

Minutes of the West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Policing Committee Meeting

Conor Room

Wednesday, 28th October 2015

Political Members

Councillor Stephen Magennis(Chair)
Councillor Matt Garrett
Councillor Brian Heading
Alderman Frank McCoubrey

Independent Members

Mrs Elizabeth Groves (Vice Chair)
Ms Breige Brownlee
Miss Claire Canavan
Mr Eoin McShane
Ms Lauren Slane

PSNI Representatives

Chief Inspector Anthony McNally

Staff Present

Alan Wardle Safer City Coordinator
Alyson Crompton Partnership Support Officer
Lorna Somers Safer City Assistant Manager

Apologies

1. Welcome and Routine Matters

- i. The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and noted that there were no apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 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.
- ii. No declarations of interest were noted.

3. Area Commanders Update on Policing

West Belfast Performance against Local Policing Plan

- i. Chief Inspector McNally advised Members that due to technical issues following the Local Government Reform (LGR) boundary changes, information from the previous Lisburn area was not currently available and therefore he was not in a position to provide up to date crime figures.
- ii. He also indicated that if Members had any questions regarding specific incidents or topics, for which they might require a more detailed response that he would be happy for them to contact him directly to discuss further.
- iii. Chief Inspector McNally provided Members with an update on the West Belfast Performance against the Local Policing Plan October 2015.
- iv. The Area Commander advised Members that the current Policing Priorities for the area were Drugs, ASB, Domestic Abuse, Hate Crime, Burglary against Older Persons and Violent Crime.
- v. Members were advised that there has been a fall in the recorded ASB incidents reported between April–October 2014/15 and April–October 2015/16 of 35. He also advised that the outcome rates for both ‘hate crime’ and ‘crimes with a domestic

motivation' over the same period had achieved their performance targets by increasing the successful outcomes. He further stated that, although there was still a possible reluctance to report, there had been an increase in reporting and prosecutions due to media campaigns etc.

- vi. He further informed Members that reported incidents of domestic burglary had increased by 10 over the period previously specified especially where older people were the victims and that unfortunately this is consistent across Northern Ireland. The PSNI in conjunction with the PCSPs have launched the Northern Ireland wide 'Domestic Burglary Campaign'; Protect Your Family, Protect Yourself and Protect Your Home. The campaign also includes the Nominated Neighbour Scheme for older or vulnerable members of the community.
- vii. Chief Inspector McNally advised Members that the issue of drugs, their availability and use is increasing this, however, is not borne out by the figures which indicate that drug recorded crimes are down. He further stated that this may be due to less reporting by the community. He explained that a positive aspect on the issue of drugs was that the drug outcome rate has increased by 4.3% over the reporting period and that this was due to increased PSNI intelligence and targeting of the drug dealers.
- viii. Chief Inspector McNally advised that incidents of violent crime had risen by 84 over the reporting period but that this was being addressed by increased patrols in some specific areas and increased working with community and statutory partners to address the issue.
- ix. Chief Inspector McNally further advised that violent crime with alcohol as a contributory factor had decreased, although further analysis to evidence this and report affectively was needed and that he would update the Partnership at a later date.
- x. Chief Inspector McNally explained that the Belfast Case Progression Team (CPT) is working to improve on the 20% overall rate of successful crime outcomes; by the analysis of crime through profiling incidents, repeat offenders and the criminal justice process.
- xi. Chief Inspector McNally finished his report by stating that he was happy to meet with any Members to discuss any particular issues coming from the Performance Report in greater detail.

Operational Obligations

- i. Chief Inspector McNally outlined the three new District Electoral Areas (DEA) for the West Belfast PSNI; Court West (Falls and Beechmount), Black Mountain and Collin.
- ii. The Local Policing Team (LPT) operational base in the West Belfast area is Woodbourne Police Station; the three Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPT) are based in the following Stations; Court West – Grosvenor Road Station; Black Mountain and Collin – Woodbourne Station.
- iii. Chief Inspector McNally briefed the Members on operational matters in each of the DEA.
 - Court West – car crime continues to be an issue especially in Divis, including thefts from vehicles. He further stated that there are operational plans in place for dealing with car crime.

- Black Mountain – one of the main issues continues to be drugs and the ASB associated with the purchase and use of drugs, particularly in and around the Turf Lodge area. The Chief Inspector informed Members that there are a number of operations planned and that he would update Members at the next Partnership meeting.
- Colin – the issue of transient youth moving in large numbers has been an issue, particularly in and around the Twinbrook and Poleglass areas over the last two weekends (17th-18th October and 24th-25th October). The young people seem to be from a number of outlying areas including Lisburn Road, Newforge and Ballymurphy. Police had responded with over 50 officers deployed on 24th-25th October. Members were informed that there are plans in place for the Halloween weekend.

Members Questions

- A Member asked Chief Inspector McNally what drugs had been seized in west Belfast due to recent Police operations?
- Chief Inspector McNally advised that there had been an increase in heroin finds, due to operations which were intelligence led and normally through house searches.
- Another Member asked that, with the previous weekends ASB involving transient youth and with Halloween coming up, if it would be possible to put together in one document the responsibilities of the partnerships involved, PSNI, Community Safety and other agencies, and could he ask the Safer City Co-ordinator to co-ordinate the document.
- The Safer City Coordinator informed Members that as a result of recent multi agency meetings in the areas affected, that a response had been formulated to engage and divert young people away from the areas in question.
- The Chair and Chief Inspector McNally agreed that there were significant resources including partnership and police in place for the Halloween weekend.
- A Member asked about Stop and Search operations; who do they target and do they peak at certain times?
- Chief Inspector McNally advised that there was a strict set of criteria to be followed for stop and search operations, including a record of why the person was stopped and the legislation it relates to. Information cards are provided to individuals stopped by the police as to why they had been stopped. He also stated that there would be seasonal peaks. Information and statistics are available on the PSNI website.
- The Safer City Assistant Manager asked if the statistics were available in a breakdown by DEA.
- Chief Inspector McNally advised that a breakdown was not available at present due to the boundary changes; however he will ask the PSNI IT department if this will become available and will report back to the Partnership.
- A Member asked what preventative measures were in place for Christmas and New Year period regarding the drugs issue.
- Chief Inspector McNally stated that the regional drugs campaign, including “Drug Dealers Don’t Care” involving BCC, PCSP and PSNI will be launched in December. Partnership support through groups in West Belfast and media support should also

help. The Chair also stated that the Sharps Project led by Belfast PCSP and BCC involving all the major partners in the drugs campaign was in progress.

- xii. The Chair advised that prescription drugs were also an issue and that a member of the community had surrendered drugs to him which had been ordered over the internet. He stated that he would pass on the information and items to Chief Inspector McNally.
- xiii. A Member inquired about a recent security incident on the Springfield Road which kept many members of the community out of their homes for a considerable time.
- xiv. Chief Inspector McNally advised that further information had been received by the PSNI which required Army Technical Officers to attend the scene which seemed to increase local anxiety around the situation. He assured the Members that the Police and Army Technical Officers would not keep people out of their homes for long periods of time unless there was a significant risk of injury to members of that community.

4. Policing Committee Grants Update

- i. The Safer City Co-ordinator asked the Members to note the agreed funding of £1,500.00 which had been approved from the west Belfast DPCSP Transitional Action Plan under Policing Committee Grants.
- ii. The members agreed to note the recommendations.