

Minutes of the West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Policing Committee Meeting

Farset International, Springfield Road
Thursday, 29th August, 2013

Political Members

Councillor Máire Hendron (Chair)
Councillor Tim Attwood
Councillor Steven Corr
Councillor Matt Garrett

Independent Members

Harry Connolly (Vice-Chair)
Breige Brownlee
Bernie Reilly

PSNI Representatives

T/Superintendent Bond
Inspector Christopher Robinson, PSNI

Inspector Alan Swann, PSNI
Inspector Jocelyn Wise, PSNI

Staff Present

Alison Allen, Safer City Manager
Glenn Thomas, Safer City Co-ordinator
Katharine McCrum, Partnership Support Officer

Apologies

T/Chief Inspector Mike White

1. Welcome and Routine Matters

- i. The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and noted the apologies provided.

2. Declarations of Interest

- i. The Chair asked Members to declare any material interests which they may have in relation to any item of business to be considered during the meeting.

3. Minutes

- i. The minutes of the Policing Committee Meeting held on 28th May, copies of which had previously been circulated, were taken as read and agreed as correct.

4. PSNI Community Awareness Project

- i. T/Superintendent Bond advised Members that a training tool was to be developed for officers in North and West Belfast in response to service delivery falling below callers expectations. She advised Members that the aim was to better inform response officers and call handling staff about the impact of anti-social behaviour and to improve service delivery and local knowledge.
- ii. Members were further advised that the project would focus one area from each District with the Beechmount area of West Belfast suggested as the project was initiated following complaints in this area.

- iii. A Member welcomed the development of the briefing tool and asked if it would be put to wider community use.
- iv. T/Superintendent Bond advised Members that its use was for internal purposes only at the moment however if it was deemed to be successful it could be further developed and rolled out to other areas.
- v. In response to a Member's comments regarding communications, T/Superintendent Bond advised Members that she was aware of the impact that relationship building had on confidence and that this was looked at when considering resourcing and shift patterns. She also advised Members that the victims strategy was now one of the Policing Priorities and so the PSNI was measured on this regularly.
- vi. Members agreed to work with the PSNI in developing this tool and asked for any contact regarding the project to be made to the full Partnership rather than a designated Member.
- vii. A Member commented that the DVD would also be useful as a training tool for officers from England if they were to be brought back to Belfast for policing operations in the future.

5. Update on Policing in West Belfast

- i. Inspectors Jocelyn Wise and Alan Swann provided Members with an update on policing in West Belfast stating that overall crime had increased by 5.57% and detection rates were also down by 3.7%. Members were advised that domestic burglary was down by 17%, violent crime - both domestic and non domestic had fallen, drug seizures, arrests and charges had all increased and that ASB offences were up by 3.75%.
- ii. A Member sought clarification regarding suggestion that the PSNI may be able to take the lead on prosecutions for on street drinking if the power was enacted through new legislation. Another Member welcomed the option given the level of funds spent by Council on fulfilling this duty.
- iii. Inspector Wise agreed to explore the issue and report back to the Partnership. Inspector Swann advised Members that a statement would be provided by the PSNI to Council however prosecutions were not always appropriate for example the Youth Diversion Service is often utilised for young people.
- iv. In response to a Members request for a more narrative comparison of the figures, Inspector Wise stated that the increase in ASB figures was believed to be due to an increased confidence in reporting incidents however this was hard to quantify and could always be open to interpretation. T/Superintendent Bond added that the trends in West Belfast were similar to those currently in North Belfast and that seasonal trends, weather and redeployments also play a part.
- v. In response to a Members query regarding the distribution of lists purportedly naming those involved in drug dealing in West Belfast and police advice, Inspector Wise advised Members that personal security and crime prevention advice was available adding that an investigation had begun regarding the leaflets.

5. Date of Next Meeting

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that the next meeting of the Policing Committee would be held on Wednesday, 23rd October at 5pm however a venue was still to be confirmed.