

# Minutes of the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership

## Private Meeting

Conor Room, City Hall  
Monday 14th November, 2016

### Political Members

Councillor John Hussey (Chair)  
Councillor Janice Austin  
Councillor Matt Garrett  
Councillor Brian Heading  
Councillor JJ Magee  
Alderman Jim Rodgers  
Alderman Tommy Sandford

### Independent Members

Susan Russam (Vice-Chair)  
Debbie Hammill  
Mary Lambe  
John Loughran  
Carmel McKinney  
Michael O'Hara

### Designated Organisations

Harry Bradley, YJA  
Chris Fee, NIFRS  
Deputy Chief Constable Drew Harris, PSNI  
Superintendent Melanie Jones, PSNI

Eithne McIlroy, PBNI  
Stephen Moore, EA  
Chief Superintendent Chris Noble, PSNI

### Staff Present

Alison Allen, Safer City Manager  
Denise Smith, Safer City Coordinator  
Katharine McCrum, Partnership Support Officer

### Apologies

Councillor Nuala McAllister  
John MacVicar  
Anne-Louise Toal  
Helen Russell, NIHE  
Cecil Worthington, H&SCT

#### 1. Welcome and Apologies

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

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

- i. The Chair advised Members that they were required to declare any material interests that they may have in relation to any items on the agenda.

#### 3. Minutes

- i. The minutes of the Belfast PCSP Meeting held on 10th October, copies of which had previously been circulated, were taken as read and agreed as correct.

#### 4. Shared City Partnership – Bonfire Management Programme

(Margaret Higgins, Senior Good Relations Officer, attended in relation to this item)

- i. Margaret Higgins, Senior Good Relations Officer provided Members with information on the Council's Bonfire Programme for 2016, including the funding, number of bonfire events and beacons, and areas for future development.

- ii. The Safer City Manager sought Members continued financial support for the programme with the caveat that further details would be provided on how funding was to be utilised.
- iii. A Member questioned what innovative ideas were being considered in relation to bonfire materials such as circular economy recycling or re-using and the development of entrepreneurial skills.
- iv. The Senior Good Relations Officer advised that options would need to be agreed politically however the Good Relations Unit would seek to look at such outcomes and the suggestions made would be noted.
- v. A Member questioned what costs were not included in the breakdown provided, such as cleansing and removal costs, PSNI and NIFRS call out costs, and suggested that these would provide Members with the bigger picture in terms of costs to rate payers.
- vi. The Senior Good Relations Officer advised that the costs did not include other agency costs, and that these were difficult to calculate. The expenditure did include cleansing costs, but only for bonfires on the Good Relations Bonfire Programme.
- vii. A Member advised that as Chair of the NIFRS Board, she was confident that costs relating to NIFRS callouts to bonfire sites could be provided.
- viii. In response a query regarding the Hopewell Bonfire Site, Area Group Commander Chris Fee, NIFRS, advised that a risk assessment of each bonfire site was carried out by the Fire Service in advance to ascertain if radiant heat was likely to cause concern, to provide advice to bonfire builders, and to have advance information should a problem arise. In the case of the Hopewell bonfire, radiant heat was not deemed to be a concern however at a late stage ashes from the bonfire caused the fire. He confirmed that these risk assessments were done as routine, not at the request of residents or other agencies.
- ix. Members noted the good work done by the emergency services in dealing with bonfire sites, often preventing fires and further damage. The work of community activists, clergy and members of the public was also commended.
- x. Members noted the update provided and resolved to approve funding on receipt of further information.

## **5. Chair's Update**

- i. The Chair provided Members with the following update:
  - The PSNI will launch Body Worn Video at an event in Musgrave Street Station on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November at 11.15am.
  - The NIPB PCSP Conference will be held on 8 February 2017 from 9.30am to 3.30am at Titanic Ltd. Council CEOs have been invited along with Heads of Community Planning and Good Relations Officers.
  - 13 Small Grants are now open for applications, including PCSP Small Grants. The submission deadline for receipt of applications is 12 noon on Friday, 13 January 2017. Details of the drop-in road shows have been circulated to Members.

## **6. Update from Designated Partners**

### **PSNI**

- i. Chief Superintendent Noble provided Members with an update on pertinent issues including the use and sale of heroin, Operation Torus which focuses on street level drug dealing, the use of a Police Quad Bike in East Belfast, and the Youth Volunteer Academy. He added that further information on the Youth Volunteer Academy would be provided at the next meeting.
- ii. In response to a query regarding the use of the Quad Bike in other areas of the City, particularly in relation to scramblers, Chief Superintendent Noble advised that Chief Inspector Haslett was the lead for this operation and that the resource would be shared across the City.
- iii. A Member noted the good work of Officers in responding to incidents when the NI Ambulance Service (NIAS) was unavailable. It was suggested that a letter be written to the NIAS highlighting the PCSPs concerns about the impact that a lack of resources was having. Members also asked for information on the number of ambulance staff who have left the Service and about the prevalence of inappropriate use of ambulances (for example by those under the influence of alcohol seeking a journey home).
- iv. A Member requested that additional resources were put in place to deal with the crowds attending rugby matches at the Kingspan Stadium given the impact on local residents in the Cregagh Estate. Chief Superintendent Noble advised that he would raise the issue with Chief Inspector Moore however if additional resources were put in place for such events there would be consequences for coverage in other areas.

### **PBNI**

- v. Eithne McIlroy advised Members about the Probation Board's Graffiti Bus which would be staffed by those on community safety orders. She added that the scheme had been run successfully in many other cities including Dublin, and that its operation would be in conjunction with Belfast City Councils existing cleansing services.

## **7. Street Pastors Project Proposal**

- i. Members were reminded that the Street Pastors had provided a presentation to the PCSP in June, and as a result, a meeting had been held with the group in order to develop a proposal for financial assistance.
- ii. The Safer City Coordinator advised that the Street Pastors were keen to recruit more volunteers and to develop a 'School Pastors' project in order to deliver pastoral care focusing on Community Safety related issues.
- iii. Members were asked to provide £8,755 of funding in order to recruit new volunteers, provide training and development opportunities, develop the schools project and to cover the costs of outreach delivery.
- iv. Several Members welcomed the initiative and commented on the good work of the group. Members did however question the ability for the Street Pastors to link with other local voluntary groups outside the City Centre and the equality of access given that volunteers were all from a Christian background which did not represent all of Belfast's population.

A Member also asked for information on other groups doing this type of work and for a business plan that could be monitored over the lifetime of the project.

- v. The Safer City Coordinator advised that the group were eager to deliver cross the City however at present the number of volunteers was restricting this. She added that it was anticipated that the Schools Project would offer increased momentum for the recruitment of these additional volunteers.
- vi. The Safer City Manager confirmed that whilst the volunteers were all from a Christian background, there was no restriction on accessing their services. She added that the current funding proposal was designed to offer short term sustainability in order to give the group time to develop a business plan for the future. Members were further advised that the internal process governing all projects would ensure that outcomes were monitored and effectiveness demonstrated. In order to satisfy Members comments, the Safer City Manager suggested that the Letter of Offer to the Street Pastors would be amended to include the necessity to begin to work with another local group.
- vii. In response to a query regarding the schools that had been identified as part of the School Pastors Project, the Safer City Coordinator advised that she would obtain further details on this.
- viii. The Safer City Manager confirmed that the training provided was accredited by the Trust which acts as a governing body for all Street Pastor projects.
- ix. Members resolved to provide the £8,755 of funding requested with the caveat that there must be a link made with another group, and that regular reports are provided on the progress of the project.

## **8. Addiction Services/BDACT Connections**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that Alcohol Awareness Week would be held between 14th-20th November and that the PCSP and DPCSPs were being asked to provide £500 of funding in order to support a Campaign during this time focusing on alcohol and personal safety in the run up to Christmas.
- ii. Members reviewed the report and agreed to provide the funding as requested.

## **9. Domestic Violence Project Proposal**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised that as part of the PCSPs work to create a Safer City and provide Safe Place Training, the promotion of support services for victims had been explored. As a result, it was proposed that the PCSP, South and East DPCSPs fund advertising on the till receipts of 4 Belfast Argos stores throughout January and February at a cost of £1,575, of which the PCSP was being asked to fund £575.
- ii. Members reviewed the report and agreed to provide the funding as requested.

## **10. Transient Youth Project**

- i. The Safer City Manager provided Members with an update on the Partnership's Transient Youth Strategy and the sub-group recommendation that detailed consultation and engagement needs to take place with those involved. She advised that comments

received at the previous meeting had been taken on-board and conversations with the Education Authority and others had confirmed that no specific research had been done with this group.

- ii. Members were further advised that 2 organisations had been identified as possible delivery agents however this would be subject to further health and safety considerations.
- iii. A Member noted that safeguarding was critical, as was the monitoring of the delivery organisation. It was suggested that Members become involved in the terms of reference for the project so as to draw on experience with vulnerable young people. Comments were also made about how outcomes would be measured and the need for a high level management group to oversee the project.
- iv. A Member requested that the Partnership was informed of the organisation who would be carrying out the work before the contract was awarded.
- v. The Safer City Manager agreed that there were a number of ethical and health and safety considerations in relation to this work and agreed to establish an advisory board of Members and Statutory Organisations who could advise on these matters.
- vi. A Member asked if names and contact details of suitable local delivery agents would be provided to staff, to which the Safer City Manager agreed but noted that due to the size of the issue, she suspected that a large organisation was needed in order to have the number of youth workers needed. She added that some groups had ruled themselves out due to the drug and alcohol issues often prevalent with this group.
- vii. Stephen Moore, Education Authority, advised that EA Youth Workers did engage with those under the influence of drugs and alcohol however following this assessment being made, the focus changed from a youth work approach to one of health and safety, safeguarding and possible involvement from the PSNI and/or Ambulance Service.
- viii. Chief Superintendent Noble underlined the PSNI's support for the project given that police were currently dealing with the issues which should be classed as vulnerabilities rather than criminal behaviour.
- ix. A Member suggested that restorative practitioners could be used alongside youth workers which would widen the number of suitable organisations. Another Member underlined the importance of an effective research methodology.
- x. Members resolved to approve the project at a cost of £20,000 with the provision that a multi-disciplinary group was brought together to support the delivery of the project.

## **11. Operation Challenger Project Proposal**

- i. The Safer City Manager advised Members that as part of the Anti-Social Behaviour project work stream 'Operational management and tasking', a good practice visit to Manchester was proposed in order to learn more about 'Challenger Hub', a multidisciplinary approach to issues associated with criminality.
- ii. Members were advised that the proposed approach covered 4 main elements; Prevention, Protection, Pursuance and Preparation, and that a site visit for 15 people was expected to cost £2,000, 50% of which would be funded by the PSNI.

- iii. Superintendent Jones outlined the background of the work and the ways in which it had built cohesion and resilience within communities. Chief Superintendent Noble added that if replicated here, the model would be adapted to the needs of Belfast communities.
- iv. Members welcomed the suggestion but noted that work would need to take place before, during and after the visit in order to make the most of the opportunity. It was also noted that evidence relating to the success of the model would need to be tested and links made with economic organisations to provide opportunities for communities involved in pilot schemes.
- v. In response to a query regarding how the work would run alongside Reducing Offending Partnerships, Superintendent Jones advised that there would be an overlap however 'Challenger Hub' was a broader, more holistic approach which aimed to empower local community groups.
- vi. It was agreed that the PCSP would fund the visit before Christmas and that an email would be circulated to measure interest in attending and determine what outcomes were required.

## **12. (D)PCSP Action Plan Progress Reports and Financial Spend Update**

- i. The Safer City Manager advised Members that progress reports relating to the delivery of the PCSP and four DPCSP Action Plans had been provided. She advised that a traffic light system had been used to clearly identify progress against each project with green meaning completed, amber meaning a quotation or letter of offer had been issued, and red meaning no action, or work was not yet at a developed stage. She added that a fourth colour, purple, had been added to demonstrate projects that had been approved for progression however were not yet underway.
- ii. Members noted the contents of the reports and agreed to defer the decision on reallocation of funds until the December meeting of the Partnership.

## **13. Education Authority – Local Advisory Groups**

- i. Members noted the correspondence provided regarding the establishment of Local Advisory Groups (LAGs) as part of the strengthening of strategic planning frameworks within the youth service.
- ii. It was agreed that staff from the (D)PCSPs would be nominated to sit on each of the area Groups.

## **14. Proposed Future PCSP Meeting Dates**

- i. Members noted and approved the list of future PCSP Meetings and Events.

## **15. Date of Next Meeting**

- i. The Chair reminded Members that the next meeting of the PCSP would be held on Monday, 12th December in the Lavery Room, City Hall.

**16. Any Other Business**

- i. The Safer City Manager advised Members that as part of a Small Grants awarded to ASCERT, a harm reduction leaflet relating to drug use had been produced.
- ii. This leaflet, while differing from the usual Community Safety message relating to the prevention and enforcement of drug related activity, had been approved as an endorsed Public Health Agency message.
- iii. Members noted the information provided.