

# Minutes of the West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

## Private Meeting

Balmoral Hotel, Belfast  
Wednesday, 23rd October, 2013

<b>Political Members</b>	<b>Independent Members</b>	
Councillor Marie Hendron (Chair)	Harry Connolly (Vice-Chair)	
Councillor Attwood	Breige Brownlee	
Councillor Matt Garrett	Bernie Reilly	
	Ann-Marie Weir	
<b>Statutory Designated Organisations</b>		
Sharon Beattie, NIHE	Angela McKeown, BELB	
Tommy Boyle, H&SCT	Inspector Alan Swann, PSNI	
Davy McComsey, NIFRS	T/Chief Inspector Mike White, PSNI	
Aideen McLaughlin, YJA		
<b>Attendee</b>		
Paula Kerr, CRJI	Terry Quinn, Greater Falls Community Safety Forum	
<b>Staff Present</b>		
Glenn Thomas, Safer City Coordinator	<b>Apologies</b>	
Alistair Charles, Safer City Coordinator	Councillor Steven Corr, Upper Falls Community Safety Forum	
Michael Burns, Project Officer	Ross Mullan, Blackmountain Action Group	
Paul Cleary, Anti-Social Behaviour Officer	Michael O'Hara, Upper Falls Community Safety Forum	
Katharine McCrum, Partnership Support Officer		

### 1. Welcome and Routine Matters

- i. The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and noted the apologies provided.
- ii. Ann-Marie Weir, the Partnership's new Independent Member, and Alistair Charles, the incoming Safer City Coordinator for the West Belfast DPCSP were welcomed to the meeting.
- iii. The Chair also welcomed Paula Kerr, Community Restorative Justice Ireland, and Terry Quinn, Greater Falls Community Safety Forum to their first meeting of the DPCSP.

### 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 Private and Public Meetings held on 26<sup>th</sup> September, copies of which had previously been circulated, were taken as read and agreed as correct.

#### **4. Tension Monitoring Project**

(Richard McLernon, Safer City Coordinator, attended in relation to this item)

- i. Mr McLernon provided Members with an update on the work of the Tension Monitoring Project which sits within Belfast City Council's Community Safety Unit, and explained the process, definition and governance arrangements through the PCSP.
- ii. Members were asked to note that community tensions and issues can be escalated through the PCSP and advised that a presentation would be made to Members when evaluation findings had been received and on the progress of the Atlantic Philanthropies Project addressing community tensions.
- iii. In response to Member's query regarding the Ballymurphy Project, Mr McLernon informed that conversations were just beginning regarding the practical work however any initiatives would support the work being carried out by the DPCSP through their Action Plan and be responsive to community need.
- iv. A Member advised that he was glad to see the project working in collaboration with the DPCSP Action Plan and cautioned against duplication.
- v. In response to a Member's query about an evaluation, Mr McLernon advised that Brendon Smith would be carrying out an independent evaluation of the project and that it may be possible for a DPCSP representative to speak to him during his review.
- vi. The Chair thanked Mr McLernon for attending the meeting and welcomed the flexible approach of the project.

#### **5. Preventing Unwanted August Bonfires Project**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that the PCSP had submitted an application to the DOJ for a project to deal with unwanted August bonfires in 2014 which had been successful in securing £15,000 of funding which would be added to existing funds to provide a project budget of £40,900.
- ii. The Community Safety Coordinator advised that the project would include local communities, in particular young people, in the development and delivery at a chosen site, which in West Belfast had been identified as Beechmount.
- iii. Following lengthy discussion regarding the chosen site, Members agreed that the Divis bonfire would be a more suitable choice given the existing intervention in the area, its size, the community impact that the bonfire has and its role in promoting additional bonfire sites.
- iv. The West Belfast DPCSP Project Officer explained that the site had been chosen as young people had previously engaged with services in the Beechmount area however this was unlikely at the Divis site.
- v. Members agreed to attempt to engage with young people at the Divis site, however if this was seen to be unachievable, the project would revert to the Beechmount site.
- vi. The Chair enquired as to whether contact had been made with the Good Relations unit regarding the project, to which the Safer City Coordinator advised that a meeting was scheduled to take place on Friday regarding its development.

- vii. Members also agreed that the project should tie in with the West Belfast DPCSP's Bonfire strategy which was currently under development in order to look at wider strategic issues.

## **6. Draft Annex to the Code of Practice on Arrangements for Belfast**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that the Draft Annex to the Code of Practice on Arrangements for Belfast PCSP and DPCSP had been circulated to Members via email and asked that comments were forwarded to the PCSP Office.
- ii. Members noted this request.

## **7. West Belfast DPCSP Action Plan Update**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that an application had been received in relation to the procurement document Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour and that, subject to written clarification on some issues, the contract would be awarded to Falls Community Council.
- ii. Members were advised that once the final clarifications had been received, information would be circulated to Members.

## **8. West Belfast DPCSP Public Event, November 2013**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that a Public Event was scheduled to take place in November, 2013, and asked for suggestions on a theme and venue.
- ii. Members discussed attendance levels at previous events and resolved that the DPCSP should tie in with existing groups and events in order to improve its engagement with communities and make better linkages with the DPCSP Action Plan.
- iii. Suggestions included:
  - a crime prevention event targeted at older people, particularly in the run up to Christmas given the increase in theft once fuel allowances are delivered;
  - linking in with school events such as Road Safe Road Shows;
  - attending events held by the West Belfast Senior Citizens Forum or University Freshers Weeks
  - holding events at more suitable times in order to attract youth group members.
- iv. The Safer City Coordinator agreed to look at the existing Belfast City Council Events calendar during November for suitable activities which would then be circulated to Members.

## **9. Emerging Issues**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that he wished to call a special meeting of the DPCSP in order to discuss priorities for the Local Policing Plan and undertook to circulate dates to Members.

- ii. The Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Officer provided Members with information on the role and work of the Interagency Antisocial Behaviour Forums.
- iii. In response to Member's comments about the small number of cases, the ASB Officer advised that the numbers did not represent one report or incident but prolific offenders. He also advised that the post of ASB Officer had been vacant for several months and so numbers were lower than in previous years when 50-60 cases were being dealt with, but added that the numbers did fluctuate.
- iv. Members discussed the absence of a community representative and the weight that some of the tools, such as warning letters, would have on prolific offenders.
- v. Members agreed that conversations should be had with regards to a DPCSP Member sitting on the forum in their role as a statutory body but also given Members community links.
- vi. The Anti-Social Behaviour Officer advised that legal guidelines had governed the forums membership but agreed to look at how the Youth Justice Agency become a member.
- vii. Members also discussed the difficulties faced with Housing Associations, who do not sit on the forums, and the eviction of families. Sharon Beattie, NIHE, advised members that joint protocols existed with all Housing Associations and this may be a model which could be replicated.

## **10. Close**

- i. The Chair thanked Glenn Thomas, the outgoing Safer City Coordinator for his work with the Partnership and wished him well in his new role with the East Belfast DPCSP.