

**Minutes of South Belfast District Policing and Community
Safety Partnership – Policing Committee
Wednesday, 28th November, 2012
Conor Room, City Hall**

Political Members

Cllr. Deirdre Hargey
Cllr. Kate Mullan
Cllr. Mairtin O’Muilleoir
Ald. Ruth Patterson
Ald. Christopher Stalford

Independent Members

Nuala Toman (Vice Chair)
Ms. Paula Bradshaw
Mr. Mark Caffrey
Mr. Trevor Greer

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Chief Inspector Gaby Moran

Staff Present

Denise Smith, CS Coordinator
Jo Black, Partnership Support Officer
Elaine McWilliams, Alcohol Misuse Officer, Get Home Safe
Edele Cleary, Project Officer, Get Home Safe

1. Welcome and Apologies

- i. The Vice Chair, Nuala Toman, welcomed the Members to the meeting of the South Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership.

2. Declarations of Interest

- i. The Vice Chair read the declaration of interest.
- ii. No interests were declared.

3. Minutes

- i. The Vice Chair proposed the minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes were taken as read and approved as correct.

4. Area Commander’s Quarterly Report

- i. The Area Commander explained that the quarterly figures were due on the day following the meeting and so figures presented for the previous quarter.
- ii. Crime figures were decreased on the previous quarter with 425 fewer crimes or a decrease of 7.1%. When compared to figures for 2008/09 this was a decrease of 0.5%.
- iii. Burglary was decreased by 18.4% and was at the lowest levels since 1998/99 representing 347 fewer crimes.
- iv. The PSNI view was that working with other statutory agencies such as young offenders and the Health and Social Care Trust in Belfast that has contributed to this reduction.

- v. Non Domestic crime had decreased by 21.6% in the year to date figures. This was at a high level compared to the previous year. This was at a high level compared to the previous year. PSNI were reporting to the licensed premises group on the Cardiff model of ID card scanning on 29th November 2012. This scheme could help decrease social and criminal behaviours in licensed premises. The Area Commander highlighted that if the Licensed Premises Committee adopts the scheme will be happy to brief DPCSP on the initiative.
- vi. Arrests and charges in relation to Drugs had continued to increase. Since operation TORUS had been put in place there had been a 69.6% increase.
- vii. The Area Commander then moved on to the Policing Priorities for South Belfast DPCSP area. The detection rate for burglary was 7.6% and a reduction could be down the fact that these were often reported later in the year.
- viii. There had been a reduction in Antisocial Behaviour incidents. The majority of these had been reported around the MacDonalDs, Castle Street and Corn Market areas. This had impacted on the quarterly figures for this heading. The PSNI were seeking to address this with the full council meetings.
- ix. There had been reductions in the Non Domestic Violent Crime incidents with injury which was increased in the quarter. This was linked to the door policy of clubs emptying at the same time.
- x. The Area Commander stated that the priority to reduce allegations of incivility by Officers had also decreased and it was hoped to build on these figures in the year to date.
- xi. Burglary to dwellings had decreased by 133 cases and 31% and this was also highlighted as a significant statistic.
- xii. Rape and sexual offence in South Belfast had been investigated by Mr. Justice Hart. There had been a steady flow of reports of these types of incidents in recent years.
- xiii. The Vice Chair invited the Area Commander to give his report on the summary of recorded crime.
- xiv. The Area Commander reported Hate Crime had decreased from 18 to 10 incidents and the detection rate had increased. Homophobic crime had increased from 17 cases to 22 cases. Race related crime was increased from 21 to 46 cases. Sectarian crimes had increased from 25 to 36 cases and the detection rate had increased from 8% to 16%. Some of these crimes related to the night time economy in South Belfast. They were also linked to workplace and residential disputes.
- xv. The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission was undertaking a review of the investigation of racial crimes and South Belfast and Craigavon and

would publish its results in early 2013 with the Public Prosecutions Service and the Courts.

5. Members Oral Questions and Input in Relation to the Area Commander's Quarterly Report

- i. A Member asked about shoplifting related offenses and if increased detections related to sophisticated equipment.
- ii. The Area Commander suggested this increased because of a period of economic recession. He further explained there could be serial offenses. He explained that Neighbourhood policing had been working with floor staff from city centre shops to train them on methods of preventing shoplifting.
- iii. The Area Commander explained that the PCSP Policing Plan would be presented at the meeting on 29th November.
- iv. A Member asked if any arrests or investigations had been made regarding a particular incident of rape.
- v. The Member further asked if relating to operation TORUS there were seizure statistics available for South Belfast.
- vi. The Area Commander explained that in relation to the first question arrests would have to be investigated and he would check the figures.
- vii. The Area Commander suggested he would pass on reports of drugs to the member. He described a recent seizure of cannabis to the value of £63,000. This had resulted in a report by neighbours. This method of detection had been duplicated in other areas of the city. The Area Commander explained that he believed that the strength of Operation TORUS had been that neighbourhood involvement had increased community confidence in local policing.
- viii. A Member asked how Domestic Violence would be dealt with in this report and future reports.
- ix. The Area Commander suggested this was not separated out in the reporting and there were no plans to separate the figures. However he would forward the figures separately to the Member.
- x. A Member asked about the offenders committing offenses which were recorded as 'other sexual offenses'. She explained that offenders committing such crimes often proceeded to commit worse offenses and wished to know how this was monitored.
- xi. The Area Commander explained there had been an increase in sexual offenses as detailed earlier in the report. He agreed with the Member's analysis that often those committing such crimes went on to commit worse offenses. He explained that the Public Protection Unit would proceed to look into and acquire detailed breakdowns. The PSNI would seek to obtain

sexual offenses arrests where possible. If there were concerns about particular offenders these were relayed to the Public Protection Unit.

6. Other Policing Issues

- i. The Area Commander explained there was a significant operation underway relating to the flying of the flag. He asked those Members involved in engaging with communities to suggest peaceful protest. PSNI were investing significant resources in the policing of the meeting.

7. Policing Committee Funding

- i. The Vice Chair introduced the topic of Policing Committee Funding. She encouraged Members to encourage others to apply for Policing Committee Funding and encourage that members apply in order to engage communities with the Police. The Vice Chair proposed to increase the limit from £5,000 to £10,000 to allow for more expenditure under this budget heading.
- ii. A Member asked had there been any applications received for the Policing Committee Funding.
- iii. The Community Safety Coordinator explained there had been none to date, however all funding needed to be spent by 31st March 2013.
- iv. The Member expressed concern that if there were no applications that spending could be undertaken prior to 31st March. The Member further proposed that the funding could be used for drugs disposal bins which were proposed for other DPCSP areas.
- v. The Area Commander explained the drug disposal bins had been useful in other areas. There was discussion among the Members of the drugs disposal bin scheme.
- vi. A Member suggested that the Policing Committee funding was introduced on the Council website. The Member further asked if the funding was not spent if it would be returned to DOJ.
- vii. The Community Safety Coordinator explained that monies were returned to DOJ if they were not spent.
- viii. The Member proposed the funding was advertised on the Council website and further that it was increased to £10,000.
- ix. A Member asked if the funding could be used for the Police and Community Together scheme (PACT).
- x. The Community Safety Coordinator explained that PACT was funded from other funding streams.
- xi. A Member suggested this was previously PSNI funding it was important for the Partnership to ensure the monies were spent.

- xii. The Member's proposal to advertise the Policing Committee Funding on the Council website and increase the amount to £10,000 was seconded. All the Members of the Partnership agreed the proposal.