

Minutes of the West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Private Meeting

Conor Room, City Hall

Wednesday 27 January 2016

Political Members	Independent Members
Councillor Stephen Magennis, (Chair)	Breige Brownlee
Councillor Matt Garrett	Eoin McShane
Councillor Brian Heading	Claire Canavan
	Lauren Slane
Statutory Designated Organisations	
Insp Alan Swann PSNI	Patricia Muldoon YJA
Carol Carville PBNI	Sharon Beattie NIHE
Tommy Boyle H&SC Trust	Jocelyn Wise PSNI
Locally Designated Organisations	
Karol McKee Upper Springfield Community Safety Forum	Paula Kerr Upper Falls Community Safety Forum
Michael George Colin Neighbourhood Partnership	
Staff Present	Apologies
Alan Wardle, Safer City Coordinator	Alderman Chris McGimpsey
Alyson Crompton, Partnership Support Office	Alderman Frank McCoubrey
	Councillor Billy Hutchinson
	Elizabeth Groves (Vice Chair)
	Chief Inspector Anthony McNally PSNI
	Harry Bradley YJA
	Micheal Donnelly Greater Falls Community Safety Forum

1. Welcome and Routine Matters

- i. The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting of the West Belfast DPCSP and noted the apologies provided.

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. West Belfast DPCSP Minutes & Matters Arising

- i. The minutes of the Private meeting held on 23rd November, copies of which had previously been circulated, were taken as read and agreed as correct.
- ii. The Safer City Co-ordinator advised the Members that all the agreed actions from the meeting held on 23rd November had been completed.
- iii. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. Presentation from PSNI on Repeat Offenders Unit (ROU)

- i. The Chair welcomed Inspector Jocelyn Wise from the PSNI who gave a presentation on the Repeat Offenders Unit (ROU) to the Members.
- ii. She outlined the purpose of the ROU, which is to provide effective interventions for young people at risk and to managing the most prolific and high risk offenders throughout Northern Ireland. The PSNI, working in partnership with the Probation Board of Northern Ireland (PBNI), Youth Justice Agency (YJA), Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) piloted the programme in Ballymena and Coleraine in 2011; with the outcome that 68% of offenders reduced their behaviours whilst engaged on the programme. The programme was then rolled out across Northern Ireland, with three units of 20 officers in Belfast, North and South.
- iii. Inspector Wise explained the three strand approach of the ROU.
 1. Prevent and Deter – Youth Diversion Officers aim to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour involving young people through early identification and effective intervention strategies.
 2. Catch and Control – Proactive approach by Police and Partners against those individuals who persist in their offending behaviour. There are 12 officers who liaise with 7 offenders each the small numbers per officer make the programme a success.
 3. Rehabilitate and Resettle – Joint approach by all agencies to provide a gateway out of crime for priority offenders. When someone comes out of prison they go one way or another either a new life or back to criminality, depending on how they have been engaging in prison can determine what route they take on release.
- iv. Inspector Wise informed the Members of the current number of people being managed across Belfast; she explained how they are identified and scored on a matrix to establish who should be on the programme. This is reviewed every 6 months as the criminality is reduced and people move off the programme. She explained it is robust but fair management and the flow of information between the partners is extremely important, she further clarified that the ROU do not manage sex offenders or anyone involved in organised crime.
- v. Inspector Wise provided statistics from the ROU involving the same people over 2 months showing a decline in criminality of those involved with the programme;
 - a. September 93 arrests 133 charges (30 burglary)
 - b. October 52 arrest 104 charges
- vi. An economic evaluation of ROU has shown that for every £1 spent there is a saving of £1.58 to society, net £3million per year. Overall a 29% reduction in recorded crime.
- vii. Inspector Wise asked the Members if they had any questions; a Member stated that prolific offenders are a major problem in the community, who appear to get arrested and released continually without any visible action taking place. How do we reassure the community that action has taken place?
- viii. Inspector Wise stated that bail is opposed on every occasion, however these are young people and there needs to be a balance.
- ix. A Member stated that the community is a partner that appears to be left out, in reply Inspector Wise advised that the community liaise with the Neighbourhood Police Teams (NPT) as decisions at times are based on information provided by the community.

- x. A Member stated that the pilot event in the Colin area had been very successful, Chief Inspector Alan Swann advised that the PSNI can visit young people and their parents outside of the ROU process. Inspector Wise added that ASBOs can also be used as a deterrent.
- xi. A Member asked if the staff vacancies in the ROU are being filled, Inspector Wise advised that they are.
- xii. A Member asked has there been an indication as to why people offend; Inspector Wise advised that there is a running theme of drugs throughout ROU process. ROU focus on the offender rather than the offences and offenders come from all walks of life.
- xiii. A Member asked how often do the PSNI appeal bail and could these figures be made public. Inspector Wise advised that to help get the message out the ROU will come out and speak to community groups if asked, however figures are not available at this time.
- xiv. A few of the Members expressed concern about known ring leaders; Inspector Wise advised that the ROU manage some of these ring leaders and are aware that when offenders are in custody the areas are calm but when released there can be a spike of crime and ASB in the area. A Member stated that the challenge for all the partners was how to deter these young people from reoffending, by channelling them away from offending and trying to break the cycle. Inspector Wise said this is where the continuity of having one Officer looking after the young person pays off.

5. Chairs Update from PCSP

- i. The Chair advised the Members that during the Policing Committee meeting it had been agreed that in future, to avoid the problem of the Policing Committee Meeting running into the time allocated to the Private Meeting, the Policing Committee Meeting would follow the Private Meeting to alleviate this issue. Members agreed to this change of process.
- ii. The Chair of the PCSP introduced a paper on the Youth Volunteer Academy to the Members to raise awareness of the proposed programme by the PSNI and the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS).

6. February Public Meeting

- i. The Safer City Co-ordinator advised the Members that West Belfast DPCSP is required to hold a public meeting of the policing committee; he asked the Members for suggestions of possible venues, he further asked the Members to note that the venues have to be pre-checked and risk assessments completed. He also advised the Members that a change of date was required for the next Private Meeting to facilitate an Elected Members other commitments.
- ii. After discussion it was agreed that the Public meeting should be thematic around ASB and Transient Youth. It was also agreed that if possible to tie in with other events in the community the Safer City Co-ordinator will investigate possible venues.

7. DPCSP Action Plan Update 2015/2016

- i. The Safer City Co-ordinator gave the Members an update on the Action Plan 2015/2016. He confirmed that an £86,500 budget had been committed from Joint Committee and Belfast City Council, with an additional £25,000 drawn down from additional Joint Committee allocations. He outlined the recent new West Belfast Projects including the Christmas Interventions; Colin Glen Youth Workers at Christmas and Saints Youth Diversionary Intervention. He asked the Members to approve delegated authority to the

Safer City Co-ordinator to approve any additional spends, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.

- ii. A Member commended West Belfast DPCSP on their excellent well developed and delivered projects; recognising the financial and resource implications of the additional 20,000 people from Lisburn Council, he hoped that conversations with the Joint Committee would proceed to increase the budget as it would be well used.
- iii. The Members agreed to approve delegated authority to the Safer City Co-ordinator to approve any additional spends, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.

8. PCSP Update (Planning Process)

- i. The Safer City Co-ordinator outlined the PCSP update on the planning process for 2016/2017. A planning event was held on 9th November to begin the process and identify the priorities for each Partnership.
- ii. The Safer City Co-ordinator advised the Members that the West DPCSP planning sub group met on the 3rd December and agreed a draft Action Plan. He asked the Members to approve the draft Action Plan 2016/2017, as recommended by the Sub-Group.
- iii. The Safer City Co-ordinator replied in response to queries from Members in regard to the draft Plan. The Safer City Coordinator explained that he had developed an West Belfast Community Safety Strategy in partnership with key strategic organisations and the Action Plan would allow the Strategy to be delivered through the support and resourcing of potentially two match funded community safety initiatives for West Belfast.

9. West Belfast Performance against Local Policing Plan

- i. Inspector Swann provided Members with an update on the West Belfast Performance against the Local Policing Plan up to January 2016.
- ii. He advised Members that there had been a rise in ASB however this shows confidence in the community to report. Court West was quiet over the Christmas period with a slight spike in car crime possibly due to repeat offenders being released and on the street. In Black Mountain the Neighbourhood Police Team (NPT) had established good links and communication within the Community. In the Colin area tensions had been raised following the murder of Christopher Meli. He further stated that through a multi-agency approach and with extra resources in place, including midnight soccer, the Christmas/New Year period had been quiet.
- iii. Inspector Swann also advised the Members that Chief Inspector McNally had been promoted and would be leaving West Belfast probably by mid March. The new Chief Inspector was to be confirmed. He further advised that there would be changes due to promotions from Chief Inspector up to Superintendent in the Belfast Area.
- iv. The Chair thanked Inspector Swann for his report. A number of the Members stated they were concerned about Chief Inspector McNally leaving as it had taken time to build confidence between the community and the PSNI and continuity is important. Inspector Swann advised there would be minimal disruption on the street as the Officers in the Neighbourhood Police Teams (NPT) across West Belfast would remain in post.
- v. A Member asked Inspector Swann if he was aware of the proposed Twinbrook rally "reclaim the streets" to address ASB in the area following the murder of Christopher Meli. The Member stated that the Community was concerned about the rally and he asked if there would be extra PSNI resources in the area. Another Member stated that the Colin

Neighbourhood Partnership had offered support to the Meli family in addressing their concerns in the area.

- vi. Inspector Swann informed the Members that the PSNI and the Neighbourhood Police Team (NPT) were aware of the rally and would be in the area to monitor the situation if the rally proceeded.
- vii. One of the Members asked how the Partnership could lobby for more PSNI resources in the area? Inspector Swann stated that this could be a role for the PCSP or Politicians. The Chair asked would it be possible to take this to the Policing Board, the Safer City Co-ordinator said suggestions can be taken from West Belfast DPCSP to the PCSP and then taken directly to the Policing Board.
- viii. A Member stated that the Partnership would need to identify hot spot areas through working in partnership with local organisations to argue for more resources.
- ix. The Safer City Co-ordinator advised that updates and feedback from the Statutory Designated Members would become an agenda item moving forward. A member asked if the YJA were aware of young people being threatened in the Divis area, Patricia Muldoon (YJA) said yes they were aware.
- x. Patricia Muldoon from the Youth Justice Agency (YJA) gave an update on their work. At present they are concentrating on Early Intervention initiatives across the city. Spanner in the Works are giving 8 performances of "Control-alt-delete" in St Peters, Divis and Holy Trinity in March. There had been a script change to encourage young people to think about their negative behaviours and the impact that alcohol and drugs have in particular. YJA staff will be present at each presentation.

10. Emerging Issues

Graffiti Project

- i. The Safer City Co-ordinator advised the Members that £30,000 had been allocated to the 12 week city wide Graffiti Project with BCC Cleansing Department which commenced on the 12 January 2016 in West Belfast. In the first week Beechmount and Divis were targeted and the service was very well received. The aim of the project is to support communities in graffiti removal. Graffiti buster packs are available if the Members know of any community groups who may benefit. Details should be forward details to the Safer City Co-ordinator. Additional work will be carried out in the Whiterock and Ballymurphy areas.
- ii. In reply to a Members question about a link to the "Graffiti Bus" the Safer City Co-ordinator advised that there was no link as yet but it is a possible outcome. A Member stated that this had been discussed at PCSP.
- iii. The Members discussed how the areas for Graffiti removal were identified; the Safer City Co-ordinator advised that BCC Cleansing Department, the PSNI and Community Groups were the current reporting systems used. It was felt that the Statutory Designated Organisations should also feed in. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) representative agreed that it was important for partnership working, the NIHE had a pot of money and she would ask the Good Relations Department to contact the Safer City Co-ordinator.
- iv. A Member stated community engagement should also be considered with potential projects around mural re-imaging, he asked if Belfast City Council would remove political or contentious murals as contractors generally don't remove. The Safer City Co-ordinator

replied that the Council would remove these murals in consultation with community representatives.

- v. Independent Member Briege Brownlee declared an interest in the following discussion. A Member advised that there is tension in the St James's area. Rodney Drive residents were keen to do a community clean up in the area including removal of graffiti. The Safer City Co-ordinator advised the Community representative to contact the West Belfast DPCSP ASB Officer who would forward any work required.

Bonfire Sub-Group

- i. The Safer City Co-ordinator advised the Members that the Bonfire Sub-Group was proposing to deliver a community questionnaire to the Divis and Beechmount areas. The questionnaire would be similar to ones carried out in North Belfast in 2013 and which is currently being carried out in the Bogside in Derry. The Safer City Coordinator had approached the NIHE to carry out surveys as they had lead on the other surveys.

Small Grants 2016/2017

- i. The Safer City Co-ordinator asked Members to volunteer for the Small Grants Moderation Panel for West DPCSP. The panel will consist of 5 Members from Political and Independent Members only. As 5 volunteers were not immediately available the Safer City Co-ordinator would email the Members to ascertain further volunteers.
- ii. The Small Grants applications will be scored and moderated by Officers on the 25th and 26th February 2016, the Members panel will then meet to validate applications.

Other Issues

- i. A Member asked if the Partnership should have a discussion on the best way to discourage young people from getting involved with prescribed organisations. The Members agreed to hold further discussions on this issue.

11. Dates of Next Meetings

- i. The Safer City Co-ordinator advised Members that the date of the next meeting was to be confirmed.

12. Close

- i. The Chair thanked Members of the Partnership for attending and closed the meeting.