

Minutes of Policing and Community Safety Partnership Special Meeting

**Tuesday 30th April 2024
Council Chamber, Strabane**

Present: Mrs Mary Casey, Ald Darren Guy, Ald Keith Kerrigan, Cllr Fergal Leonard, Cllr Emma McGinley, Ald Niree McMorris and Ms Linda Watson.

PSNI: Chief Inspector William Calderwood, Sheena Jackson, Chief Superintendent Gillian Kearney, Chief Inspector Yvonne McManus, Inspector Cathal Pearce and Constable Gemma Stone.

In Attendance at Meeting: Thomas Conway (PCSP Vice-Chair), Vanessa Russell (PCSP Manager) and Alexandra Wallace (Admin).

DSPCSP 32/24 Introduction and Welcome

The PCSP Vice-Chair, Thomas Conway, welcomed all PCSP members to the meeting.

DSPCSP 33/24 Apologies:

Councillor Sandra Duffy, Councillor Christopher Jackson, Mr Aodh McCay and Councillor Antaine O Fearghail.

DSPCSP 34/24 Approval of Minutes – Minutes of PCSP Meeting 26/03/24 (DSPCSP 23/24-31/24)

The Minutes of PCSP Meeting were checked for accuracy. The minutes were proposed as follows:

Proposed by: Linda Watson

Seconded by: Ald Niree McMorris

DSPCSP 35/24 Matters Arising

Letter to Agencies re CCTV Funding – the PCSP Manager she is working with City Centre Initiative to co-ordinate a meeting with current and potential funders to include DOJ, WHSCT, PHA, NIPB, Mental Health Champion, Professor Siobhan O'Neill to focus on the long-term funding of CCTV in the DCSDC area.

CCTV Monitoring Visit – the PCSP Manager confirmed the following dates 15th and 16th May for these visits. This will comprise of 2 sessions each day one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The times will be forwarded to members in due course.

Justice and Security Stop and Search powers – the PCSP Manager informed the following dates for JSA meetings as follows: 15th May 2024 at 1pm and 19th June 2024 at 1pm. Members are asked to confirm availability. Advance notice will be given for future meetings.

Closure of Police Service Enquiry Offices – the PCSP Manager referred members to correspondence forwarded from PSNI on 15.04.24 advising that Waterside Enquiry Office will close within 3 months.

Flags within Communities – the PCSP Manager confirmed that this meeting had taken place in the Waterside Shared Village on Tuesday 23.04.24 as requested. Elected members informed those present that the flags at the Drumahoe play park have been removed and also the flags from Magheramason will also be removed.

A lengthy discussed took place in relation to flags:

Elected members raised concerns surrounding the erection of flags around the City Centre and the Strand Road Police Station, these flags are causing a level of intimidation and asked if these will be removed?

Members felt that there needs to be further engagement with young people which is proving difficult at present. The issue with flags is seen as a cultural thing associated within both communities.

The Chair recognised that flags have been discussed in this forum previously and there is no simple solution to this issue.

Response: CI McManus informed all present that the PSNI do not remove flags and believes that engagement is the best way forward. CS Kearney stated that each scenario will be dealt with on it's own merits and that PSNI will continue to work with the community to address this issue.

DSPCSP 36/24

Presentation of Police Performance Report for the Period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

CS Kearney referred members to the Police Performance Report for the period (30/01/24-30/04/24).

Members were referred to the following statistics relation to **Outcome 1 – We Have a Safe Community:**

Violence Against Women & Girls

- Violence against women and girls has decreased by 10.4% (-320) on the previous period.
- The most notable decreases: Homicide decreased 100% on previous Period.
- Stalking and harassment seen a 17.1% decrease (-184)
- Violence with injury has seen a 2.6% decrease (-17).
- Violence without injury has seen decrease 8.7% (-92) reduction on last period.

Violence Against Women & Girls Domestic Motivated

- Other Sexual offences seen a decreased 23.7% (-9).
- Highlighted that Rape has seen an increase of 32.1% (+9) in 12-month period.
- Homicide has 100% decrease to zero in this period.
- The most notable decrease is in stalking and harassment seen a 17.1% decrease (-184 this incorporates an increase of 1 incident of stalking rolling 365 days and a reduction in harassment such as neighbour disputes). With an overall -30.2 reduction in harassment for the PSNI overall.
- Violence without injury has seen a decrease 8.7% (-92) on last year
- Rape within domestic motivated is showing an increase. The increase was

in May and September 2023. There is no obvious pattern in the increase and the increase is not dissimilar to other Districts. This will be monitored over the next year and further analysis may be required.

- The DCS area repeat victimisation rate is currently 20.6%, which is higher than the service rate of 18.3%. Operation Roodstone is being rolled out in the area, where Public Protection Branch work in conjunction with NPT officers to complete visits with managed offenders.
- **Ask for Angela (April 2024):** Translink is now supporting the 'Ask for Angela' scheme and their staff are being trained that anyone who asks for Angela may be using a code to indicate they need help. Proactive comms expected timeline April 2024.

Theme 1 - Build Trust and Confidence

- Crime prevention presentations throughout the District carried out by our Crime Prevention Officer and Neighbourhood police teams.
- NPT created home safety packs that include the following items: Door stoppers, Door wedge, Door jammer and Sensor alarm.
- Online safety delivered in schools throughout the District by Neighbourhood officers.
- Additional funding from PCSP for Cameras for high-risk victims of Domestic abuse.
- Proposal for funding to PCSP for a One Stop Shop – Foyle Family Justice Centre approached to host. Waiting for Foyle Family Justice Centre to confirm a date to start.
- Consulting with the Women's Centre about how to build partnership working – the feedback is to be included in Neighbourhood training to be delivered to the Service.

Questions from Members as follows:

A member on the board asked how many stalking incidents have proceeded to conviction?

Response: CI McManus informed all present that this is new legislation, and numbers are not available at this time.

A member on the board asked how many rape and Domestic violence incidents have proceeded to convictions?

Response: CI McManus informed all present that body worn cameras allow officers to record which can capture injuries, but it is still hard to get people to carry the case through the criminal Justice system to conclusion. She did not have the specific numbers at present but will furnish the board with the statistics at the next meeting.

CI McManus, PSNI

Drugs Seizures and Drug-related Arrests

- Total drug offences in DCS Area have shown a 9.5% reduction (68 less offences).
- Trafficking of drugs show an increase of 0.9% which is one more offence.
- Possession of drugs show a reduction of 11.1% (67 less offences).
- NPT's and District Support Team (DST) across the area continue proactive Operations targeting drug supply and the harm posed by same.

- DST are working closely with UKBA and Royal Mail Security Branch and Police are intercepting large quantities of drugs as a result. All seizures are considered for further action to locate suspected offenders, if not then seized items are destroyed.
- Area drugs lead and DST have scheduled regular meetings with C1 Organised Crime Branch to discuss drug trends and foster closer working links.
- DCS Area have commenced work on a revised bespoke drugs strategy focusing on tackling drugs causing most harm and supporting investigations in relations to drugs deaths.
- Whilst outcomes show reductions this is attributed to the CJ Investigative process, requirement for bail etc.
- A positive is the fact that drug related arrests show increase of 1.2% which is 4 offenders.

Drug seizures with the 12-month period until 31st December 2023

- Pregabalin – 105 (3694 tablets with a street value of £3,694.00).
- Morphine – 2
- Benzodiazepines – 89
- Cannabis – 418 (14,465g with a street value of £433,950.00)
- Cocaine – 121 seized with a street value of £118,250.
- Heroin – 2
- There is an emerging trend especially within DCS Area where we are achieving CJ Outcomes and securing charges as a result of mobile phone based evidence investigations (MPE) where we have had those involved in drug supply sentenced to imprisonment for lengthy sentences, generally through due the nature of these investigations, it is not always that we make as such alongside the arrests.
- With community concerns around drug related deaths, we are now refocusing efforts on tackling the drugs causing most harm and those involved in the supply of same.
- As well an abstraction demand to perform core policing functions which has an impact on operational resourcing levels to conduct proactive enforcement, this will affect both NPT's and DST.
- For the period 01.01.23 to 31.12.23 there was a 3.8% decrease of drug seizure incidents for the PSNI across NI. This is also reflected in DCS area.
- Cannabis remains the most commonly seized drug, followed by cocaine and benzodiazepines.

Questions from Members as follows:

A PCSP member asked if PSNI could provide the number of arrests and convictions concerning drug and sale use within the urban and rural areas?

Response: CI McManus advised that at present she was unable to give direct figures on arrests. She added that Insp Pearce and his team are working to deter the selling and use of drugs within the district.

An elected member asked if there was a possibility of rebranding and relaunching crime stoppers as they feel the general public associate this service for reporting terrorist crimes.

An elected member stated that people feel more comfortable speaking to the

police in person. It was suggested would it not be more beneficial for communities to have a permanent NPT presence within their area which will help build trust and a rapport. The feedback that we have received indicates a level of mistrust towards the PSNI at present.

Response: CI McManus also highlighted that they were looking at NPT and that this was a priority.

An Elected Member asked that their appreciation for the work of Insp C Pearson and his team be recorded in the minutes.

DSPCSP 37/24

Questions on the District Commander's Report

An elected member referred to PSNI in South Belfast and Fermanagh & Omagh District declaring that they are treating the recent defacing of bilingual street signage as a "sectarian hate crime." He asked if the defacing of bilingual street signage and road signage in the Council area, namely that of the name of this city Londonderry, be treated as a sectarian hate crime?

Response: CS Kearney referred to the PSNI Perception Test, which states that "Evidence is NOT the test when reporting a hate incident; when an incident or has been reported to police by the victim or by any other person and they perceive it as being motivated by prejudice or hate, it will be recorded and investigated as a hate incident or crime. The perception of the victim of any other person is the defining factor in determining whether an incident is a hate incident, or in recognising the hostility element of a hate crime. Perception-based recording refers to the perception of the victim, or any other person.

It would not be appropriate to record a crime or incident as a hate crime or hate incident if it was based on the perception of a person or group who;

- Had no knowledge of the victim, crime or the area,
- May be responding to media or internet stories,
- Are reporting for a political or similar motive."

DSPCSP 38/24

Any Other Business

An Elected Member asked that it be recorded of their thanks to CI Calderwood and his team for the handling of the Easter Parade in Creggan with the use of a drone in the area.

A member of the board raised a question regarding placing a Speed Indicator Device (SID) at the school in Eglinton, they were informed that this one of the first locations to have them installed.

DSPCSP 39/24

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on **Tuesday 28th May 2024 in the Council Chamber Guildhall.**

The Chair thanked members for their attendance and input at the meeting which ended at approximately 11.10 am

Policing and Community Safety Partnership Meeting

PCSP Meeting 30th April 2024
Council Chamber, DCSDC, Derry Road, Strabane

ACTIONS

Page 3 DSPCSP 36/24	Number of Domestic Violence Incidents that have proceeded to convictions. It was agreed to provide these statistics at the next PCSP Meeting	PSNI