

Minutes of the East Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Public Consultation

Park Avenue Hotel, Belfast

Tuesday 2nd October 2018

Political Members	Independent Members
Alderman Tommy Sandford (Chair) Councillor Sonia Copeland Councillor Aileen Graham Councillor Mairead O'Donnell Councillor John Hussey (PCSP)	
Designated Organisations	
Gary Ballantyne, NIHE Superintendent Melanie Jones, PSNI Gabi Mornhinweg, H&SCT	Chief Inspector David Moore, PSNI Alan Wilson, EA
Staff Present	Apologies
Glenn Thomas, Safer City Coordinator Alison Crompton, Project Officer Katharine McCrum, Partnership Support Officer	Councillor Carole Howard Michelle Bryans Jonathan Currie David Geddis Lisa McMaster Dermot Magorrian, YJA Nick Thompson, NIFRS

1. Welcome

- i. Wendy Osbourne, NIPB, introduced Members to the Local Policing Review 2018 which was being delivered by the PSNI and NIPB. She explained that the purpose of the consultation was to seek the views of the public to help shape the future of policing, explore how police can best meet public need and deliver the most effective local policing.
- ii. Temporary Deputy Chief Constable Steven Martin outlined the changing context of policing against a backdrop of austerity, with a larger portion of police time being spent dealing with vulnerable people. He advised that of the PSNI's 6,600 Officers, half were front line staff delivering visible, local policing. He noted that this number was decreasing alongside a decreasing budget therefore consideration needed to be given to how the PSNI could offer services in the future.
- iii. Further information was provided to Members via a video from the Chief Constable, George Hamilton, and NI Policing Board Chair, Anne Connolly.
- iv. Superintendent Alywin Barton introduced an animation explaining the changing nature of policing and provided further statistics demonstrating the increased demand on services relating to concerns for vulnerable people. He also drew attention to a demand wheel which detailed the volume and scope of work undertaken by the PSNI during 2017/2018.
- v. Chief Inspector David Moore provided an outline of policing from an East Belfast perspective. He explained that between 90-130 calls for service are received each day, up to 1000 per week, with approximately 1/3 classified as priority or emergency calls and

1/3 violent crimes. He added that there was a noticeable increase in scams and cyber-crime. Chief Inspector Moore advised that overall crime was currently down by 4% when compared with the previous year however demand remained high or the 70 Local Policing Officers and 12 Neighbourhood Officers. The group were advised that currently 1 of the 5 crews in East Belfast was at a hospital with a vulnerable person, and that this was a regular occurrence.

2. Prioritisation Simulator

- i. Members of the public and DPCSP Members were provided with tablet computers in order to test out the Prioritisation Simulator following an explanation from Superintendent Alywin Barton.
- ii. The tool allows users to act as the District Commander for their local area, assigning resources by allocating 100 points across 6 overarching areas of local policing through 24 sub-sections.

3. Feedback

- i. A member of the public advised that he had decided not to take part in the exercise as he felt that it was endorsing government funding cuts at a time when the PSNI could use additional funds.
- ii. Wendy Osbourne, NIPB, suggested that the aim of the simulator was to prioritise issues rather than focus on cuts but acknowledged that all services would welcome additional funding.
- iii. A speaker welcomed the opportunity to see the range of work carried out by the PSNI. Another suggested that the option to pay more tax could have been included in the options as with lower budgets, crime will increase, as will insurance premiums.
- iv. Ms. Osbourne asked the group to consider the 3 qualitative questions within the consultation;
 - Have you ever used the PSNI?
 - What aspects of Policing in your local area are important to you?
 - How do you think the PSNI should improve Policing in your area?
- v. A member of the public suggested that feedback should be given to those who report crime in order to keep the community involved, particularly as personal details are requested when reports are provided.
- vi. Another member of the public provided details regarding an assault and theft which took place in the Titanic quarter and the poor investigation and response his family had received from both the PSNI and Harbour Police. Superintendent Melanie Jones undertook to investigate the issues raised and provide feedback regarding the investigation.
- vii. A DPCSP Member suggested that confidence in policing had deteriorated since cuts had been introduced and local patrolling had decreased. Ms. Osbourne advised that this issue had been raised at many of the consultations. A member of the public agreed that the days of knowing your local Officers by name had gone.

- viii. The Safer City Coordinator advised that partnership working with communities and statutory partners had a huge role to play in building confidence and reporting issues.
- ix. A DPCSP Member voiced his support and respect for the PSNI as someone living and working in the City, particularly given the ongoing threats still faced by Officers.

4. **Close**

- i. Wendy Osbourne thanked Members for attending the consultation event and encouraged continued feedback engagement with the process. She reminded people that their views would influence the decisions made in the future and that an independent evaluation of the findings would be carried out once the consultation closed.
- ii. Ms. Osbourne also advised that the Policing Board was advertising for new Independent Members as the current term would come to an end in 2019. She encouraged existing Members to reapply if they were still interested in working with the PCSPs.
- iii. T/Deputy Chief Constable Steven Martin thanked everyone for their input. He noted that the PSNI's role would continue to be to protect the most vulnerable when they needed it the most. He also recognised the quality of Officers within the PSNI and reminded the group that it was not their fault that budgets were being stretched.
- iv. He recapped on the issues that had been raised, including the example of poor victim feedback regarding the Titanic assault, and asked Superintendent Jones to update him on the outcome of her investigation. He also underlined the PSNI's focus on policing with communities to address local issues with local solutions.
- v. The group were also advised that the PSNI would begin recruiting for new Officers in October.