

# Minutes of the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership

## Policing Committee

Lavery Room, City Hall  
Monday 7th December, 2015

<b>Political Members</b>	<b>Independent Members</b>
Councillor Matt Garrett (Chair)	Debbie Hammill (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Janice Austin	Mary Lambe
Councillor Declan Boyle	John MacVicar
Councillor Carole Howard	Carmel McKinney
Councillor John Hussey	Michael O'Hara
Councillor JJ Magee	Susan Russam
Councillor Stephen Magennis	Anne-Louise Toal
Alderman Jim Rodgers	
<b>PSNI Representatives</b>	
Chief Superintendent Nigel Grimshaw	T/Superintendent Bobby Singleton
<b>Staff Present</b>	<b>Apology</b>
Alison Allen, Safer City Manager	John Loughran
Lorna Somers, Safer City Assistant Manager	
Katharine McCrum, Partnership Support Officer	

### 1. Welcome and Apologies

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

### 3. Minutes

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

### 4. Matters Arising/Chair's Business

- i. The Safer City Assistant Manager advised Members that the actions from the previous meeting had all been completed.
- ii. The Chair asked for details of the PSNI Familiarisation Event on 16th December to be circulated to Members again.

## **5. Update from PSNI Representatives**

### NI Policing Plan

- i. Chief Superintendent Grimshaw advised Members that of the 21 targets within the Northern Ireland Policing Plan, 10 were being fully met, a further 5 were on track and 6 measures were not being met. He noted that burglaries in which older persons were the victims were of particular concern, and that focused anti-burglary campaigns had recently been launched as a result.

### Recent Incidents and Events

- ii. Chief Superintendent Grimshaw mentioned the shots that had recently been fired at PSNI Officers in West Belfast which, thanks to the vehicle's armoured protection, had not resulted in injury.
- iii. Members were advised that despite a number of drugs seizures, the Halloween period had been relatively quiet. Chief Superintendent Grimshaw advised that the police presence would be heightened over Christmas however Officers would remain conscious of the City's role in attracting visitors to Belfast. He added that the PSNI Christmas Campaign would be supplemented by an enhanced Security Campaign.
- iv. Chief Superintendent Grimshaw advised that a number of parades and protests had taken place in the City Centre over the previous weekend, some in relation to the imminent arrival of Syrian Refugees. He advised that the PSNI would be taking precautions to ensure the safety of refugees coming to Northern Ireland.

## **6. Member's Questions and Input**

- i. Members voiced their support for the PSNI Officers involved in the recent attack and agreed that it should be condemned by all sections of the community. Members agreed that this was unacceptable given that Officers were doing their duty in supporting local residents.
- ii. It was agreed that a letter of support regarding the recent attack on PSNI Officers would to be issued on behalf of the Partnership.
- iii. Chief Superintendent Grimshaw thanked Members for their support following the incident in West Belfast.
- iv. Ahead of his change in job, Members thanked Chief Superintendent Grimshaw for his work in Belfast and commended his time as a great leader and Officer within the PSNI.

### Drug Seizures and Burglary

- v. A Member asked if operations to deal with drugs were being intensified over Christmas given that it was a lucrative time of year for burglaries and the link between the two was clear.
- vi. Chief Superintendent Grimshaw advised that burglary was at the forefront of the PSNI's Christmas Campaign and that while there had been some significant drug seizures recently, they too would remain a high priority for the Service, particularly with the increase in needle finds.

- vii. In response to a Member's comment that a zero tolerance approach to drug dealing should be taken, T/Superintendent Singleton advised that the PSNI were aware of concerns about the time taken to deal with reports and that they were working to improve community confidence in this area.
- viii. A Member commented upon the high level of burglaries in East Belfast, and asked if any operations were planned to tackle this. He also noted that Officers were doing their best with restricted budgets.
- ix. Chief Superintendent Grimshaw advised that burglary was of particular concern for the PSNI and that the focus was currently on prolific offenders who appeared to be travelling to different areas. He noted that a coordinated approach to tackling the issue was required so as to avoid displacing crime to neighbouring areas.
- x. Members were reminded that prevention was the key to reducing the number of burglaries as up to 1/3 of burglaries were committed through open doors and windows.
- xi. In response to a query regarding why the NI Policing Plan target was to reduce burglaries by just 2%, Chief Superintendent Grimshaw suggested that while this may not seem reassuring, targets needed to be considered over time. He added that a consistent reduction of 2% every year for a 5 year period would result in a positive trend for that particular target. He also added that a number of significant arrests meant that progress was being made in regard to reducing burglaries.
- xii. At a Member's request, Chief Superintendent Grimshaw agreed to provide a breakdown of the percentage of burglaries where victims were over 55 years old. He also agreed to circulate further information on the Nominated Neighbour Scheme and Cocoon Watch.
- xiii. A Member noted that the Campaign regarding creeper burglaries had been a good one as it publicised how easy it is to become a victim. He suggested that a campaign regarding the purchase of stolen goods should also be developed as blame needs to be shared with those that support the theft. It was also suggested that drug campaigns should also have a focus on drug users as well as the dealers.
- xiv. A Member suggested that the Partnership needed to consider vulnerable people, including older people, being the victims and scams which could have a similarly devastating effect on people. It was also suggested that the issue of older people and drug use was often ignored.
- xv. In response to a Member's suggestion that the true impact and devastation of burglaries needs to be profiled, T/Superintendent Singleton advised that the PSNI would be happy to support such a campaign.

#### Anti-Social Behaviour

- xvi. A Member questioned what the repercussions were for parents whose children were causing anti-social behaviour in light of the campaign 'Where is your Child?'.
- xvii. The Chair advised Members that this campaign had been delivered by many of the DPCSPs as part of a partnership approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour which included joint enforcement with police, education programmes and the use of Anti-Social Behaviour Forums.

- xviii. T/Superintendent Singleton added that dealing with anti-social behaviour could be difficult if the behaviour in question was not criminal, however the PSNI did not wish to criminalise young people if at all possible. He confirmed that the police were working closely with their partners, and that further legislation on the subject of anti-social behaviour would enable their powers to be strengthened.

#### Stop and Search

- xix. A Member questioned the increase in the use of stop and search powers, and asked if this was in relation to an increase in the terror threat and if there was a particular age focus.
- xx. T/Superintendent Singleton advised that he did not have a more detailed breakdown of stop and search figures, but he would see if this could be made available. He advised that the PSNI had refocused on the terrorist threat as there was a belief that stop and search powers had not been being used to their full effect. He added that the powers were still used sparingly but that training had led to greater confidence in its use.

#### **7. Date of Next Meeting**

- i. Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Policing Committee would be held on Monday, 8th February, 2016.