

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Private Meeting of the Policing and Community Safety Partnership held in LVI on Tuesday 17th January 2023 at 6.30pm

PRESENT

Mrs Y Craig (Vice-Chairperson)
Deputy Mayor, Councillor M Guy (via Zoom)
Alderman A Ewing (via Zoom)
Councillor N Anderson
Councillor R Carlin (via Zoom)
Councillor A Gowan
Councillor John Palmer (via Zoom)
Councillor A McIntyre (via Zoom)
Councillor S Skillen (via Zoom)
Councillor H Legge (via Zoom)
Mr J Bentley
Mr P Dean (via Zoom)
Mrs G Conroy (via Zoom)
Ms A Landy (via Zoom)
Mrs P Leeson
Mrs P Yellamaty (via Zoom)

IN ATTENDANCE

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Acting PCSP/Manager Services Manager
PCSP Officer (JB)
Member Services Officers (CH and EW)

Designated Organisations

Superintendent J Mullan, PSNI
Superintendent K Moore, PSNI
Chief Inspector I McCormick, PSNI
Ms J Harkness, YJA (via Zoom)
Mr J Crymble, EA (via Zoom)

1. Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were received from the Chairman, Councillor J Gallen, Mr G Clifton (NIFRS), Mr D Marley (NIHE), Mr D McBurney (IND Member) and PCSP Officer, Mr S Addley.

2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

Councillor A Gowan declared an interest in respect of item 6.1.1, 'Participatory Budget (Grand Choice) Update', since he was a member of Annahilt Primary School PTA.

3. Minutes

It was proposed by Councillor A Ewing, seconded by Councillor N Anderson, and agreed that the Partnership approve the minutes of the private and public meetings of 15th November, 2022, subject to the addition of Mrs Grace Conroy to the names of those in attendance.

4. Introduction to the Commission for Victims of Crime

(Mr P Dean joined the meeting remotely at 6:32 pm).

The Vice-Chairperson welcomed Mrs Geraldine Hanna, Commissioner Designate for Victims of Crime, to the meeting and she provided an overview to the Partnership on the Victims of Crime Strategy, the purpose of the office and the role of the Commissioner Designate. She advised that she had been appointed to the new role of Commissioner Designate for Victims of Crime in June 2022, having worked in numerous victim support services throughout her career.

She further explained that her role included all victims of crime. However, as part of the terms of reference for the post, Mrs Hanna would be taking a special interest in victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and hate crimes, due to the particular issues victims of these types of crime had with the criminal justice system.

Mrs Hanna explained that one of the key aspects of her role was to monitor compliance and promote awareness of the Victim Charter. The Partnership noted that, in 2015, the Northern Ireland Assembly had placed on the statute books 'The Northern Ireland Victim Charter' which gave victims the entitlement to know how they could expect to be treated by criminal justice agencies, which included key rights, such as;

- the right to be treated with dignity and respect; and
- the right to be kept updated about the progress of their case.

Ms Hanna outlined the three key areas where she would like to see progress being made during her term of office:

- Delay: without additional funding of the justice system the current backlog would not be expected to be dealt with until 2028. Ms Hanna advised that she had called for additional resources to address the backlog.
- Data: across all criminal justice agencies there were ten case management systems with no way to track a victim from the point when a crime had been reported through to case closure. Ms Hanna advised that she had called on the Criminal Justice Board to invest in one case management system that would serve the needs of all criminal justice agencies. Long term this would improve victim data, quality of data and accessibility of data.

- Disclosure: there had been a Review on Sexual Violence conducted and also an Information Commissioners Report on mobile phone data, around the use/seeking of personal information from victims of sexual violence. Both reports highlighted an excessive amount of data being sought as part of the investigations process. Ms Hanna informed the Partnership that she would be working with the Police and PPS in carrying out a review on the quantity of data being used. Ms Hanna reported that her second concern was around the courts requesting victims support services information i.e. from services such as Nexus, without due process being followed and hoped to address this issue during her term of office.

Members' Comments & Questions

In response to a question raised by Councillor N Anderson in relation to any plans to address problems arising from individuals being moved into communities which gave rise to antisocial behaviour and/or intimidation of residents, Mrs Hanna agreed to liaise the member to discuss the issue raised after the meeting.

After discussion, during which Mrs Hanna answered further questions which had been posed by Members, the Partnership noted the information provided and the Vice-Chairperson thanked Mrs Hanna for her address.

5. Update from Statutory Partners

5.1 PSNI Update

Superintendent J Mullan provided an update in relation to crime trends in the area. It was reported that there was a continued decrease in crime across the Council area, with a decrease of 6.2% in the year to date and outcome rates/results for victims had increased by 31%. The main areas where crime rates had increased were in theft and shop lifting which had previously been reported as being linked to the current cost of living crisis. Instances of ASB had decreased by 420 instances in comparison to the previous year with a 15.6% decrease.

It was reported that a month long operation over the Christmas period took place with results as follows:

- 2300 vehicles stopped in Lisburn & Castlereagh in proactive patrols
- 662 drivers breath tested
- 15 arrests for drink/drug driving under the influence
- 178 people searched
- 32 drug seizures worth over £13,000
- 180 domestic instances reported with 36 domestic arrests made; and
- PSNI increased visibility around town centres, hot spots over the festive period

A 17% decrease in the Domestic rate for the year to date was reported, and although instances did increase over the festive period, statistics were not as high as previous years.

5.1 PSNI Update (Cont'd)

Overall demand continued to increase in non-crime related instances including the knock on effect from the demand on the health service.

In relation to the current resourcing difficulties within the PSNI, the Superintendent reported that the Chief Constable would be attending a Policing Board meeting the following week to give an update on the way forward for the organisation, including plans on how the organisation would work with decreased resources.

5.1.1 Antisocial behaviour/ Intimidation – Bow Street Mall/Lisburn Square Traders

In response to an issue raised by Mr P Dean around ongoing issues in antisocial behaviour around Bow Street Mall and Lisburn Square, the Superintendent confirmed that the PSNI was aware of the Bow Street Mall issue and confirmed that the neighbourhood team were liaising with Bow Street Mall's management team. The Superintendent reported that she was not aware of the issues around Lisburn Square and encouraged reporting of all instances to the PSNI.

The Acting PCSP Manager indicated that the President of the Chamber of Commerce had been in contact with the Council to discuss the matter. It was explained that the antisocial behaviour appeared to be focused around the car park at Lisburn Square. Traders had reported being verbally abused and items had been thrown at traders and the problem appeared to be escalating. Superintendent J Mullan agreed to investigate the issues raised as an action.

It was also agreed that a meeting be held between the PSNI and the traders in conjunction with the President of the Lisburn Chamber of Commerce to address the matter. The PCSP Officer in attendance also agreed to raise the matter at the next meeting of the ASB forum to ascertain what assistance could be provided.

Following a number of further questions posed by members in relation to antisocial behaviour, drug issues and mental health instances, Superintendent J Mullan advised the Partnership that she was due to transfer to PSNI Headquarters and would be leaving the post of District Commandeer for Lisburn and Castlereagh. She extended her appreciation to the Partnership for their support during the last two years. She then introduced Superintendent Kelly Moore who would be taking up the role of District Commander at the end of January.

The Vice Chairperson thanked Superintendent J Mullan for her help and support and extended a welcome on behalf of the Partnership to Superintendent K Moore.

5.2 Education Authority Update

The Partnership noted an update by Mr J Crymble advising that all youth programmes were back up and running following the Christmas break, with all centres expected to be fully reopened within the coming week. It was reported that the Education Authority would liaise with the PSNI to look at early intervention around ASB to inform the programmes that would be developed to help the ASB issues in the area.

5.3 Youth Justice Agency Update

Ms J Harkness reported that work was ongoing on the Youth Justice Agency's core business, with statutory orders coming through for young people from the Courts and the PPS. It was also reported that the Youth Justice Agency was currently engaging with a number of schools in the area through their Early Stage Diversion Team, alongside the PSNI, delivering on a number of topics, including: online safety, vaping, drugs, alcohol and decision making.

Furthermore, it was advised that the Agency had engaged with community groups throughout the area with regards to developing opportunities to permit young people to participate in their community.

6. Report of the Acting PCSP Manager

6.1.1 Participatory Budget (Grand Choice) Update

(Mr P Dean left the meeting at 7.20 pm).

The Partnership noted an update which related to the Downshire East DEA Grand Choice participatory budgeting process. Successful applicants progressed to the Market Place event which took place on Saturday 14th January 2023, at Leggacurry Presbyterian Church Hall. The event had been well-supported by the local community with a total of 881 persons voting on the various initiatives, with 24 spoilt votes and 15 projects awarded funding as set out below:

Votes	GROUP	AMOUNT
599	Carr PS PTA	£1,000
546	Anahilt Primary School	£1,000
545	Dromara Connect	£1,000
531	1 st Anahilt Scout Group	£1,000
509	Anahilt LOL 752	£1,000
457	Drumbo Men's Shed	£1,000
455	Drumbeg Parish Club	£1,000
454	Ballynahinch Uniform Zone	£1,000
443	Anahilt PA PTA	£1,000
441	Anahilt PS Breakfast Club	£1,000
409	Bailliesmills Senior Acc Band	£1,000
401	Carr Primary School	£1,000
387	Bailliesmills Junior Acc Band	£1,000
378	Anahilt and Magheraconluce CA	£1,000
376	Dromara Community Association	£1,000
	Total amount awarded	£15,000

6.1.1 Participatory Budget (Grand Choice) Update (Cont'd)

The PCSP Officer thanked the statutory agencies for their continued support in attending the Grand Choice events which provided an opportunity to engage with the community and promote the various statutory agencies objectives.

A number of members passed on congratulations to both the team for organising such a successful event and to the successful applicants that had been awarded funding.

Following a query raised by Councillor Sharon Skillen, the Acting PCSP Manager confirmed that it was planned to include two more rounds of Participatory Budget (Grand Choice) in the Action Plan for 2023/2024, and the two areas that had been identified were Castlereagh East and Castlereagh South.

6.1.2 Lisburn North

It was noted that the final tranche of the Grand Choice initiative in the Lisburn North DEA process had opened for applications on 28th November 2022, and would close on 22nd January 2023. It was confirmed that the Market Place event would take place on Saturday 18th February, from 11am to 3pm in Harmony Hill Presbyterian Church, and all Members were encouraged to attend. PCSP Members were encouraged to promote Grand Choice events within their local community groups and organisations within their appropriate DEAs.

6.2 Drugs & Alcohol Awareness Plays for Post Primary Schools

The Partnership noted information, which had been provided on the provision of drugs and alcohol awareness initiatives, which offered post primary schools and SERC Lisburn Campus the opportunity to avail of a professional theatre production which raised drug and alcohol awareness for students in Year 9 and upwards. These plays were a result of concerns raised by the District Commander on the number of drug deaths of young persons under the age of 25 years at the November Policing Committee meeting.

It was confirmed that the plays, which would be delivered between the 14th and 16th March 2023 would take place within the school environment. It was reported that the project would be delivered in collaboration with PSNI, Lisburn YMCA and ASCERT, which aimed to highlight issues on drugs and alcohol as follows:

- prevent and reduce drugs and alcohol consumption
- polly drugs misuse including prescription drugs – Mixing multiple drugs with or without alcohol
- effects of drugs and alcohol on the body
- peer pressure of consuming drugs/alcohol
- consequences associated with drugs and alcohol misuse

It was further confirmed that the play would be followed by a 20 minute panel discussion with experts from PSNI, Youth Justice, ASCERT, Healthy Living Manager and Lisburn YMCA.

6.2 Drugs & Alcohol Awareness Plays for Post Primary Schools (Cont'd)

Any PCSP Members who wished to attend a production was encouraged to contact the Acting PCSP Manager.

6.3 2023/24 PCSP Action Plan

It was reported that, in accordance with DoJ Planning Guidance, that PCSP Action Plans were to be submitted for approval not later than 17th February 2023. It was agreed to hold an Action Plan Workshop on Tuesday, 31st January at 6.30 pm, in the Chestnut Suite, Lagan Valley Island. The workshop would aim to discuss the potential projects which would reflect the following key areas provided by the Joint Committee:

- ASB - key priority for DoJ and other partners including Youth Justice Agency, EA and NIHE.
- Drugs and Alcohol Abuse - it is considered that early intervention and collaborative initiatives can have a positive impact on community safety.
- Domestic and Sexual Abuse - this remains an ongoing priority across community safety partners.
- Hate Crime - statistics indicate that hate crime incidents are increasing across all council areas.
- Cyber Crime - this form of crime is becoming increasingly prominent, and vulnerable members of our communities can be more likely to fall victim.
- Vulnerabilities from Organised Crime (including Paramilitarism – SP3)

As the PCSP budget for the incoming year had not been confirmed it was agreed to submit a budget in line with what had been approved in the last number of financial years, in the sum of £293,115.

It was confirmed that no further funding would be made available for the purchase of new SIDS. Members congratulated the Partnership and Policing Board for their work on completing the roll out of SID programme which had resulted in a safer community.

The Acting PCSP manager responded to a number of questions and suggestions by members in relation to potential areas to be considered for the action plan and also the potential for the PCSP action plan to mirror the same themes as the PSNI action plan. It was suggested that this idea be fed through to the DOJ and Policing Board to consider setting deadlines for both actions plans for similar dates in future years.

6.4 Forthcoming Events

The Partnership noted the dates of the following forthcoming events with members encouraged to attend where appropriate:

26 January 2023 6pm - 9pm	Lisburn City and Lisburn Rural Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators Event. This will take the form of speed dating and crime prevention presentations. This coincides with the National Neighbourhood Policing Week (23 – 29 January).	Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn
2 March 2023 10am - 2.30pm	Senior Citizens Crime Prevention Event for Castlereagh.	Christ Church Presbyterian, Dundonald
9 March 2023 10am - 2.30pm	Senior Citizens Crime Prevention Event for Lisburn City & Lisburn Rural	Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn

7. Any Other Business

7.1 Cyber Crime Webinar

It was reported that invitations had been received by the Chair and Vice-Chair of PCSP to attend a Cyber Crime Webinar on Tuesday 31st January, 2023 at 2pm. The Acting PCSP Manager advised members that the Chairman was unable to attend and that the remaining space was intended to be filled by a member of PCSP, she requested that anyone interested in attending should contact her to arrange.

7.2 DOJ Protection Arrangements

The Acting PCSP manager indicated that an email had been circulated to PCSP members in relation to DOJ Protection Arrangements. It was advised that PCSP Members were not eligible to apply for the position of Lay Advisers for public protection arrangements.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7.41 pm.

Vice-Chairperson