

Minutes of the East Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Private Meeting

Room 1C, Cecil Ward Building, Belfast
Wednesday, 23rd March, 2016

Political Members

Councillor Carole Howard (Chair)
Councillor Sonia Copeland
Councillor Aileen Graham
Councillor Deirdre Hargey
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
Jane Lappin, PBNI
Dermot Magorrian, YJA

Alison Methven, NIHE
Chief Inspector David Moore, PSNI
Pauline Smart, EA

Staff Present

Glenn Thomas, Safer City Coordinator
Andrew Charles, Project Officer
Katharine McCrum, Partnership Support Officer

Apologies

Councillor Niall O Donnghaile
Michael Roberts, NIFRS

1. Welcome and Routine Matters

- i. The Chair welcomed Members to meeting and noted the apologies provided.

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 Meeting held on Wednesday, 27th January, copies of which had previously been circulated, were taken as read and agreed as correct.
Proposed: Councillor Aileen Graham
Seconded: Mr Steven McMillan

4. Update from the Policing Committee Meeting

- i. Chief Inspector Moore provided a summary of the report provided to Policing Committee Members noting that the number of incidents of violent crime where alcohol was a factor had fallen by 16%, the outcome rate for racist hate crime was up by 16.3% and incidences of anti-social behaviour were down by 7.1%. He added

that a number of focused operations had brought about good results for both burglary and drug offences.

- ii. Members noted the report.

5. Update from the Belfast PCSP

- i. The Chair advised that she had been unable to attend the previous PCSP meeting however she understood that no pertinent issues had arisen from the meeting.

6. Action Plan Update

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that an end of year report on the delivery of the Action Plan would be delivered at the next meeting of the Partnership. He added that there was likely to be a small underspend of between £2,000 and £3,000.
- ii. Members were advised that delegated authority had been sought from the Chair and Vice-Chair for 2 projects proposals that had been recently received;
 - Artsekta, £1,860, Journey Around the World – Two 5 week programmes focusing on cultural awareness with Ballymac and the Lagan Village Group.
 - Dreamscheme, £1,073 – A programme with 12 hard to reach young girls within the Braniel estate looking at anti-social behaviour and risk taking behaviour.
- iii. The Safer City Coordinator advised that both projects were approved and more details would be made available in the end of year report. Members were therefore asked to note the progress to date.
- iv. Members noted the contents of the report.

7. PCSP Small Grants Update

- i. The Safer City Coordinator reminded Members that £40,000 had been allocated for 2 rounds of Small Grants within the East Belfast DPCSP Action Plan for 2016/17. He added that 6 applications had been received for the first tranche of funding and that, following scoring by a staff moderation panel and endorsement by a DPCSP Member Panel, 2 applications had been deemed eligible for funding at a cost of £7,732.50:
 - Dreamscheme Northern Ireland - £4,732.50
 - Cregagh Wanderers Youth Football Club - £3,020
- ii. Members were advised that £32,267.50 now remained in the Small Grants budget from Tranche 2.

- iii. The Safer City Coordinator requested that Members agree to fund the 2 eligible groups and to the promotion of a capacity building service in order to improve the standard of future applications.
- iv. A Member questioned whether it was the process of applying for PCSP Small Grants or capacity issues that was resulting in fewer successful applications. It was noted that the criteria for grants of £6,000 was similar to those of £200,000 which was not proportionate.
- v. The Safer City Coordinator advised that while there were suggestions that the process could be improved, the capacity of groups to meet the strict criteria was also an issue. He advised that groups had been supported ahead of the application process however had still missed the threshold required. He also suggested that the message regarding the availability of grants was not reaching communities despite best efforts.
- vi. Members were advised that the second tranche of Small Grants would be advertised in May, 2016 and were encouraged to promote this within their networks. The Safer City Coordinator noted that groups were surfing the wave of discontent with regards to the application process.
- vii. Members discussed the advertising of grants, and the support offered to groups.
- viii. The Safer City Coordinator advised that Officers were becoming more proactive in their support of groups and were aiming to provide examples of successful applications, once legal had approved the process. The Chair suggested that mock applications could be drawn up.
- ix. Members agreed to the allocation of £7,732.50 towards Small Grants and to the programme of capacity building.
Proposed: Mr Jonathan Currie
Seconded: Mr David Geddis

8. Proposed Meeting Schedule 2016/17

- i. The Safer City Coordinator drew Members attention to a proposed schedule of East Belfast DPCSP Meetings for 2016/17. He advised that the April, 2016 date would need to be amended as the Chair was not available, however asked for approval of the May, June, July, August and October dates.
- ii. Members approved these dates and agreed for an updated list of meetings to be brought to the next meeting of the Partnership.
- iii. At the request of a Member, it was agreed that Private Meetings would be held in venues within East Belfast, while Policing Committee meetings would continue to be held in Belfast City Council offices.

9. Inner East Forum Project

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that the DPCSP had received a funding request from the Inner East Forum, a community-led group involving statutory agencies which deals with local issues and supports the establishment of multiagency responses.
- ii. Members were further advised that the Forum had agreed at a recent meeting to hold a planning day which would include discussion regarding work with other groups, including the East Belfast Tension Monitoring Group. The funding request covered costs for the facilitation of this event, meeting facility costs and the production of an information booklet.
- iii. Further to the report provided, the Safer City Coordinator suggested that if Members supported the application, they may wish to review the Forum's progress after 6 months and include the suggestion to move from a single identity group to one with a cross community focus.
- iv. Two Members advised that they sat on the Forum and raised concerns at the suggestion that the group would be asked to change its focus within 6 months, given the sensitive issues discussed by the Forum. They agreed that while this would be a positive move, local issues needed to be tackled initially, and the proposal to change the Forum would need to be agreed by its Members.
- v. The Safer City Coordinator interjected to ask that the two Members involved in the Forum leave the room. He apologised for not raising the issue prior to the discussion, but confirmed that a declaration of interest should have been made at the outset of the agenda item to ensure that discussion and funding decisions were not influenced by those with a vested interest.
- vi. A Member advised that the explanation provided by the Members who sit on the Forum was useful in allowing Members to make an informed decision about how to progress with the application for funding. The Safer City Coordinator accepted the comments but advised that the process was in place to protect the decisions made by the Partnership and to allow for open discussion therefore they must be enforced.
- vii. Mr Jonathon Currie and Mrs Michelle Bryans left the room for the remainder of the discussion.
- viii. Members considered the application further and it was agreed that regular updates would be requested from the group, however no stipulation would be placed on the Forum to become a cross community group during the current funding period.
Proposed: Mr David Geddis
Seconded: Ms Lisa McMaster
- ix. Members agreed that it was important to declare an interest at the outset of discussions, and if queries were raised regarding projects for funding requests, groups could be asked to come to future meetings to provide further information.
- x. Mr Jonathon Currie and Mrs Michelle Bryans returned to the room and the Safer City Coordinator confirmed the decision of the Partnership, including the request for regular updates from the Forum.

- xi. It was suggested that updates would need to be sought from the Forum directly, not from those Members who sit on the East Belfast DPCSP, as the application had come from the Chair of the Inner East Forum and had not been discussed at Forum meetings.
- xii. The Safer City Coordinator agreed to contact the Chair of the Forum regarding project updates in line with what would be requested from all groups receiving DPCSP funding.

10. Addendum 1 - East Belfast Tension Monitoring Group 2016/17

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that the Tension Monitoring Group was developed through Peace III funding in 2012 and since this date and gone from strength to strength, being considered as best practice at a Ministerial level.
- ii. Members were further advised that in January, 2014, the East Belfast DPCSP had agreed to support the Group in its work, and that the current paper requested that this support continue through the funding of room hire and refreshments costs as well as the delivery of a planning day.
- iii. Mr Jonathan Currie declared an interest in the item under discussion and subsequently left the room.
- iv. Members commended the work of the Group and Chief Inspector Moore advised that within police circles, the Group was considered best practice with key agencies and communities around the table. Project Officer Andrew Charles was also commended for the work he had done in developing the Group.
- v. It was acknowledged that the work of the Tension Monitoring Group could go beyond issues at the interfaces to look at issues across East Belfast and that this would be discussed as part of the planning day.
- vi. Members approved the funding of £3,350 towards the East Belfast Tension Monitoring Group, and requested that a report be brought back to the Partnership following the planning day in March, 2017.
Proposed: Councillor Sonia Copeland
Seconded: Ms Lisa McMaster

11. East Belfast Bonfires

- i. The Safer City Project Officer provided Members with an update on bonfire sites within East Belfast, noting that 8 sites were currently collecting bonfire materials. Members were further advised that staff and community representatives were being proactive in responding to resident's complaints, many of which related to fly-tipping.
- ii. It was acknowledged that bonfire sites remained a difficult and sensitive issue and that Members' assistance in working towards solutions would be gratefully received.

- iii. Members were advised that 2 round table working groups would be meeting in the weeks ahead to discuss pertinent issues, and that these would involve the PSNI and other statutory agencies.
- iv. A Member noted that the Castlereagh Cultural Forum had previously coordinated a number of bonfires, but following fines imposed by Belfast City Council, had decided against returning to the Bonfire Programme. He added that meetings had been held with the Good Relations Department to negotiate a way forward, and that the Forum had been advised to reconsider their decision to not avail of the Bonfire Programme funding.
- v. A second Member advised that 14 bonfire sites had been overseen by the Cultural Forum however this was likely to decrease given the current situation. He added that as the collection of pallets had begun early in the year, so too had the dumping of rubble and other household goods.
- vi. A Member questioned the legal situation for the Council should someone become injured whilst playing or climbing on materials left on Council owned land.
- vii. The Safer City Coordinator advised that lifting materials could be a slow process as community buy-in was often needed to ensure that Council staff were not put at risk.
- viii. A Member commented that lessons needed to be learnt from the issues seen at the Walkway Bonfire site in the previous year, and suggested that elected officials needed to 'step up'. The Safer City Coordinator advised that Councillors had been instrumental in the multi-agency approach to the issues. The Chair added that the public may not always see the work that is done behind the scenes and commended the Councillors who had put themselves at risk whilst becoming involved in bonfire discussions.
- ix. Further comments were made about the additional work that was needed, however as the Public Meeting was due to commence, Members agreed to hold a further meeting to discuss the points raised.