

Minutes of Policing and Community Safety Partnership Meeting Policing Committee

**Derry City and Strabane District Council
Tuesday 6 February 2024
Council Chamber, Guildhall at 1.00pm**

Present: Cllr Jason Barr, Cllr John Boyle, Mrs Mary Casey, Mr Thomas Conway, Ald Darren Guy, Ald Keith Kerrigan, Cllr Christopher Jackson, Cllr Fergal Leonard, Mr Aodh McCay, Cllr Emma McGinley, Ald Niree McMorris and Mrs Jeanette Warke.

PSNI: CI Yvonne McManus and Insp Cathal Pearce.

In Attendance: Ciara Bond (Admin), Cllr Sandra Duffy (PCSP Chair) and Vanessa Russell (PCSP Manager).

PCPM 01/24 Apologies

Mrs Margaret Hall, Miss Una McCartney, Cllr Antaine O'Fearghail and Ms Linda Watson.

PCPM 02/24 Introduction and Welcome

The Chair welcomed all members to the meeting in Council Chambers.

PCPM 03/24 Presentation of Police Performance

Chief Inspector Yvonne McManus referred members to the Police Performance Report for period 01/10/23-30/01/24.

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

Domestic Abuse

- This current rolling 365-day period (16/01/2023-15/01/2024) there has been a - 8.8% decrease in domestic motivated crime compared to the previous rolling 365-day period. During the same period domestic motivated incidents have recorded a 3.3% increase.
- These victims experienced 49.9% of all domestic incidents.
- On average, repeat victims experienced 3.0 domestic incidents during the 365-day period.
- 25.9% of repeat victims experienced a further domestic incident within a week of the last, on average.
- Review of MARAC – formal response awaited from DOJ and DOH.

Violence against Women and Girls

- Violence against women and girls has decreased by 10.1% (-309) on the previous year.
- The most notable decreases: stalking and harassment, 17.0% (-184).
- Violence without injury has seen a 10.3% (-109) reduction on last year.
- Sexual offences have also recorded an overall reduction of -9.8% (-30) incidents.

- Almost two thirds of all incidents are committed by acquaintances (31%) or intimate partners (27%).
- 9.97% of VAWG related incidents are sexual offences with the remainder VAP (90.03%). Of these the biggest category is violence without injury (38.2%) followed by stalking and harassment (36.2%); 42.7% of all incidents are domestic related.
- The DCS area repeat victimisation rate is currently 20.0%, which is higher than the service rate of 18.7%. The average number of VAWG per victim is 2.88, with four victims experiencing 10 or more incidents each during the last 365 days.

Response

- **VAWG 16 Days of Action Campaign (25th November – 10th December):** Those who have perpetrated violent or abusive offences towards women and girls were targeted which resulted in 39 arrests across NI. This provided an opportunity to provide an update of some successes to date and reaffirm our commitment to tackling societal issues. This year's national campaign dates coincided with the introduction of further offences under the Justice (Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 to further raise awareness of these new crimes and encourage reporting.
- As part of the VAWG strategy and Safer Spaces theme CPO worked with Ulster University to talk to international students about Personal Safety.
- NTE patrols proactively look out for predatory behaviours to safeguard those presenting as vulnerable.
- Crime prevention presentations throughout the District are carried out by our Crime Prevention Officer and Neighbourhood Police Teams.
- Online safety is delivered in schools throughout the District by Neighbourhood Officers.
- PSNI are thankful for additional funding provided from PCSP for Cameras for victims of Domestic Abuse.
- Social Media to raise profile – regular posts to raise awareness of new legislation regarding stalking, domestic abuse, and safe socialising.
- Working group established to revisit safety for Women and Girls in the City Centre and to promote safe socialising.
- PPB & Support Hub meeting with Foyle Family Justice Centre in order to seek feedback and share learning.
- Dip sampling of investigations for compliance and quality which is victim focused.
- The senior leadership team in Derry City & Strabane have signed the White Ribbon Charter (to engage men and boys to end violence against women and girls).

CI McManus took members through two case studies:

1. Police investigated the attempted murder of a female in 2022 and had been unable to apprehend the suspect as he had fled across the border to ROI. Through ongoing engagement with other criminal justice partners and the Public Prosecution Service Trade and Cooperation Agreement Warrants (TaCA) have now been issued by PPS and the extradition of the suspect will now be sought from Ireland.
2. Police attended a domestic incident where the victim alleged that she had been assaulted and strangled by her partner. Attending officers immediately utilised BWV to record her account. The suspect was arrested and the matter investigated by Domestic Abuse Officers. Despite no formal complaint from the victim a prosecution the file was submitted to the Public Prosecution Service

who directed prosecution. The suspect was convicted of common assault and non-fatal strangulation due to the evidence obtained by police in the absence of a formal complaint and the victim who had declined to attend court.

With the new legislation PSNI can apply to court for a civil order quicker for domestic abuse; they can apply for a court order. This was introduced as it was recognised there was a gap between suspect and victim.

Assessment

- To reduce the risk of harm. In two cases above Police actions reduced the risk of harm and took action to protect victims.
- More work is required to deal with 'violence with injury'. PSNI work with partners re significant rise in rape allegations to ensure they are mitigating any risk. They are conscious the effect this can have on victim and on sense of safety.
- PSNI believe that being safe in public spaces and online are a basic expectation.
- PSNI are committed to the **PSNI Tackling Violence against women and Girls Action Plan**.

Outcome/Result

PSNI will work hard to implement our 7-year Tackling VAWG Action Plan which incorporates the three themes of Building Trust and Confidence, Relentless Perpetrator Pursuit, and Safer Spaces.

In addition, PSNI will support partners and will seek support from partners with implementing wider initiatives.

Questions from Members as follows:

Recent Attack on Young Girl in New Year - An elected representative mentioned the attack on a young girl which happened in the New Year and created widespread concern in the Waterside. This has caused a fear of people using taxis. PSNI and CCI were thanked for their collaboration in trying to explore every possibility to apprehend the person. It was great to see a multi-agency approach and that PSNI have recognised it remains an issue in the area. The issue has been raised and discussed by full Council also. It is hoped that the collaborative work will continue and is encouraged by the Justice Minister.

CI McManus stated that everybody has a responsibility and what they do about a situation.

The Chairperson agreed and stated these issues were too prevalent in Derry and in society. The new legislation for women and girls subjected to abuse has been welcomed. Misogyny is there also and wider pieces of work around it were encouraged. The Chairperson said she hoped it was a priority for the new Justice Minister.

Insp Cathal Pearce was welcomed to take members through Outcome 2 of the report. He informed members that he had been NPT Sgt for Waterside Rural and had been promoted to his current position.

He referred Members to the following statistics in relation to **Outcome 2 – We have confidence in Policing:**

Drug Seizures

- Total drug recorded offences FYT 31st December 2023 is 683, slight reduction of 47 offences from PFY of 730 (-6.4%).
- Trafficking of drugs for same period has reduced by 9 Offences to 107 as opposed to PFY being 116, reduction of -7.8%.
- The offence of possession of Drugs has decreased 38 Offences from PFY in respect of the same period, 576 from 614, this being -6.2% reduction.

The attached Drug seizures and arrests show that the statistics here remain relatively stable for the 12-month rolling period up to 30th September 2023.

Insp Cathal Pearce said drug seizures were the same as across the province. A snapshot of drug type seizures for 12 month period until 30 September 2023 are listed below:

Pregabalin – 122 (Comparison to 477 Seizures in another area). This is causing the most harm; the drug is being misused and bought via the internet therefore is more potent. The user is not aware of this and it can cause a build-up of toxins.

Morphine – 3 - This is a slow-release pain prescribed medication and is stolen.

Benzodiazepines – 107 (Comparison to 489 in another area)

Cannabis - 467

Cocaine – 135

Heroin - 5 (BCPD 65) all areas within Local Policing show seizures except for Causeway Coast and Glens and Ards and North Down.

Insp Pearce stated that through mobile phone extraction information is linked to supply and with a warrant PSNI can catch people. Incidents of postal seizures of Intercepted parcels of controlled drugs are between 12-20 a month. A lot of drugs are being bought through the internet as opposed to through a dealer. A legitimate name may be used to order drugs but the person collecting the drugs is a different person who meets the postman to collect the drugs package in the driveway. This may be the reason for the reduction of 4.7% of drug seizures.

Response

- NPT's and DST across the Area continue proactive Operations targeting drug supply and the harm posed by same.
- All suspects detected for drug offences or encountered by Police are considered for safeguarding and support referrals, via Social Services or Health trusts.
- Juveniles detected by Police are referred to Youth Justice Substance misuse awareness courses if they meet eligibility criteria for Non-Court disposals. (CRN)
- Area Drugs lead and DST have scheduled regular meetings with C1 Organised Crime Branch to discuss Drug trends and foster closer working links.
- DST work closely with UKBA and Royal Mail security branch and as a result 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.
- NPT's continue to work with all partners and stakeholders to gather Information on those suspected of being involved in Drug supply and offending.
- City Centre NPT are working with Staff from Night Support workers and Foyle Haven to assist the emerging trend of Opioid overdose, involving Naxolone administration.

- Police have recently reviewed the RAPID drugs bin strategy, to ensure sites are visited regularly.
- NPT's across the Area continue critical schools' education work highlighting the harm posed by drug misuse and indeed the consequences of becoming involved in Drug offending and Criminality.

As part of our Children and Young Persons Strategy: We continue to quality assure/dip sample check JSA Stop and Searches and look at what can be done to manage the impact a stop & search can have on a child or young person.

Insp Pearce took members through two case studies:

1. An intelligence led search took place in Strabane where a large quantity of drugs was seized, including 50 bars of Xanex. The total street value was £3050. PSNI are awaiting forensic evidence on the drug seizure. Two male suspects were arrested; both men have extensive previous history of drug misuse and offending.
2. A residential property was searched in Strathfoyle area where 48gms of suspected herbal cannabis was found and 97gms of suspected cocaine. The total street value was £6780. Scales and dealing bags were also found. The suspect had gone on the run but was located the next day and was subject to Prison Release Article 17 licence conditions for drug supply and was also in breach of a suspended sentence. The suspect was remanded in custody and is awaiting sentencing. The suspect is linked to a group in Belfast.

Assessment

- Police within DCS area continue to treat drug misuse and supply as a priority, it remains a dedicated area priority.
- The issue of drug supply and the harm caused by same is a societal issue, Police and all other stakeholders must work together, as an enforcement only strategy will not work.
- Police continue great engagement work primarily through NPTs involving many partners and agencies including DePaul Ireland, Northlands centre along with ARC Fitness and HURT Charity.

Outcome/Result

- Drug trends within DCS area are in line with all other areas of Northern Ireland.
- Drug misuse and supply continues to evolve and new methods of use and supply feature regularly.
- Police within DCS area continue efforts to tackle the issue, liaise closely with PPS to ensure that those detected by PSNI are dealt with appropriately.
- In many incidents, PSNI seize cash and vehicles when investigating drug supply and always seek to ensure that proceeds of Crime Act seizures are progressed in as effective a manner as possible.
- Engagement with all stakeholders to address issues of addiction and harm from misuse, and partnership working as outlined above.
- Education by working with partners involved such as DePaul Ireland and ARC Fitness Recovery.
- Enforcement where appropriate, targeting those involved in drug supply to the full extent of the law within the Criminal Justice system.

Insp Pearce stated PSNI were working with all partners in relation to current drug

trends.

The Chairperson thanked Insp Pearce for the update and commented that it was taking drugs off the street. The report had highlighted various issues regarding Pregabalin and other drugs and the levels of drugs being brought in to the City. She referred to postal interception which was prevalent in bringing in drugs.

The following queries/issues arose:

Use of Naloxone – A member raised a query regarding the use of naloxone and the number of overdoses in the city over the past number of months and added that Foyle Haven have seen a significant increase.

Response – CI McManus agreed to ask why a pilot wasn't being used in the Derry & Strabane area.

PSNI

Issue of Different Addresses - The Chairperson asked how were PSNI dealing with the issue of different addresses being used by dealers to?

Response: Insp Pearce said that checks are carried out regarding these incidents and all information/intelligence is analysed. Full research is carried out in advance and PSNI will always make an assessment around vulnerability if a person's address is being used by drug dealers.

Drugs – Member of Public submitted to Medical Institution - A case was referred to where a person involved in drugs was submitted to medical institution in Waterside. When released money had built up in bank account and £6,500 was handed over for more drugs. This went on for approximately 10 years. Nobody could do anything as the person was an adult. This type of endless cycle needs to be broken. Some intervention is required at an early stage as it is happening repeatedly. If in an institution the money should not be allowed to build up; the criminal element relies on that.

Stop and Search Powers – a member stated that the percentage of stops for Strabane is significantly higher than Derry, i.e. 5% in Strabane and 1.2% in Derry, which impacts on confidence in policing, particularly young people and their attitude towards PSNI.

Response - Insp Pearce informed members that officers in Strabane have more experience and are more comfortable with the use of Stop and Search. Officers must show reasonable grounds for stop and search. Officers in Derry area focus on JSA powers.

CI McManus said that demand is also a factor and that members should look at the number of uses as well as the percentage: 153 calls in the City and 27 calls in Strabane last week. The NPT in Strabane is there a long time, they are steady and consistent and therefore are more experienced and confident using these powers.

CI McManus referred to the prime example of good collaboration re addiction. PSNI work closely with partners to address issues with regard to addiction.

The member asked if PSNI have more experience in Strabane, then why the need to use Stop and Search more often? Even if they are not juveniles they see what is happening; PSNI look like the enemy to young people.

Response – PSNI use practices in the report card. PSNI are aware of the impact on young people and they want children to understand their threats also.

Education of Drugs – The NPTeam met with young people to discuss the misuse of drugs. Positive outcome was that the young people got together and designed a comic

in and around misuse of drugs. Youths from both Pennyburn Youth Club and Cathedral Youth Club met weekly and alternated between the two venues. The comic will hopefully be distributed to other community groups/youth centres. Thanks was passed to the NPT who took the time to collaborate with the young people on this project.

Shared Learning/Good Practice – In response to a member who asked if best practice and information sharing across districts, PSNI confirmed that this happens on a regular basis.

Engaged and Supportive Communities

Insp Pearce took members through report **Outcome 3: We have Engaged and Supportive Communities:**

Shoplifting - Last December there was a significant increase in shoplifting. This was experienced in all areas in Northern Ireland and could be linked to the “cost of living crisis”. There may specifically be a link to drug misuse/action in this District. While there is still an increase the rise has stabilised.

ASB - Problem solving approach to ASB has been maximised, again using statistical data to understand the issue. There have been some real successes that have had a significant impact on the quality of life for our community, eg, Strathfoyle. The rise in ASB is being reviewed, ie, personal/causation factors.

Halloween/Christmas – Three themes were focused on.

- **Safe socialising** (upskirting, downblousing, and cyber-flashing).
- **Safe shopping** (clothing – sold on for maximum value, alcohol and cosmetics).
- **Safe roads** (focus on drink/drugs driving).

Response

- Neighbourhood teams have been using crime analysis to set team objectives – this ensures activity is evidence based.
- Continue to roll out “safe shop” delivery to retailers; this was funded by PCSP.
- Our Crime Prevention Officer attended retail outlets to offer security advice re prevention of theft of high value goods.
- Problem solving folders have been created and are ongoing in relation to specific problems – such as B&B’s in the City focusing on ASB, criminality, and vulnerability for those involved and how the community has been impacted.
- The problem-solving folders have focused on the victim, offender, and location. Sometimes the focus has been on one element or all three.
- Specific targeted patrolling areas were created based on crime analysis to ensure PSNI are in the right place for preventing crime & ASB. Time/resources were invested into high visibility, with foot/bike patrolling in these areas.
- Collaborative working with AGS – sharing information regarding live time cross-border crime – shoplifting.

Insp Pearce referred members to a good new story:

1. A 91-year-old in Limavady Road was held overnight by 3 juveniles. Proactive work was carried out and included the use of CCTV. All suspects were arrested and charged. The victim saw that PSNI dealt with the issue correctly. This was positive work with a good outcome.

Assessment

- During Operation 'Seasons Greetings' effective policing took place where community could see that crime does not pay.
- Good use of Barring Notices and Speedy Justice (16 suspects identified for CRN's and 10 for barring notices).
- One group of shoplifters responsible for £700 of goods from one business.
- Co-operation between City Centre Beat, retail staff, and City Centre Radio. This resulted in two from a group being caught, goods recovered, and restorative justice for juveniles.
- **Road Safety Week** – road safety operation took place. A number of offences were detected around road worthiness, where approximately 20 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued. Enquiries being made re 6 suspected illegal taxis.

Outcome/Result

- Those identified with vulnerability/poverty as an aspect of theft were referred to SVP or SS.
- Shoplifting is a District priority, and an Acquisitive Crime Strategy has been implemented with some great results. PSNI to continue to engage with partners.
- **ASB** – several working groups have been set up to work collaboratively on issues. Officers continue to attend meetings within the community. PSNI value the good relationships they have with partners and the community.

The Chair thanked Chief Insp McManus and Insp Pearce for taking members through the report. She stated the event she attended in Foyle College on road safety was harrowing.

Problem Solving Folders – in response to a member, PSNI confirmed that this allows an analysis of an issue. PSNI can look at the victim, social behaviour, and locations; PSNI try to break the triangle by removing one element and hope that the triangle will fall apart. It allows for more patrolling, CCTV, crime prevention and to target repeat offenders.

PCPM 04/24

Comments/Questions on District Commander's Report

The Chair welcomed comments/questions from members which were as follows:

1. **Copper Cable** - On two previous occasions, underground BT copper cable was stolen in the Cranagh/Glenelly area and has caused significant disturbance to residents in the area. Can PSNI advise what measures they are taking to prevent this type of theft in the future and what information/results have they obtained from their investigation into the two recent thefts?

Response – This is not just DCSDC it is in all areas. A single point of contact is to be established for BT and Openreach so that they are all linked in one place. PSNI are analysing thefts of copper pipes on building sites. BT cables are a significant issue also. BT hope to tie down their cables with the use of other cables and clips. This will all take time to secure.

2. **Cross-sectoral Successes** - With the excellent work being actioned to identify and address the key issues, can inclusion of strategic and operational cross-sectoral successes be shared?

Response – the following successes were shared with PCSP members:

- Misuse of Drugs magazine.

- Bonfire group.
- £6,000 towards 'tackling paramilitary crime programme' with Man Utd which took place Sept-Dec 2023.
- **Linked with Belfast in 'Safe Shopping Programme'** – this involved taking good practice and sharing own best practice.
- **Transport set up by Council** – a shared perspective to solve transport problem.
- Within the City, interagency work with taxi firms and businesses to ensure safety of public.

Insp Pearce said that people are invested in the district and are coming together to solve the problems.

3. **Increase of Machinery and Livestock** - Due to the increase in thefts of machinery and livestock in the Derry and Strabane rural district, what steps are PSNI taking to reassure farmers and rural dwellers that they are safe in their own communities? Furthermore, what resources are PSNI allocating to both the prevention of these crimes and prosecutions being brought towards the perpetrators?

Response – PSNI are aware of the livestock issue with people being encouraged to report. PSNI have a rural crime team with cross border meetings held monthly. Policing Board and NPTs have central meeting where they share good practice. Training takes place for officers. Insp Pearce said all information will be taken on board.

Rural Crime – In response to a member who asked what can be done locally, e.g. can more patrols be assigned during the night to try and address the issue, PSNI agreed that they can create a target patrol area, however it can be difficult to assign a base for this. PSNI are aware that people are afraid in these areas and will take information back and will report back to members.

PSNI

Copper piping – a member referred to an incident he witnessed some time ago where he had witnessed a man take a vanload of copper, wire and cabling to a scrap metal company and was paid several thousand pounds in cash, therefore there was no trace. He added that there needs to be a system where this is stopped.

Criminals are back and forth across the border; they are possibly closer to Draperstown PSNI.

PCPM 05/24 Local Policing Plan 2024/2025

The Chairperson stated that due to another meeting taking place in the Council Chamber the meeting had to come to a close. The Local Policing Plan would be included on the agenda for the PCSP meeting scheduled for 27th February 2024.

PCSP Manager & PSNI

PCPM 06/24 Any Other Business

As there was no further business to report, the Chair thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 2.20pm.

PCPM 07/24 Date of Next Meeting

The next PCSP Meeting - **Tuesday 26 March 2024, Green Room, Guildhall**

Policing and Community Safety Partnership Meeting Policing Committee

**Derry City and Strabane District Council
Tuesday 6 February 2024
Council Chamber, Guildhall**

ACTIONS

Page 6 PCPM 03/24	Use of Naloxone – PSNI to ascertain why a pilot scheme wasn't being introduced in the Derry and Strabane Council area.	PSNI
Page 9 PCPM 04/24	Rural Crime – PSNI to take information back on whether locally anything can be done on targeting and patrolling specific areas of vulnerable people.	PSNI
Page 9 PCPM 05/24	Local Policing Plan 2024/2025 The Local Policing Plan 2024/2025 will be included in the agenda for the next PCSP meeting on 27 th February 2024.	PCSP Manager & PSNI