

**Minutes of the North Belfast District Policing and  
Community Safety Partnership  
Policing Committee  
Wednesday, 29 January 2014, 5.00pm  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor HR Conference Room, Cecil Ward Building, Belfast**

<b>Members Present</b>	
<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Independents</b>
Councillor Patrick Convery (Chair)	Ms. Jennifer Cornell (Vice Chair)
Councillor JJ Magee	Ms. Bronach Graham
Councillor Guy Spence	Mr. Winston Irvine
Councillor Naomi Thompson	Mr. Pat McLarnon
	Mr. Ian McLaughlin
<b>PSNI</b>	
Chief Inspector Andy Freeburn	
Inspector Robin Gouk	
Inspector Gavin Kirkpatrick	
<b>Staff Present</b>	<b>Apologies</b>
Richard McLernon, Safer City Coordinator	Councillor Mary Ellen Campbell
Edele Cleary, Project Officer	
Saranne Gallagher, Partnership Support Officer	

**1. Welcome & Routine Matters**

- i. The Chair, Cllr Patrick Convery, welcomed Members to the Policing Committee of the District Policing and Community Safety Partnership.
- ii. Apologies noted for Cllr Mary Ellen Campbell.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

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

**3. Minutes of North Belfast DPCSP Policing Committee**

- i. The Minutes of the North Belfast Policing Committee Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November, of which copies were previously circulated, were taken as read and correct.
- ii. The Safer City Coordinator updated Members on the agreed actions from the previous North Belfast DPCSP Meeting. The Safer City Coordinator updated Members regarding the Local Policing Plan.
- iii. A Member requested that a date be agreed and an update given by each political parties at a future DPCSP Meeting regarding care homes and legislative change.
- iv. Members agreed for a letter to be forwarded to Department of Justice on behalf of the Partnership regarding ongoing concerns with care homes. Members agreed to review the letter in advance of sending it to the Department.

#### **4. Area Commanders' Update Report**

- i. Area Commander Andy Freeburn provided an update on criminal statistics up to 15 January.
- ii. Area Commander Andy Freeburn commented that there had been increase of 4% in overall crime rates in North Belfast compared to this time last year.
- iii. The Area Commander advised Members that there had been a decrease of 8.5% in domestic burglary and an equal pattern for non-domestic burglaries.
- iv. The Area Commander advised Members that there had been a slight decrease in drug seizures, with one additional seizure in comparison to last year.
- v. The Area Commander commented that ASB figures had increased by 5.5%.

#### **5. Policing Plan Consultation Update**

- i. The Area Commander provided Members with an update regarding the local Policing Plan.
- ii. The Area Commander commented that there had been a limited number of responses had been received in relation to the consultation of the Policing Plan.
- iii. The Area Commander further commented that the key themes within the Plan are drugs/alcohol, burglary, anti social behaviour and also reference is made to road traffic.
- iv. The Area Commander advised Members that copies of the Plan are available and if any further comments or observations that Members had, if they could be forwarded for inclusion.
- v. Members commented that on reviewing the Plan, they had no further observations.

#### **6. Review of the previous month's policing**

- i. The Area Commander provided Members with an overview of the Service First Briefing.
- ii. The Area Commander advised Members of the new procedures, structures and changes that would be implemented through the Service First Operational Policing Model.
- iii. The Area Commander also advised Members what the Service First Policing Model would mean for North Belfast, specifically highlighting that response teams would be centrally located to Tennent Street Police Station, extra resources for Neighbourhood Policing Teams and that there could be no change to the Reducing Offender Unit which currently operates across Belfast.
- iv. A Member asked what the impact would be moving the response team to Tennent Street regarding response time to calls.
- v. The Area Commander commented that response time to calls should not be affected by the response team being located to Tennent Street.

- vi. A Member asked if there could be any risk to officers moving. The Area Commander commented that the level of risk would remain the same as when officers are together and that the service provided would not change.
- vii. Inspector Kirkpartick commented that through the implementation of Service First more officers would be present on the ground which would allow for a better and effective service to the public.
- viii. A Member queried a comment made by C/Superintendent Clarke referencing that only Neighbourhood Police Teams would be going back to York Road and not response. The Area Commander advised that if Mr Clarke made this comment, this may be the case but he was uncertain and could not comment further.
- ix. Members discussed the importance of call handling and that all training given to operators should be of a very high standard and all operators need to have an understanding of the geographical area of Belfast.
- x. The Area Commander commented that all training given will be appropriate and of a high standard.
- xi. A Member further commented that if possible Members of the Partnership could assist with the training, as their local knowledge could help ensure the system is effectively used. The Area Commander and Members welcomed this.
- xii. A Member asked through the implementation of Service First, if the number of officer's in Neighbourhood would increase. The Area Commander commented that there would not be any further officers until the completion of the next recruitment phase.
- xiii. The Area Commander advised Members that the new system is due to be implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> April.

## **7. Forthcoming policing events/issues**

- i. No events/issues were discussed.

## **8. Members Written Questions and Responses**

- i. The Area Commander provided Members with an update regarding written questions received and responses given. The Area Commander further commented that he would prefer a more flexible and personal approach to be adapted by the Partnership.
- ii. A Member commented that the procedures for questions being submitted to the DPCSP are unclear and that clarification to be provided.
- iii. A Member further commented that the procedures adapted by North DPCSP are different from those adapted by other DPCSP's in relation to written questions. He further commented that Members in other DPCSP's are forwarded responses to questions to review in advance of the next DPCSP meeting.
- iv. The Area Commander commented that the Partnership would need to review their procedures regarding written questions and how responses should be provided. The Area Commander advised Members he would prefer to have an open and honest discussion and

where he is not in a position to answer any questions, he will provide an answer to the question at the next DPCSP meeting.

- v. Several Members expressed preference for current system to remain in place but that written response should be circulated in advance.
- vi. A Member suggested that the Partnership invite the Chief Superintendent to attend a DPCSP meeting once a year. The Area Commander commented that the Chief Superintendent would welcome this but advised Members that the C/Superintendent does attend PCSP meetings.
- vii. A Member asked the Area Commander if he could confirm if any further arrests/follow up investigations had taken place since the incident with the police landrover. The Area Commander to provide information regarding the incident at a future DPCSP meeting.
- viii. The Chair suggested the Partnership review how questions are submitted and possibly to implement a new process on how responses are provided.
- ix. A Member further asked the Area Commander, that following a procession in North Belfast and if intelligence suggested that an event of this nature would be happening why were there no police present. Whereas while a peaceful vigil in another area of North Belfast was being held, police were present.
- x. The Area Commander commented that there was nothing to suggest that the procession was linked to terrorism. However, at the vigil, people blocked the road and when police tried to clear, a device was found which lead to a security alert being declared.
- xi. A Member asked the Area Commander how long does police bail last. The Area Commander advised Members how police bail operates and how bail gives PSNI the power to further investigate.
- xii. Members thanked the Area Commander for the responses provided and agreed to discuss the process of how written questions/responses are provided at the North Belfast DPCSP Planning Day on 17 February.

#### 9. **Date of next meeting**

- i. The Safer City Coordinator advised Members that the next North Belfast DPCSP Meeting will be held on 26<sup>th</sup> February, HR Conference Room, Cecil Ward, Belfast at 5.00pm.