

**Minutes of the East Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership
Policing Committee
Conor Room, City Hall
Wednesday, 24th April, 2013**

Political Members	Independent Members
Councillor Adam Newton (Chair)	Mr Mark Houston (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Claire Hanna	Mrs. Lynda Gibson
Councillor Mervyn Jones	Mr. Gareth Beacom
Councillor Adam Newton	Mrs Olwen Lyner
Councillor Niall O'Donnghaile	Mr Andrew Moorhead
Alderman Gavin Robinson	
PSNI Representative	
Inspector David Moore	
Staff Present	Apology
Sean McCormick, DPP Officer	Chief Inspector Mark McEwan
Jo Black, Partnership Support Officer	
Bernie Quinn, Project Officer	

1. Welcome and Routine Matters

- i. The Chair, Councillor Adam Newtown, welcomed the Members to the first meeting at which he was presiding. On behalf of the Members he thanked the outgoing Chair, Claire Hanna, for her sterling conduct in the role.
- ii. The Chair expressed his best wishes to the outgoing DPP officer, Sean McCormick, whose last meeting this was.

2. Declarations of Interest

- i. No Declarations of Interest were recorded.

3. Area Commanders Update on Policing in East Belfast (oral report from representatives of the Police Service of Northern Ireland)

- i. Inspector Moore gave apologies for the Area Commander, Chief Inspector Mark McEwan, who was unable to attend. He presented a report on crime figures in the area which were compared to the previous year same quarter in 2011-2012.
- ii. Violent Crime was reduced by 1.89%. Sexual offences were increased by 11%. Burglary was decreased by 13%, of which residential burglary was decreased by 18%. Thefts from a person were decreased by 13.5%. Damage to vehicles was decreased by 6%. Shoplifting was decreased by 16.7%. Antisocial behaviour was decreased by 0.5% and the Chief Inspector The total recorded crime was increased by 5.3%.

4. Question for the PSNI Representative from Members

- i. A Member asked if figures related exclusively to areas within East Belfast. The Member asked if the figures could be emailed to Members. This would allow Members to compare PSNI figures to figures provided by other agencies.

- ii. The Member asked Inspector Moore about the spate of burglaries in the Mersey Street and Woodstock Road areas of East Belfast.
- iii. The Inspector explained that the perception was worse than the actual numbers of instances. There was a meeting on the burglaries held in Westbourne Church in East Belfast on Tuesday 30th April at 7.00pm. He suggested that the DPCSP should advertise this meeting.
- iv. A Member suggested that the topic was also featured as the theme of the East Belfast DPCSP Public Meeting. The Member further expressed his concerns about the number of people walking the streets late at night and that this could lead to crime. A Member agreed that there were increased instances of people walking in the street late at night and that this featured an element of risk taking behaviour.
- v. A Member suggested that there had been instances of antisocial behaviour in the area related to alleygates being left open.
- vi. Inspector Moore explained he knew there was a perception of increased burglary and antisocial behaviour in the city but this did not actually reflect the figures presented to Members.
- vii. Following discussion, members decided not to publicise the meeting being held in Westbourne Church in East Belfast on Tuesday 30th April.
- viii. A Member suggested that the DPCSP should fund burglary from within the Action Plan. The Members further suggested that the East Belfast Crime Prevention Officer from within the PSNI, was invited to attend the public meeting to make a presentation. This was agreed by the Members.
- ix. A Member stated that in the view of the Alternatives Street-by-Street initiative that day-time walk ins were leading to increased levels of burglary.
- x. A Member explained that while they were participating in the Pottinger clean-up operation funded by the Policing Committee, members of the public had asked about the rise in burglaries in the area.
- xi. A Member expressed their opinion that perception was not the only issue as reported crimes were not reflective of all incidents.
- xii. The Inspector explained that the burglary figure was half of the 2011-2012 figure and so the perception was different to the reality. The Westbourne Church meeting would provide an opportunity for members of the public to discuss the figures versus the perception by the public. He offered to provide the breakdown of burglary figures on a quarterly basis to the Policing Committee. After discussion this was agreed by Members.