

# Minutes of the East Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

## Private Meeting

Room 1C, Cecil Ward Building, Belfast  
Wednesday, 27th January, 2016

### Political Members

Councillor Carole Howard (Chair)  
Councillor Sonia Copeland  
Councillor Aileen Graham  
Councillor Deirdre Hargey  
Councillor Niall O Donngaile  
Councillor Tommy Sandford

### Independent Members

Mr David Geddis (Vice-Chair)  
Mrs Michelle Bryans  
Mr Jonathan Currie  
Ms Lisa McMaster  
Mr Steven McMillan

### Designated Organisations

Yvonne Cowan, H&SCT  
Dermot Magorrian, YJA  
Alison Methven, NIHE

Chief Inspector David Moore, PSNI  
Michael Roberts, NIFRS  
Pauline Smart, EA

### Staff Present

Glenn Thomas, Safer City Coordinator  
Katharine McCrum, Partnership Support Officer

### Apology

Jane Lappin, PBNI

## 1. Welcome and Routine Matters

- i. The Chair welcomed Members to meeting and noted the apology provided. The Chair gave her condolences to Mr Geddis following the death of a family member, and advised that she had sent a letter to the family on behalf of the Partnership.
- ii. Members welcomed Station Commander Michael Roberts, NIFRS, to the East Belfast DPCSP.

## 2. Declaration of Interests

- i. Members were asked 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 declared at the outset of the meeting.

## 3. Minutes and Matters Arising

- i. Minutes of the East Belfast DPCSP Private Meetings held on Monday, 30th November and Monday, 14th December, copies of which had previously been circulated, were taken as read and agreed as correct.  
Proposed: Mr David Geddis  
Seconded: Councillor Carole Howard

#### **4. Chairs Update on the Belfast PCSP**

- i. The Chair provided Members with an update on the PCSP Meeting held on 14th January. The key points were:
  - The PCSP was working with the Lord Mayor to tackle homelessness in the City,
  - Professional begging had become an issue in the City and so awareness work was needed to educate people on the difference between true need and organised crime,
  - McClure Watters provided a presentation on options to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour in Belfast with a formal coordinated approach being selected as the most appropriate. Further information on the chosen option will be provided during a future specific workshop,
  - The PPS provided a presentation and would be available to speak to DPCSPs if requested,
  - Chief Superintendent Chris Noble, the new District Commander for the Belfast City District Command Unit, was introduced to the Partnership.

#### **5. Connswater Greenway Update**

- i. Due to a heavy agenda, it was agreed that this item would be deferred to the next meeting of the East Belfast DPCSP.

#### **6. Action Plan Update**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that work was progressing well with the delivery of the East Belfast DPCSP Action Plan, and that if projects continued as planned, the Partnership could expect to have a small underspend of £2,361. He added that there was still time to allocate these funds to additional pieces of work.
- ii. Members were reminded that any unspent funds would be lost to the Partnership, and that there was still the possibility that projects may declare underspends or that money would be clawed back following project evaluations.
- iii. Members noted the contents of the report.

#### **7. Planning Process**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that the scheduled Planning Sub-Group meeting had not taken place due to illness. Members were further advised that in order to not fall behind in the process, he had developed a draft Action Plan for 2016/2017 based on previously agreed priorities. He added that the Plan would remain flexible to ensure that it could effectively respond to emerging needs.
- ii. Members agreed the Draft Action Plan in principle but requested that a Planning Sub-Group meeting was convened ahead of the next DPCSP meeting in order to have a more detailed conversation regarding the draft Action Plan.

## **8. Neighbourhood Watch Project**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that over 40 Neighbourhood Watch Schemes were currently operating in East Belfast, and that while the PSNI had previously supported these schemes, responsibility for this had now moved to PCSPs.
- ii. Members were asked to approve the allocation of £2,000 towards supporting a bespoke East Belfast event for Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators and to undertake a study in order to identify and address the needs and experiences of Coordinators.
- iii. Chief Inspector Moore requested that the DPCSP staff team link with Inspector Keith Hutchinson when developing the project as there were system developments that could assist in its delivery. The Safer City Coordinator also agreed to circulate the name and location of each of the existing schemes.
- iv. In response to queries regarding who would be invited to attend the event, the Safer City Coordinator confirmed that new and emerging groups could be included and that the event could be moulded to the needs of the audience. He also confirmed that the administration of Neighbourhood Watch was not anticipated to be time consuming or resource intensive, but support for the groups was important.
- v. Members approved the allocation of £2,000 as laid out within the paper.  
Proposed: Councillor Niall O Donnaghaile  
Seconded: Mr David Geddis

## **9. Hate Crime Project**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator outlined a Hate Crime Project involving the development of an educational resource pack and delivery of a pilot programme in partnership with the Ulster Historical Foundation and Queen's University. Members were reminded that several high profile incidents of hate crime had taken place in East Belfast, and that while this appeared to be reducing, it remained a serious issue.
- ii. In response to questions about the resource pack and if match funding should be sought, the Safer City Coordinator confirmed that once the pilot was delivered, the project would be evaluated and the resulting resources would belong to the East Belfast DPCSP for use in the future. With regards to funding, he advised that while DPCSPs often match funded resources, given that the East Belfast DPCSP had money remaining in its budget, he would not suggest requesting additional funds.
- iii. Members suggested linking with the Race Relations Forum and using local resources and knowledge throughout delivery. It was also suggested that the resource should be advertised once the initial pilot had been evaluated.
- iv. Following further discussion Members approved funding of £3,000 towards the project, as outlined within the paper. It was also agreed that a retrospective review of Hate Crime projects funded by the East Belfast DPCSP should be carried out in the new financial year.  
Proposed: Mr David Geddis  
Seconded: Councillor Deirdre Hargey

## **10. Community Survey Project**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator outlined details of previous community surveys that had been undertaken by the East Belfast DPCSP and requested that Members approve funding of £1,000 to carry out a comparable survey in the areas of East Belfast that had until recently fallen under the responsibility of Castlereagh PCSP. He added that the Belfast PCSP would be carrying out a Citywide Survey in 2016/2017.
- ii. A Member suggested that hard copies of the online survey should be made available for those who are not computer literate.
- iii. Members approved the funding as outlined within the paper.  
Proposed: Mr Jonathan Currie  
Seconded: Mrs Michelle Bryans

## **11. Intergenerational Project**

- i. In line with the Declaration of Interest policy, Mr David Geddis and Councillor Tommy Sandford declared an interest in this item and stepped out of the room during the ensuing discussion.
- ii. The Safer City Coordinator outlined a project aimed at building relationships between younger and older age groups in the Cregagh area in association with the Cregagh Community Centre.
- iii. Members welcomed the project and approved the £820 of funding as requested.  
Proposed: Councillor Niall O Donnaghaile  
Seconded: Councillor Aileen Graham
- iv. Mr Geddis and Councillor Sandford returned to the room and were advised of the decision made in their absence.

## **12. Young Men's Youth Bank Project**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that an application had been received to set up a committee of young men who would identify, develop and run projects within their local community, and in turn engage other young people at risk of negative behaviours. He added that this was project offered an excellent opportunity for the DPCSP to work with the group in the development of future plans around projects and their delivery.
- ii. Members approved the allocation of £1,640 towards the delivery of the project as outlined within the paper.  
Proposed: Mrs Michelle Bryans  
Seconded: Mr Steven McMillen

### **13. Drugs and Alcohol Project**

- i. Members were reminded that the East Belfast DPCSP had allocated £3,000 to the Citywide 'Drug Dealers Don't Care' Campaign which was due to be launched in February, 2016. Members were asked to approve a further £3,000 towards the campaign in order to secure a higher level of coverage throughout East Belfast, particularly in the areas of Sydenham, Short Strand and Tullycarnet.
- ii. The impact of the campaign was discussed and whilst it was agreed that it was difficult to monitor, the Safer City Coordinator advised that feedback from Crimestoppers allowed Officers to observe spikes in calls related to the awareness campaigns.
- iii. Members approved additional funding of £3,000 to the Campaign, bringing the total funding from the East Belfast DPCSP to £6,000.  
Proposed: Mr Steven McMillen  
Seconded: Councillor Aileen Graham

### **14. Addendum 1 – Short Strand Youth Project**

- i. Members were advised that an application had been received from Short Strand Drug Awareness Group and St Matthews Football Club who had engaged with 32 young women at risk of involvement in interface issues and/or risky behaviour. Members were further advised that this project was quite unique given the target audience, and that a robust evaluation had been put in place by the groups.
- ii. Members welcomed the focus on young women and agreed that the pilot could act as a building block for projects in other areas. Activities focusing on mental health and suicide intervention were particularly welcomed. Several Members suggested that a cross community element could be added to the programme but it was resolved that given the number of topics already being tackled, it was likely to be more successful as a single identity project.
- iii. It was agreed that the group would be asked to explore future collaborations with other groups, in Avoniel for example, following evaluation of the initial programme.
- iv. Members agreed to provide £6,240 of funding towards the project's 6 week programme and residential.  
Proposed: Mr Steven McMillen  
Seconded: Mr David Geddis

### **15. Youth Volunteer Academy**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator drew Members attention to a letter that had been received from the PSNI regarding their Youth Volunteer Academy (YVA) pilot scheme.
- ii. Members noted the contents of the letter.

## **16. AOB/Emerging Issues**

### Delegated Authority

- i. Members were asked to provide extended delegated authority to the Chair and Vice-Chair to approve time-sensitive projects alongside the Manager and Assistant Manager of the Community Safety Unit. The Safer City Coordinator explained that this was being requested given that the end of the financial year was just 9 weeks away. He assured Members that stringent governance procedures were in place to oversee these decisions.
- ii. Members approved the request for delegated authority.  
Proposed: Councillor Aileen Graham  
Seconded: Councillor Tommy Sandford

### Graffiti Removal Project

- iii. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that the PCSP was funding a Graffiti Removal Project across Belfast. Members were asked to contact the PCSP Office with any removal requests.

### Walkway Bonfire

- iv. Members were advised that pallets had begun to be collected at the Walkway Bonfire site as a result of which staff were beginning work with the community and relevant agencies to tackle this issue at an early stage. He advised that the land in question (currently owned by DRD) would soon be owned by the Council with works planned in the coming weeks.
- v. A Member suggested that staff link with the MP for East Belfast who had begun to coordinate meetings on the subject.
- vi. Members agreed that bonfires were a big issue for communities and that there were great differences in political opinion about how they should be managed.
- vii. In response to a query regarding the Council's policy on the collection of bonfire material, the Safer City Coordinator advised that the Council's Cleansing Department did their best to remove items however they would not go on site once intimidation or threats had been issued. He added that Officers did a lot of 'behind the scenes' work with communities and other agencies, but problems often arose when the Council did not own the land in question. He also noted that only a small number of bonfires caused problems for communities.
- viii. It was noted by a Member that 14 bonfires in the Castlereagh area had been managed well in the past but relationships had broken down and the governing group was no longer in existence.
- ix. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that meetings were ongoing with the Good Relations Unit and agreed to ask them for an update on their plans ahead of the next meeting. It was also agreed that bonfires would remain as a regular agenda item in the run up to summer.

- x. Chief Inspector Moore advised that while the PSNI would not be directly involved in the removal on bonfire materials, he was committed to providing Officers at the Walkway site during the coming weekend to supervise pallet removal if required and with community consent. He added that the community in the close vicinity to the Walkway bonfire had suffered greatly in the last year because of bonfire related issues and it was important that the PSNI made residents feel safe.
- xi. The Chair welcomed this commitment from the PSNI.

#### PACTS

- xii. A Member suggested that the Partnership take time to discuss the model used for Partners and Communities Together (PACT) Meetings given that attendance had been low and most of the meetings had fallen to staff to administer.
- xiii. This was seconded by a Member who advised that staff were coming under fire for poor attendance however it was not their role to manage the meetings.

#### Drug and Alcohol Forum

- xiv. Members were advised that the next meeting of the forum would be held on Thursday 4th February in the Short Strand Community Centre.

#### Bike Tour to Connswater Greenway

- xv. In response to a query about when Members would be visiting the Connswater Greenway Site, the Safer City Coordinator advised that once the weather got better this could be arranged. He added that following the Connswater Greenway presentation next month the details could be agreed.

### **17. Dates of Next Meetings**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that the next DPCSP meeting would be held on Wednesday, 24th February and would include a Public Meeting.
- ii. Members discussed themes for the meeting including drugs and alcohol, suicide awareness and online safety. Following discussion about a recent presentation by Superintendent George Clarke at a Public Protection Awareness Raising Session, it was agreed that the Safer City Coordinator would contact the PSNI to see if this could be delivered as part of the Public Meeting.