

West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Private Meeting

Lavery Room, City Hall
Thursday, 27th August 2019

Political Members	Independent Members
Councillor Michelle Kelly (Chair)	None in attendance
Councillor Claire Canavan	
Councillor Brian Heading	
Alderman Frank McCoubrey	
Councillor Micheal Donnelly	
Statutory Designated Organisations	
Chief Inspector Gary Reid, PSNI	Harry Bradley, YJA
Inspector Uel Boyd, PSNI	Pauline Smart, EA
Local Designated Organisations	
Staff Present	Apologies
Suzanne Gowling, Safer City Coordinator	Cllr Matt Collins
Alyson Crompton, Safer City Project Officer	Aisling Heath, Falls Council
Pol Hamilton, Safer City Coordinator	Paula Kerr, CRJI
Denise Smith, Safer City Assistant Manager	Nicola Bradshaw, PBNI

1. Welcome and Routine Matters

- i. The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and noted the apologies provided.
- ii. A Vice Chair was not elected as there were no Independent Members present.

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 recorded.

3. Presentation on tackling antisocial behaviour in West Belfast

- i. Pol Hamilton, Safer City Coordinator gave a presentation about Belfast City Council's approach to tackling antisocial behaviour in West Belfast.
- ii. He outlined the model of best practice in and around Falls Park and City Cemetery for tackling antisocial behaviour. The range of behaviours included vandalism, violence and risk taking behaviours.
- iii. Groups involved with tackling antisocial include Belfast City Council's Safer Neighbourhood Officers, Park Wardens and Alcohol Enforcement Officers. The PSNI, youth outreach workers, Street Pastors and elected representatives and some local residents.
- iv. Mr Hamilton advised Members of the problems identified including a lack of coordination of groups, communication issues, varied organisation responses, relationship issues, new transport system, relationships with young people and site issues.

- v. Belfast City Council led the problem solving in partnership, which included coordination of meetings, with an action plan and proactive communications delivered by the Interim Project. Further partners were invited to add their input including youth providers and Translink. Council authorised access to parks after hours and other measures put in place including temporary lighting, alcohol enforcement, diversionary activities, monthly walkabout and schools presentation.
- vi. This response from the partners resulted in improved coordination, communication and improved the relationships with young people and between partner organisations. Action was taken in a number of areas within the Park and Cemetery including tree cutting and improved lighting.
- vii. Mr Hamilton concluded his presentation by opening to the Members for questions.
- viii. A Member commended the Council and its partners on the response to tackling antisocial behaviour over the previous year however he was concerned about the ending of the supplementary EA funding on 31/08/19.
- ix. Pauline Smart, EA advised Members that the supplementary fund came from an underspend and had been extended to Holy Trinity, St Theresa's and St Peters Immaculata for outreach work in Falls Park area over the summer months until 31/08/19. It is likely that new funding will open after Christmas, better coordination is required and the youth workers on the street need to be accountable.
- x. Pauline Smart EA advised that she would continue to monitor the best use of the resources in the area and delivery would be adjusted accordingly.
- xi. Members commented that the partners and outreach working had been invaluable in tackling antisocial behaviour however; we cannot take our eye of the issue. Chief Inspector Gary Reid advised that he had raised the issue of a gap in provision with EA however; EA provided reassurance.
- xii. A Member asked about the review of the ASB Forums and the timeline involved.
- xiii. Mr Hamilton advised that the ASB Forum review would include information sharing amongst partners and would take into consideration the Forum in light of other developments like the Reducing Offending Unit and the successful prevent and deter approach.

4. Minutes

- i. The Minutes of the West Belfast DPCSP Private Meeting held on 19th March, copies of which had previously been circulated, were taken as read with one amendment to page 6 Item 9 no v. take out "Tennant Street Police Station" and replace with "Woodbourne Police Station" .
- ii. With this amendment in place, Members agreed the minutes as correct.

5. Matters Arising

- i. There were no matters arising.

6. Chairs Update from PCSP

- i. The Chair provided Members with an update from the Belfast PCSP advising Members of the joint briefing on the Public Protection Unit at 7.00pm in the Lavery Room on Monday 09 September 2019.

7. (D)PCSP Audit Verification Report

- i. The Safer City Coordinator asked Members to note an internal audit verification of PCSP expenditure letter from the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) to all PCSPs relating to the 2017 – 2018 financial year.
- ii. The Members noted the report

8. 2019-2020 West Belfast DPCSP Action Plan Implementation Report

- i. The Chair introduced Item No 8, the 2019/2020 Belfast PCSP Action Plan Implementation Report and highlighted that most of the discussion is expected to be about the Professional Witness Project. Therefore, Members agreed to deal with all the other projects first.
- ii. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members of the progress of a number of Progression Projects in the 2019/2020 in the Belfast PCSP Action Plan.
- iii. Members were reminded that they gave approval in June for the West Belfast DPCSPs Community Safety Strategy, Network Support Project for 3 years. Members have been furnished with a project description to provide more detail in line with the other projects.
- iv. She further advised that West Belfast DPCSP approved the projects listed in this report and their budget allocation at the meeting on 19 March 2019. The projects presented below have completed due diligence and complied with the Belfast City Council’s procurement policy and procedures.
- v. The SCC asked that Members agree the budget allocations detailed below for each project.
- vi. Domestic Violence and Abuse Project
South, North, East and West Belfast DPCSP’s Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Awareness Raising and Training Project in Year 1 from November 2019 – March 2020 and in Year 2 from April 2020 – March 2021 as outlined below.

Cost to West Belfast DPCSP

Timescale	Cost
November 2019 – March 2020	£1,875
April 2020 – March 2021	£1,875

- v. Members agreed the budget allocation for West Belfast DPCSP for the Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Awareness Raising and Training Project for 2 years as outlined above.
- vi. Network Support Project
West Belfast DPCSP’s Community Safety Strategy, Network Support Project as outlined below.

Cost to West Belfast DPCSP

Timescale	Cost
October 2019 - March 2020	Up to £12,500
April 2020 – March 2021	Up to £30,000
April 2021 – March 2022	Up to £30,600

April 2022 – October 2022	Up to £18,207
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- vii. Members agreed the budget allocation for West Belfast DPCSP Community Safety Strategy, Network Support Project as outlined above.
- viii. Small Grants
West Belfast DPCSP's Small Grants, Tranche 2 2019/2020 utilising underspend from the Community Safety Strategy as outlined below.

Cost to West Belfast DPCSP

Timescale	Cost
October 2019 - March 2020	£12,446

- ix. Members agreed the budget allocation for West Belfast DPCSP Small Grants, Tranche 2 2019/2020 utilising underspend from the Community Safety Strategy as outlined above.
- x. Professional Witness Project
West Belfast DPCSP's Community Safety Strategy, Professional Witness Project. Members were advised that the recommended budget is based on 2019/2020 commitment to the Strategy. However, there would be provision to increase the 'call off' service should further funding be available to West Belfast DPCSP in future.
- xi. The Safer City Coordinator introduced the Professional Witness Project model developed with significant input from PSNI and NIHE and which has taken into consideration the Section 75 requirements.
- xii. Strand One is a mechanism to access communities who are seeking to address antisocial behaviour but are unsure what to do or what the implications are for them.
- xiii. Strand Two is the Professional Witness service to provide actionable information to relevant agencies. This may be evidence statements or supporting residents to develop community impact statements.
- xiv. A lead post will bring experience and consistency to the project, enhanced with 'call off' services where/when the need is identified by DPCSP Members.
- xv. In order to be successful, the 'call off' teams are likely to employ residents from different local communities; different areas will have different teams operating locally. The 'call off' teams will ensure West wide coverage and may be used at any point throughout the project. They are most likely to be deployed to witness problematic behaviours and provide actionable information, evidence statements and to support the development of community impact statements.
- xvi. She detailed the stages of the project as set up, delivery of service, management of the project and further recommended a significant independent evaluation. The total budget recommended is £153,900 over 36 months.
- xvii. A Member asked about the relationship between the Professional Witness Project and the four Community Safety Partnerships in Greater Falls, Upper Springfield, Upper Falls and Colin.
- xviii. The Safer City Coordinator advised that the Partnership Support Project, agreed in August, would provide support to all the policing and community safety networks across West. However, it is expected that any particular issues raised through the Networks would inform where the Professional Witnesses would be deployed.

- xix. Two Members asked how the proposed model was so different from the two Professional Witnesses suggested at the working group. The Safer City Coordinator reminded Members that one of the issues they wanted to address was that one witness could not be in 2 or 3 places at the same time; and that problematic behaviours take place in evenings at weekends. She advised that flexibility was required with a contractor appointed to deploy the 'call off' teams as required to specific areas.
- xx. A Member asked how the contractor recruits the 'call off' teams. The Safer City Coordinator explained that the contractor would be responsible for recruiting them, establishing the systems and making sure team members were trained. She clarified that this is why there are specific set up costs in the budget. However, she recommended progressing the project as different teams became operational, rather than waiting until everything was perfectly in place.
- xxi. A Member asked who decides when these teams are deployed, are they local people and is there a risk. He highlighted that he did not think local people would apply for these roles as they may be targeted. The Safer City Coordinator advised that risk management will be in place and the deployment will be agreed between the contractor, PSNI, PCSP and NIHE.
- xxii. Chief Inspector Gary Reid explained that a Professional Witness needs to make a signed statement and go to court to allow any prosecutions to proceed. He recognised that reporting directly to the police is difficult for some people however, there is the possibility that people could submit a witness statement anonymously. If the judge is not prepared to maintain the anonymity, the statement could be withdrawn. This is something PSNI have been working on and it would support the Professional Witness project.
- xxiii. A discussion took place between Members around the reporting of actionable information from the professional witness. It was noted that reports from Community Safety Forums are passed to Professional Witness and then to PSNI. However, her understanding is that the information is about known issues and is often a request for service rather providing actionable information.
- xxiv. The Safer City Coordinator confirmed that the rationale for the Professional Witness Project was that the community is looking for action; however, statutory agencies need actionable information to do so. She highlighted that PCSP would support the Professional Witness with training mentoring to provide actionable statements and other support through monthly steering group meetings.
- xxv. Harry Bradley from the YJA stated that they receive information through the ASB Forums enabling them to deflect Young People; however, he is unsure what is admissible in court. The Chief Inspector advised that the Professional Witness statements should ideally result in a judicial outcome.
- xxvi. A Member commented that in 2016, the Attorney General had recommended that evidence from the Professional Witness could go forward. Chief Inspector Reid and Mr Bradley YJA both stated that this would only apply in civil court, however the PPS may give anonymity in certain cases in criminal court.
- xxvii. A Member asked when does the current Professional Witness Post finish. The Safer City Coordinator explained that the current post is the Policing and Community Safety Strategy Interim Project, which was funded by West Belfast DPCSP until 30 June 2019 and is now funded directly by NIHE.
- xxviii. The Safer City Coordinator advised that the Interim Project reports are contained in Item 11. She also commented that the Network Support Project which was previously agreed by the Members is different from the Professional Witness role.

- xxix. A Member asked if the Interim Project Officer was aware of these conversations. The Safer City Coordinator advised no that it would not be appropriate at this stage of development.
- xxx. A Member asked about looking at two posts as discussed previously at the working group. The Chair reminded Members that after the working group meeting subsequent discussion with PSNI and NIHE took place, which were important in framing the current proposal.
- xxxi. The Chair advised that the PCSP meeting in June concluded that there is a need for the evaluation of the previous Professional Witness Project. She highlighted that the Section 75 requirements need to be considered, and the previous 9.00 – 5.00pm post is not working.
- xxxii. When the project was evaluated was discussed, however it appears it was last evaluated in 2015.
- xxxiii. A Member asked about the review which should have been taken forward in April, however acknowledged that this was delayed due to the local government elections in May. Another Member commented that the review seems to have taken place to inform the proposed model.
- xxxiv. A Member asked if the contractor and other funder could attend the meeting to explain their role. The Safer City Coordinator stated that this may be seen to unduly influence the contract that would be offered and may lead to calls of unfair advantage.
- xxxv. The Chair commented that as far as the DPCSP was aware there had been no prosecutions in the past 4 years from information provided by the Professional Witness.
- xxxvi. In response to a query about the similarity of job roles, the Safer City Coordinator confirmed that the job description had been shared with Members after the workshop in May.
- xxxvii. The Chair stated that due to the extent of information and discussion around the Professional Witness Project there was a need for further reflection and discussion in September. The Safer City Coordinator recommended that there is a special West Belfast DPCSP meeting purely to clarify the Professional Witness Project.
- xxxviii. Members agreed that a West Belfast DPCSP workshop would take place on Tuesday 03 September at 5.30pm to discuss the Professional Witness Project, the venue to be emailed to Members. The recommendations from this project specific meeting would be considered at West Belfast DPCSP's meeting on 24 September.
- xxxix. Member agreed to also discuss the recommended Professional Witness Project Independent Evaluation at that meeting

9. (D)PCSP Small Grants Member Panel Process Report

- i. The Chair introduced Item No 9, Small Grants Member Panel.
- ii. The Safer City Coordinator asked the Members to agree the following recommendations:
 - a. To confirm the Chair and Vice Chair as their nominated representatives to participate in the Small Grant Member Panel.
 - b. Delegate authority to the (D)PCSP Member Panel to approve the Tranche 2 Small Grants for each Partnership
 - c. Note that projects scoring above 50% will be deemed eligible for funding subject to budget availability, in line with the procedure used in previous years.
 - d. Note that the amended process will be used for all (D)PCSP Small Grants from this point forward.

- iii. The Members agreed the recommendations above. As there is no Vice Chair for West Belfast DPCSP, Members agreed delegated authority to the Chair Cllr Michelle Kelly and Cllr Brian Heading as their nominated representatives.

10. 2019/2020 Action Plan Progress Report

- i. The Safer City Coordinator provided Members with an update in relation to the 2019/2020 Action Plan Progress Report.
- ii. Members noted the report provided.
- iii. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that every meeting at which a decision is delayed results in more underspend for West Belfast DCPSP.
- iv. Current underspend is projected at approximately £15,000 and Members were asked to consider whether they wish to offer it up to Policing Committee Grants or not.
- v. Another Member suggested working with EA to see how the resources could enhance their service.
- vi. The Chair highlighted that this would need to be discussed at the September West Belfast DPCSP Meeting.

11. Policing and Community Safety Strategy Interim Project

- i. The Safer City Coordinator asked Members to note the progress reports and that funding for this project is now directly from NIHE.
- ii. Members noted the report provided.

12. Updates from Statutory Partners

YJA

- i. Harry Bradley advised Members that the YJA have a dedicated team in Belfast for Early Intervention Strategies (EIS).
- ii. He further advised Members that the feedback from the Community Responsibility Notifications (CRN) was very positive and these continue to be a means of keeping young people out of the criminal justice system.
- iii. The Early Intervention Strategies also deliver projects in schools, which commence in September and include internet safety, the One Punch campaign and a drugs programme.
- iv. A Member asked who identifies young people for the EIS. Mr Bradley advised that young people were referred through the PSNI, ASB Forums, EA and Social Services; receive a 6-week programme of interventions.

Education Authority

- i. Pauline Smart, EA, advised Members of EA funding programmes - Youth Diversion and Summer Intervention successfully delivered in July and August.

- ii. A Member asked about the youth engagement work in the Suffolk area. Ms Smart confirmed that resources had been in place in the Suffolk area in August, the issues were mainly around Lenadoon. New staff are being recruited in Lenadoon/Beechmount area with a drop-in in Lenadoon possibly in Horn Drive

PSNI

- i. Chief Inspector Gary Reid advised Members that the partnership work around ASB continues to be successful with good outcomes. In particular, the partnership work around the Féile was excellent given the size of the crowds attending only 12 arrests made.
- ii. He also advised that there are a few issues in Suffolk/Lenadoon area.
- iii. Chief Inspector Reid confirmed the first wave of new NPT in Court West doubling in size to 2 Sergeants and 16 Constables.
- iv. A Member asked about the deployment of the 16 constables. Chief Inspector Reid advised that the PSNI had identified requirements and that the entire West team will know the whole area to cover redeployments.

12. West Belfast Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) Report

- i. The Safer City Coordinator provided Members with an overview of the West Belfast Antisocial Behaviour Report.
- ii. The Members noted the report.

13. Emerging Issues

- i. No emerging issues noted.

14. Date of Next Meeting

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that the next meeting of the West DPCSP would be on Tuesday 24 September 2019 followed by a Public Meeting on a review of Policing Figures for 2018-19 and a discussion on Hate Crime – Citywide, venue to be confirmed.