

Minutes of the East Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Policing Committee Meeting

Room 1c, Cecil Ward Building, Belfast
Monday 14th December, 2015

Political Members	Independent Members
Councillor Carole Howard (Chair)	David Geddis (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Sonia Copeland	Jonathan Currie
Councillor Aileen Graham	Steven McMillen
Councillor Tommy Sandford	Lisa McMaster
	Michelle Bryans
PSNI Representative	Staff Present
Chief Inspector David Moore	Glenn Thomas, Safer City Coordinator
	Alyson Crompton, Partnership Support Officer

1. Welcome and Routine Matters

- i. The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting of the Policing Committee.

2. Declaration of Interests

- i. Members were reminded of the need to declare any material interests which they may have in relation to any item of business to be considered during the meeting. No declarations of interest were noted.

3. Area Commanders Update on Policing

- i. Chief Inspector Moore presented Members with a report on police performance against the Local Policing Plan for East Belfast, noting that the figures are accurate today.
- ii. He advised that Victim Based Crime overall was down by 6%, however violence against the person had risen by 1.3%. Sexual Offences – Rape has seen an increase from 29 last year to 35 this year possibly due to an increase in reporting.
- iii. There has also been a 23.7% drop in Robbery from 59 last year to 45 this year however Burglary has increased by 12.5%, with Domestic Burglary up 9% in particular against the Elderly. The main areas targeted have been Bloomfield Ward, Merok Ward, Woodstock, Rosetta and Ravenhill, no major crime gangs in area, either walk ins, doors left open or creeper burglaries.
- iv. Non – Domestic Burglary has also seen an increase of 20.1% targeting premises, with poor security, no alarms, and money on show. In a bid to raise awareness the Crime Prevention officer and Anti-Social Behaviour Officer have visited over 130 premises. There will also be a pro-active increase in Police Officers around shopping centres and post offices leading up to Christmas.

- v. It was noted trafficking of drugs was down due to two significant searches in the Short Strand Area, while the number of violent crimes where alcohol was a factor had reduced by nearly 17.8% which was very positive.
- vi. Chief Inspector Moore advised that Bicycle Crime was down 45%, Criminal Damage down by 8.5% and Public Order offences down by 1.4%. The total of recorded crime – all offences was down by 4.5%.
- vii. The Chair was concerned that some retailers had no alarms; she asked how we can encourage them to partner up with alarm companies, to reduce insurance, possibly through Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association (NIIRTA).
- viii. A discussion ensued with some Members stating that they felt that the retailers, especially of small businesses would not spend the money, however it was felt that the retailers need to take responsibility and that the CPO and ASB should be commended for their awareness raising.
- ix. Further discussions took place regarding Domestic Burglary particularly against the elderly, it was felt that the PCSP should continue to raise awareness in the community, of potential scams and rogue traders who target the vulnerable.
- x. The Safe City Co-ordinator advised that the DPCSP may be able to allocate funding from the Action Plan to help with the awareness raising.
- xi. Concern was expressed by a Member of the loss of daily contact and a notable presence of Police in his area; he was worried that crime could increase.
- xii. Chief Inspector Moore explained that due to the restructuring of the Police and the lowest crime rate in Belfast, the East Belfast District has reduced policing compared to other Belfast Districts however the Neighbourhood Police Teams can attend if requested.
- xiii. The Safer City Co-ordinator advised the Members that the BCC Community Safety Unit have staff that can be utilized to complement the Police.
- xiv. A Member stated that it is good to see people reporting 41.5% Domestic Burglary involving older people, are any of these burglaries being carried out by repeat offenders?
- xv. Chief Inspector Moore advised that they had no information to confirm that repeat offenders are involved in the burglaries.
- xvi. A Member had concerns about organised crime and distraction burglaries, he asked if this impacted on East Belfast, he also asked about the interface and a few isolated incidents.
- xvii. Chief Inspector Moore advised that they were not prevalent in East Belfast and that the interface was quiet.
- xviii. The Chair thanked Chief Inspector Moore for his comprehensive report.

4. Emerging Issues

- i. The Safer City Coordinator updated the Members on two successful Policing Committee supported events
 - a. **Merry on the Mersey** an intergenerational event involving over 350 people with East DPCSP representation from the Safer City Co-ordinator, Independent Member Michelle Bryans and the PSNI.
 - b. **Walkway** a talk with the PSNI with East DPCSP representation from the Safer City Co-ordinator, Councillor Sonia Copeland and the PSNI.
- ii. Councillor Copeland commended the PSNI on an excellent event at the Walkway, with the officers being very approachable, serving the attendees with tea and coffee and sitting down for a chat. Another Member agreed that this has been a very positive event.
- iii. Councillor Graham stated that it was very positive to see the PSNI at an event in Tullycarnet at the weekend.

5. Date of Next Meeting

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that next meeting of the Policing Committee would be held on Wednesday 24th February 2016.