

Minutes of South Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Policing Committee

Monday 23rd May 2016, 5.00pm

Conor Room, City Hall, Belfast

Political Members

Councillor Jeffrey Dudgeon
Councillor Deirdre Hargey
Councillor Geraldine McAteer

Independent Members

Aleksandra Lojek-Magdziarz (VC)
Michael Boyle
Aidan Hughes
Richard Kennedy
Paul McDonnell

Statutory Designated Bodies

Dermot Magorrian, YJA
Yvonne McKnight, H&SCT

Chief Inspector Robert Murdie

Belfast City Council Staff Present

Suzanne Gowling Safer City Coordinator
Alyson Crompton Support Officer

Apologies

Councillor Declan Boyle (Chair)

1. Welcome & Routine Matters

- i. The Vice Chair, welcomed all Members to the Policing Committee Meeting of the South Belfast DPCSP.

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 declared.

3. Minutes and Matters Arising

- i. A Member requested for the Minutes of the previous meeting to be amended (Section 5, Point ii.) to reflect the usage of a website and not an app.
- ii. The Minutes of the Policing Committee Meeting held on 25th January 2016, copies of which had been previously circulated, were taken as read and agreed as correct, with the amendment above.
- iii. The Safer City Coordinator provided Members with an update regarding drugs paraphernalia and sharps. She advised Members that since 1st September 2015 until 20th May 2016 there had been a total of 131 incidents involving the discovery of drugs paraphernalia and sharps throughout Belfast:
 - 71 incidents (56 of these incidents occurred in South Belfast) involved the discovery of discarded needles (used/unused); and,
 - 60 incidents (56 of these incidents occurred in South Belfast) involved the discovery of drug paraphernalia.

- iv. A Member asked if an update had been available regarding the operation undertaken by the PSNI regarding heroin finds. Chief Inspector Murdie commented that no outcomes had been available at this stage as the operation is ongoing.
- v. A Member asked why more incidents regarding drugs had been occurring in South Belfast. Chief Inspector Murdie commented that the reason for the peak in drug abuse in South Belfast had been due to the existence of a transient population in South Belfast and a higher number of public places/toilets.
- vi. A Member asked in relation to the number of charges made recently (6 charges made out of 37 convictions) did the PSNI not regard this as a relatively low success rate. Chief Inspector Murdie advised Members that there are number of contributing factors to charging a person of a crime, but every effort is made to do so when appropriate.
- vii. A Member asked if the PSNI could identify any hot spot areas of concern regarding drug abuse within South Belfast. Chief Inspector Murdie commented that public place/toilets, Dublin Road and Botanic Gardens had been areas where drug abuse had been identified as concerns.

4. Update on PSNI Hate Crime Policy and Procedures

- i. Chief Inspector Murdie updated Members on the new PSNI Service Procedure in relation to police response to hate crime. Members received a copy of the PSNI Service Procedure.
- ii. Chief Inspector Murdie provided Members with an overview of why the change had been required.
- iii. A Member asked if the vulnerable index detailed within the report would be separated learning needs and mental illness into separate categories. Chief Inspector Murdie commented that there had been no request for the categories to be separated but he would take the recommendation on board.

5. Progress against the South Belfast District Policing Plan

- i. Chief Inspector Murdie updated the Members on the performance against the South Belfast District Policing Plan from 1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016. Members noted that:
 - Anti social behaviour had increased by 2.5%;
 - Total number of drug seizures had increased by 7.8%;
 - Number of crimes where alcohol had been a factor had decreased by 7.5%;
 - Reporting from victims of domestic abuse had increased by 3.8%;
 - A 26.8% increase in relation to domestic burglaries against older people; and,
 - An increase of 3.1% in relation to the reporting of hate crime.
- ii. A Member asked if the PSNI had been doing any follow up with older people who had been victims of hate crime. Chief Inspector Murdie advised

Members that any older people who had been subject to burglary, will be visited by the PSNI Crime Prevention Officer who will provide advice on crime prevention.

- iii. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that Belfast PCSP had produced a DVD to highlight the impact of burglaries on families. She further advised Members that in partnership with the PSNI, Safer Neighbourhood Officers conduct door-to-door calls to highlight the dangers of unlocked doors and windows.
- iv. Following a discussion, Members agreed that older people might not be able to avail of information via social media. Members suggested reviewing alternative ways of how to communicate with older people. Members agreed to discuss this further at the next South Belfast DPCSP Meeting.
- v. A Member highlighted his concern that the Lisburn Road area may be neglected when it comes to addressing burglaries. Chief Inspector Murdie provided reassurance that proactive and reassurance police patrols will be deployed in any areas of South Belfast experiencing and increasing trend in burglaries.

6. Emerging Issues

- i. Chief Inspector Murdie advised Members of the new legislation regarding Psychoactive Substances to be in place from 26th May. He provided Members with copies of the Home Office's advisory leaflet regarding this legislation.

7. Question and Discussion

- i. No further questions/discussion took place.

8. Close

- i. The Vice Chair thanked the Members for attending
- ii. Members noted that the next South Belfast DPCSP Policing Committee Meeting would be held on Monday 22nd August, 5.00pm in the Conor Room, Belfast City Hall.