

**Minutes of the East Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership –
Policing Committee
Conor Room, City Hall, Tuesday, 27th November, 2012**

Political Members

Cllr Claire Hanna (Chair)
Cllr Deidre Hargey
Cllr Mervyn Jones
Cllr Adam Newton
Cllr Niall Ó Donnaghaile
Ald Gavin Robinson

Independent Members

Mark Houston (Vice-Chair)
Gareth Beacom
Lynda Gibson
Olwen Lyner
Andrew Moorehead

**Police Service of Northern Ireland
Representatives**

Chief Inspector Mark McEwan
Inspector David Gibson
Sergeant Jonathon Ireland

Staff Present

Sean McCormick, DPP Officer
Jo Black, Partnership Support Officer
Bernie Quinn, Project Officer
Terry Quinn, Antisocial Behaviour Officer

1. Welcome & Routine Matters

- i. The Chair, Councillor Hanna, welcomed Members and the representatives of the Police Service of Northern Ireland to the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

- i. No Declarations of Interest were recorded.

3. East Belfast DPCSP Private Meeting Minutes

- i. Minutes of the Policing Committee Meeting of the East Belfast DPCSP of 25th September, copies of which had previously been circulated to Members, were approved as a correct record.

4. Area Commanders Update

- i. The Area Commander gave the following update in relation to the priorities of the East Belfast Local Policing Plan:
 - o Burglaries had decreased by 29.19% compared to this time of the year in 2011.
 - o Antisocial behaviour reduced by 8.9%. A Halloween campaign had been helpful in achieving this result.
 - o There was a reduction of 42.8% in reported allegations of incivility by police personnel.

- Non-domestic crime with injury was reduced by 18.6%, although these figures related to incidents occurring during the night time economy. Police had engaged in a 'Super Get Home Safe' initiative during the Halloween period which engaged night club owners and proved to be successful.
 - Operation TORUS had been an ongoing operation in relation to drug issues with the result that drug seizures in the Pottinger area had increased.
- ii. The Area Commander advised the Members that the police were giving advice to communities on door to door traders in the run up to Christmas. This advice had also been posted on the PSNI Facebook and Twitter social media sites. Communities had also been advised to check their personal security by reducing the amount of cash in their homes. In December the PSNI would focus on Crime Prevention messages in the run up to Christmas.

5. Questions from Members

- i. A Member raised the matter of a van which had been seen in East Belfast selling beds and asked the Area Commander if he was aware of it. The Member further raised an alleged reported incident of attempted child abduction.
- ii. The Area Commander stated that if the license plate of the van was known this could lead to the possible identification of the persons involved. The Area Commander gave a detailed account of police action to Members in relation to the allegation of attempted child abduction. He asked Members to encourage those alleging such incidents to report incidents in the first instance to the police and to avoid posting such incidents on social media sites.

6. Odyssey Complex

- i. The Chair suggested that this could be an appropriate time for the Area Commander to give Members a report of the policing of the Odyssey Complex and the role of the Harbour Police, previously requested by Members.
- ii. The Area Commander introduced Inspector David Gibson and Sergeant Jonathan Ireland of the Titanic Quarter Neighbourhood Policing Team and asked them to give a report to Members.
- iii. Inspector Gibson explained that policing of the harbour complex was previously paid for by the Harbour Commissioner. However, since the development of the Odyssey Complex, the night time economy in the area had increased and, therefore, the policing of the area was the responsibility of PSNI in conjunction with the Harbour Police.
- iv. Concerning night club assaults and the level and perception of night time incidents, the PSNI had engaged with night club owners. The two principle night club owners had been responsive to police engagement increasing resources into their premises to ensure better security.
- v. A methodology currently being successfully used in Cardiff to reduce incidents of assault and antisocial behaviour was currently being explored. The Cardiff model was a complex analytical model which weighted the number of incidents into a 'traffic light system'. Prior to the instigation of the Cardiff model there had been 5 incidents reported per week in the Odyssey Complex, however, in recent weeks there had been no incidents reported.
- vi. The Inspector further explained to Members that police had also engaged with the Odyssey Complex management to analyse security procedures and policies for

handling difficult people with the result that police tactics and operations had been revised accordingly.

- vii. The Inspector explained to Members that one aspect of the Cardiff model was IDScan, an electronic scanning device that would scan identification documents produced by customers seeking entry into the nightclubs. This enabled the proprietors to check the authenticity of the documents, regulate entry and record details of the identification documents produced. He stated that it was the intention of all those concerned with the management of the Odyssey Complex to establish the use of IDScan as soon as possible.
- viii. The Area Commander further explained to the Members that the Cardiff model had been adapted to Northern Ireland and that the revised model would be presented to the Licensing Committee of the Council in the coming months.
- ix. The Member requested that the DPCSP Policing Committee receive a report on how the 'traffic light' categories were adjusted to reflect the situation at the Odyssey complex.
- x. The Area Commander agreed to provide such report.
- xi. A Member asked if there were incidents at sites which were not at the Odyssey but could be linked to incidents there.
- xii. The Area Commander explained that where incidents could be linked to the Odyssey Complex, these incidents would be included in the statistics.
- xiii. A Member raised the amount of incidents of underage young people entering clubs at the Odyssey Complex.
- xiv. Inspector Gibson explained that the number of rejections from clubs for suspected underage admittance had increased due to the fact that nightclubs were working together. The IDScan system, he stated, would improve the management of underage people seeking admittance into licensed premises.
- xv. A Member asked who monitored incidents at the Odyssey Complex.
- xvi. Inspector Gibson explained that in the first instance this was the Odyssey Complex manager and the civilian security personnel from Eventsec. He further stated that it was the responsibility of door staff at the respective licensed premises to implement the 'house' door policies. He also explained that Eventsec could be contacted directly by police with if there were incidents.
- xvii. A Member stated that the branding of the Odyssey Complex as an economic driver should also help to reduce the number of incidents. The Member then asked if the issuing of an entertainment license by the Council Licensing Committee to 3.00am would have an adverse effect on incident reduction.
- xviii. The Inspector stated that police statistics indicated that incidents were reduced from 356 to 277 which suggested that the later license had assisted in crowd dispersal.
- xix. The Chair drew discussions to a close. She asked Members for topics for themed discussion in future meetings. There was discussion among Members and it was agreed to request a presentation from the Victim and Witness Care Unit.

7. Policing Committee Funding

- i. The Chair outlined to Members that three Policing Committee Funding applications had been received, copies of which had previously been circulated to Members, and invited the DPP Officer to give the report.
- ii. Two of the Members, Andrew Moorehead and Gareth Beacom declared an interest and withdrew from the room.
- iii. The DPP Officer gave Members the background to the Policing Committee Funding. He stated that three applications had been received, namely:
 - o Victoria PACT – Networking Event - £100
 - o Victoria PACT – Community Tidy Up Wandsworth - £100
 - o Walkway Community Centre – Community Safety Event - £350
- iv. The DPP Officer also informed the Members that he had received a further two applications on 27th November, copies of which he circulated to Members also for their consideration. The applications received were:
 - o Charter NI – Community Safety Event - £500
 - o Lower Castlereagh Community Group – Youth Engagement Project - £447.50
- v. After discussion the Members agreed to fund the initial three applications as outlined at **7.iii**. They also agreed that they would consider the two late applications outlined at **7.iv** and forward their recommendations to the DPP Officer by close of business on the 29th November. Based on the responses from Members, authority was given to the Chair to approve/reject the said applications.
- vi. The DPP Officer outlined to Members that there was an anticipated under spend of the Policing Committee Funding budget. He requested Members to consider increasing the cap of £500 for a single application in order to spend the remaining budget by 31st March, 2013.
- vii. After discussion the above item was deferred until the next meeting of the Policing Committee.