

**Minutes of the North Belfast District Policing and
Community Safety Partnership
Policing Committee
Wednesday, 11 September 2013, 5.00pm
Conor Room, City Hall**

Members Present	
Councillors	Independents
Councillor Patrick Convery (Chair)	Ms. Jennifer Cornell (Vice Chair)
Ald David Browne	Ms. Bronach Graham
Councillor Mary Ellen Campbell	Mr. Pat McLarnon
Councillor Guy Spence	Mr. Ian McLaughlin
Councillor Naomi Thompson	
PSNI	
Chief Inspector Ian Campbell	
Sergeant Oli Connolly	
Chief Inspector Andrew Freeburn	
Staff Present	Apologies
Alison Allen, Safer City Manager	Cllr Conor Maskey
Edele Cleary, Project Officer	
Mark Corbett, ASB Officer	
Saranne Gallagher, Partnership Support Officer	
Richard McLernon, Safer City Coordinator	

1. Welcome & Routine Matters

- i. The Chair, Cllr Patrick Convery, welcomed Members to the Policing Committee of the District Policing and Community Safety Partnership.

2. Declarations of Interest

- i. The Chair highlighted the declaration of interest policy..
- ii. No declarations of interest were recorded.

3. Minutes of North Belfast DPCSP Policing Committee

- i. Minutes of 14th August were agreed by members.
- ii. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that an issue regarding cares homes had been raised with the Belfast PCSP. However, direct liaison between members had not yet happened to date. Members requested that a letter is forwarded to DOJ in relation to this matter.
- iii. A Member queried if further information had been received in relation to the burglary strategy. The Safer City Coordinator commented that information regarding this matter will be circulated to Members at a later date.
- iv. A Member commended and paid thanks to the Chief Inspector for the management of the incident on the 9th August 2013.

4. Area Commanders' Update Report

- i. The Area Commander, Chief Inspector Andrew Freeburn provided an update on criminal statistics.
- ii. Overall Crime had increased by 6.5%. Public disorder/injuries to PSNI can be a contributory factor to this increase.
- iii. Domestic burglary had decreased by 3% compared to the same quarter in the previous year. The Area Commander suggested the reason for decrease is due to ongoing work with repeat offenders.
- iv. Detection rate had decreased. The Area Commander commented this had been mainly due to the result of officers attending public order issues. The Area Commander further commented that the detection rate for all violence had remained marginally low at 25%.
- v. The Area Commander advised Members that drugs detection had an increase of 16% within North Belfast, however it had been noted that there had been an increase in the usage of drugs in North Belfast.
- vi. A Member queried that although there had been an increase in the detection rate of drugs in North Belfast, there had clearly been an increase in the usage of certain drugs in North Belfast. A Member further commented that the heroin market within Northern Ireland is continuing to grow but it is difficult to market and combat this issue.

5. Written Questions from Members and responses from Area Commanders'

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that two questions had been received. All questions had been circulated to members and responses received.
- ii. A Member offered his thoughts and well wishes to all the officers who had been injured on 9th August 2013.
- iii. A Member asked a question in relation to the use of a firearm at the incident. The Area Commander commented that the PSNI work on evidence and in this case there had been no evidence to support the claim that a firearm had been fired.
- iv. A Member asked a question in relation to Question 3 b/c specifically regarding flag protests.
- v. The Area Commander explained that the PSNI had seen different situations across loyalist protests and that tension at the minute had not been with flag protestors, it had been within the community itself.
- vi. A Member asked a further question regarding crowds gathering within the Deerpark area and queried if this had being organised through Facebook.
- vii. The Area Commander commented that the PSNI had been aware of the situation but is unsure of what it is linked to. PSNI are currently working with community representatives to resolve situation, however PSNI are currently stretching resources due to ongoing public disorder issues.

- viii. A Member asked if any indication had been given to when the protest at Twadell will end.
- ix. The Area Commander commented that there had been no information to suggest when this will happen. The PSNI would like to be in a position to reduce their presence and focus on their normal policing duties within communities but the situation is unpredictable. PSNI continue to work directly with local community representatives from both communities to resolve the highly challenging situation.
- x. A Member also asked if weather had a contributing factor to crowd gathering.
- xi. The Area Commander commented that there had been no information to support this.
- xii. A Member made reference to an incident at Twadell the previous Monday evening and that there had been no indication that the situation was going to happen. The Member further commented that when PSNI officers used riot shields and land rovers, it was very intimidating and at this incident there was no real element where police at any stage were under direct threat from the crowds.
- xiii. The Area Commander commented that although the crowd were not violent, the PSNI had no choice but to use riot shields. The Area Commander commented that evidence shows that if there had been no police presence, serious public disorder could occur. If the PSNI are not present, people had access to go up the road and could lead to a breach of peace. If the situation diffuses, PSNI would remove all presence but this is not viable option at this stage.
- xiv. A Member made reference to people's human rights. The Area Commander commented that the PSNI are compliant with human right legislation.

No further questions asked.

6. **Other matters relating to Policing**

- i. The Area Commander provided an update on a project that assisted both Tigers Bay and the Newlodge areas. The project developed a community garden which allowed for members of the community to get involved. Further community initiatives had taken place following this project which had resulted in young people from the Newlodge area going across into Tigers Bay.
- ii. The Area Commander requested financial support of £500.00 from the partnership to support this initiative further.
- iii. DPSCP agreed to support this initiative.

7. **Date of next meeting**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Member that the date of the next meeting is 09 October 2013.