

**Minutes of South Belfast District Policing and Community Safety
Partnership**

Policing Committee

Tuesday 7th March 2017, 5:30pm

1st Floor Conference Room, Cecil Ward Building, Belfast

Political Members

Councillor Geraldine McAteer (Chair)
Councillor Deirdre Hargey
Councillor Jeffrey Dudgeon
Councillor Lee Reynolds
Councillor Declan Boyle

Independent Members

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

Statutory Designated Bodies

Christine Hunter, PBNI
Dermot Magorrian, YJA

Superintendent Robert Murdie
Yvonne McKnight, HSCT

Belfast City Council Staff Present

Suzanne Gowling Safer City Coordinator
Rachel Fulton Partnership Support Officer

Apologies

Aidan Hughes
Anita Duff, EA
SC Michael Roberts, NIFRS
Gary Ballantyne, NIHE

1. Welcome and Routine Matters

- i. The Chair welcomed all Members to the Policing Committee Meeting of the South Belfast DPCSP and noted the apologies provided.
- ii. Brendan Thompson was introduced to members as the community safety placement student.

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/Matters Arising

- i. The minutes of the Policing Committee held on 25 January 2017, copies of which had been previously circulated, were taken as read and agreed as correct.

4. Progress against the South Belfast District Policing Plan

- i. Chief Inspector Robert Murdie updated the Members on the performance against the South Belfast District Policing Plan from 28/02/2017.

- ii. Members noted that:
- Overall crime had decreased by 7.1%;
 - Outcome rate for burglary had decreased by 29.4%
 - Number of offences against older people had decreased by 13.4%;
 - Number of crimes with a racist motivation had decreased by 42.6%
 - An increase of 3.4% in relation to the number of anti-social behaviour incidents;
 - A decrease of 11.2% in relation to the number of allegations of failure in duty; and,
 - A decrease of 3.2% in the number of drug seizures.
- iii. Chief Inspector Murdie advised Members that the decrease in levels of crimes linked to racist motivation was concerning as it is being attributed to underreporting issues due to Brexit and fears around its occurrence for individuals. He commented further that it is a widespread trend across Northern Ireland.
- iv. The Vice-Chair commented that underreporting is a serious concern in her community as people are fearful of the implications from Brexit. She stated that there are budget cuts for translators and people are left feeling isolated and scared to communicate crimes in their area.
- v. She further commented that information is not available for public in relation to rights, post Brexit, which is creating fear and thus underreporting of crime is occurring.
- vi. Councillor Hargey suggested that this issue is brought to the South Belfast DPCSP planning session for further discussion. She stated that South Belfast has a very diverse community and the action plan going forward needs to deal with community concerns and myths around issues such as Brexit.
- vii. Members agreed to discuss further at the planning session.
- viii. Chief Inspector Murdie commented on ASB figures, highlighting that the increase of 3.4% is due to the on-going issue of transient youth, not just in South Belfast but City-wide.
- ix. Councillor Boyle raised his concerns around transient youth issue, stating that there needs to be preventative measures put in place.
- x. The Chair agreed with Councillor Boyle, highlighting that transient youth is a serious city-wide issue and the central PCSP has begun research into methods on how to combat the issue, with a proposal of a city centre location for youths being discussed.
- xi. Chief Inspector Murdie advised Members that there was a Belfast wide decrease in drug seizures compared to numbers in 2015/16. He stated that with the beginning of Operation Torus, these figures should rise.

5. Question and Discussion

- i. A discussion took place around confidence in the criminal justice system.
- ii. The SCC suggested that going forward the partnership could receive more information on the remit of the criminal justice system to aid confidence in policing. She stated that this discussion would be brought into the upcoming planning session.
- iii. In relation to crime figures a member highlighted how the outcome rate for burglary was down, even though the percentage change was increased.
- iv. Chief Inspector advised that the reason for this was that the small pool of continuous offenders had been taken off the streets, reducing the pool for burglaries to happen. He commended the work of the PSNI's Reducing Offenders Unit for their work in relation to this.

6. Date of Next meeting

- v. Members noted that the next South Belfast DPCSP Policing Committee Public Meeting would be held in March to focus on addressing policing and community safety issues identified by young people; it will likely take place in the RADAR Centre.

7. Close

- vi. The Chair thanked the Members for attending

**South Belfast DPCSP Meeting- Summary of Actions
Policing Committee Meeting
Tuesday 7th March 2017**

Action Agreed	By When	By Whom
SCC to provide opportunity/information for knowledge building of the criminal justice system	Next DPCSP planning meeting	SCC