- iii. Members also agreed to hold a Joint PCSP/DPCSP Planning Session in March, 2016, to enable each Partnership to outline its Action Plan.

10. PCSP Social and Economic Evaluation

- i. Members were advised that recommendations from the Social and Economic Evaluation of the Belfast PCSP and DPCSPs were included in the Development Plan to be discussed under Item 11. The Safer City Manager added that its recommendations would also inform future projects undertaken by the Partnerships.
- ii. A Member commented that it may be useful to circulate 'Section 7' – a range of specific recommendations for the future monitoring and evaluation of projects' to Members to enable them to have a greater understanding of the new processes.
- iii. The Safer City Manager agreed to circulate this section of the Evaluation.
- iv. Members agreed to endorse the recommendations and receive quarterly reports on their implementation.

11. PCSP/DPCSPs Development Plan

- i. The Safer City Assistant Manager provided Members with a draft PCSP/DPCSP Development Plan which listed a number of work streams designed to develop the impact and effectiveness of the Partnerships.
- ii. Members agreed to endorse the plan and receive quarterly reports on the actions within the Plan.

12. Date of Next Meeting

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