

Minutes of Policing and Community Safety Partnership Meeting POLICING COMMITTEE

**Glenelly Room, Council Offices, Strabane
Monday 3 June 2019**

Present: Mr Martin Connolly, Cllr Shauna Cusack, Ald Maurice Devenney, Cllr Sandra Duffy (Chair), Cllr Paul Fleming, Ald Darren Guy, Miss Una McCartney, Mr Noel McCartney, Mr Patrick McGonagle, Cllr Ruairi McHugh, Mrs Margaret McLaughlin, Cllr Martin Reilly, Mr Andrew Russell, Mr William Sayers, Cllr Brian Tierney, Ald Graham Warke, Ms Linda Watson, Supt. Gordon McCalmont (PSNI), CI Rosie Thompson (PSNI), CI Johnny Hunter (PSNI), and CI Bob Blemmings (PSNI).

In Attendance: Vanessa Russell (PCSP Officer) and Ms Ciara Bond.

PCPM 09/19 **Welcome and Introduction**

The Chair, Cllr Sandra Duffy, introduced herself as being a Sinn Fein Councillor who had just taken up the role of Chair for the first time on PCSP.

The Chair requested that all members complete the forms distributed, ie, Home Safety Referral Form (Part A) and Declaration of Interest forms.

Tragic Incident in Galliagh - The Chair referred to the tragic and sensitive incident in Galliagh over the weekend and said there was no formal information at present. She asked the PSNI for an update. The PSNI representative thanked all for their assistance over the weekend, he gave an update and stated that the team were working on the case. A vehicle was stolen from Oakfield and had crashed into a lamp post where it went on fire. One body had been recovered but they are not at the stage of identification. DNA has yet to be carried out. It was being treated as a fatal road traffic collision. There are families involved that don't know if it is their loved one.

An elected member gave condolences to the family concerned and thanked J Hunter (PSNI) and his team who were working on this over the weekend. The concern of the communities were taken on board and hourly meetings were held in Strand Road. The help provided from PSNI and the hourly meetings were appreciated by the community.

Lyra McKee - The Chair stated that as incoming Chair it would be remiss of her not to mention condolences to the family, friends and wider circle, of Lyra McKee. The investigation is ongoing.

The PSNI representative stated that there is more movement in the investigation. They have linked with detectives but there is concern as to what can be shared as the situation could be worsened.

Congratulations to PCSP – PCSP was congratulated by the Chair on the recent awards which were held in Parliament Buildings, Stormont, as follows:

- Winner of the Award for Contribution to Embedding a Culture of Lawfulness with the ‘Recruited’ Film
- Runner-Up for the Award for Outstanding Impact in Tackling ASB with the Community Safety Wardens
- Runner-Up for the Award for Excellence in Collaboration with the Derry & Strabane Multi-Agency Support Hub

PCPM 10/19 **Apologies**

Dermot Harrigan (PCSP Manager).

PCPM 11/19 **Minutes of PCSP Meeting of 29 April 2019**

The minutes of the previous PCSP Meeting of 29 April 2019 were checked for accuracy and were proposed by Cllr Brian Tierney and seconded by Ms Linda Watson.

There were no matters arising.

PCPM 12/19 **Presentation on Police Performance for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 (Annual Report)**

Supt. McCalmont stated he was delighted to be back as district commander with a dedicated command team. He introduced CI B Blemmings, CI J Hunter and CI R Thompson as the new Chief Inspectors for the district.

There are positive/negative issues within the report with a key area around harassment (with approximately 80% attributed to online harassment).

There was a reduction in Victim Based Crime with a reduction of 27 which is positive. There was an increase in sex offences and rape, which is a trend across NI and can be attributed to increased confidence in reporting, so there needs to be focus on this area.

Supt. McCalmont highlighted key aspects of the report:

Theme 1: Communication and Engagement

Overall reduction in number of victims of crime and outcome rates have improved from the 3rd quarter report from 29.1% to 30%. There is great partnership work in this area. The Support Hub provides collaborative work for those who are vulnerable within the community.

There have been approximately 50,000 calls for service this year, with an increase of 20 complaints against police compared to the previous financial year although this does not cause massive concern.

Theme 2: Protection of People and Communities

ASB - There has been an overall reduction in ASB of 8.3%. This is as a result of close links between Neighbourhood Teams and working collaboratively with CSW and other organisations. Meaningful solutions are being given to young people moving them away from ASB.

Hate Crime – confident in building relationships in this area. This was evident in the diversity events held in the Guildhall last year and something similar may be held again this year.

Crimes Against Older People – PSNI have been responsive in both Castledearg and Strabane where arrests were made. The NPT is working to enhance community engagement, especially in rural areas and the CPO has provided crime prevention advice in relation to cold callers and scam calls.

Children at Risk – collaborative work is being carried out with various agencies. NPTs assign officers from teams to act as specific point of contact for Children's Homes. A dedicated CASE officer manages engagement with local schools.

Domestic Abuse – there has been an increase in offences recently. There are positive outcome rates. Safeguarding and vulnerability are key issues where necessary support is required. The Support Hub overlaps with Children at Risk working with other partners. There are good evidence-based practices. Actions are taken away by PSNI and partners with long-term solutions.

People are Safe on the Roads – collaborative work with other organisations in relation to getting cars off the road is key in a lot of areas. There is an increase from last year in relation to data re children and young people. More education needs to happen in this area with a focus on road safety.

Supt. McCalmont **agreed** to strip back the data relating to the number of young people killed or seriously injured on our roads to see if it's young people in run-arounds or RTCs and will bring back an analysis to the PCSP to see if there is any work required in terms of education etc.

PSNI

Theme 3: Reduction in Offending

Drugs - Officers are pursuing people in relation to drugs where there are organised crime gangs. They are very focused with the crime team and there is positive work being carried out in relation to prescription drugs. Work is ongoing in this area.

PSNI continue to work with partners in relation to minor drugs/alcohol disposals and to provide further help and assistance to those involved via interventions and restorative practices.

The RAPID drug disposal bins have removed 19,793 tablets from circulation across the district.

ATM Thefts – there has been heavy involvement in this area. There have been no ATM thefts in Derry & Strabane which is positive from an organisational perspective.

Paramilitary Style Attacks – Republican shootings has increased from 6 to 10. There have been none over the last few months. Groups are under pressure by the community. It is challenging to get ahead of a paramilitary assault where pressure and meaningful outcomes are key.

July last year has had an impact in stopping the city moving forward.

PCPM 13/19 **Positive News**

EU funding has been obtained for community policing, with an additional 190 constables appointed, 52 of which will be in neighbourhood roles over the next 6 months. The community will be involved in how these are utilised. PSNI are currently working through the detail but there will be an enhancement in Strabane, Waterside and Cityside, focusing on problem solving. It is anticipated that this will be completed by October 2019.

The Chair thanked Supt. McCalmont for his report and welcomed the announcement re community policing as it is known the impact this will have.

PCPM 14/19 **Questions on the District Commander's Report**

Supt. McCalmont took members through the questions that had been submitted in advance of the meeting. In addition to the written response provided clarification was also provided on the following:

Drugs Bins Update – The PCSP Officer confirmed that both Long's at Woodburn and Gee's at Glendermott Road had been asked if they would host a drugs bin, however both had declined. She explained that they are considering a few other locations in the Waterside area and an update would be provided to the PCSP.

NH Policing – this news was welcomed but reference was made to Caw/Nelson Drive area where it was hoped someone stable would be assigned to the area. PSNI confirmed that there are limits to working to get better understanding to address issues as it is always an area that is low on resources. It is hoped that relationships could be built up in areas.

ASB – funding for CSW is in place for this year. CCTV has been welcome in Strabane town to reduce ASB.

There was a reduction in ASB by -8.3% and it is hoped that this stays down. It will be difficult over the next couple of months when pressure may need to be put on teams.

Cars on Road – cars are not always removed quickly and Council may not always be made aware of a specific issue. The process of lifting cars needs to be reviewed as it causes more ASB if a car has been left sitting in a local area. There are stand-alone schools’ officers who deal with other issues who could carry out educational work in this area within schools. CI Hunter **agreed** to ensure supervisors and call management staff are aware of the call-out number for lifting cars.

PSNI

Paramilitary Style Attacks and Stop & Search – how PSNI are going to reduce both of these. It is about building confidence in community policing and getting the correct balance. The focus is to get it right re community impact and being sensible about it. Supt. McCalmont advised that some investigations are on-going and PSNI will continue to try and disrupt individuals.

Recent Pipe Bomb Incident – this investigation in the Waterside area is currently live and is being treated as a paramilitary style attack.

Recent shooting in Community – PSNI have not been able to define it, there is a criminal aspect, awaiting intelligence re community feedback.

Prescription Drugs through Post Office – an independent member, on a number of occasions, has been asked to take bags full of drugs to the drugs bins which were delivered to houses within the community by the Post Office. This needs addressed/highlighted and training provided within the Post Office.

PSNI confirmed they work closely with the postal services. There are gangs using mules to post drugs across the UK. Links will be checked within the Post Office and feedback given at the next meeting.

PSNI

Offences in relation to Older People – it was confirmed that the Crime Prevention Officer should be in place in the coming months.

It was mentioned that an older person in the Strabane area had been burgled and whilst PSNI were contacted nobody ever came back to the individual as a follow-up. The general consensus of older people is that feedback is not good from PSNI.

Supt. McCalmont stated he would look into this.

PSNI

Road Safety in relation to Scramblers/Quads – young people are driving on roads/pavements when using scramblers/quads.

Supt. McCalmont confirmed this has to be done at source. NPTs should be able to identify people and help get a workable solution, with possibly some social media focus. NPT officers can go and approach the family if they're given a name/address, etc.

Death by Unlawful Driving – statistics on page 1 and page 9 of PSNI report appear to be contradictory.

Supt. McCalmont confirmed that the data would be reviewed and feedback given at the next meeting.

PSNI

Stop & Search Statistics – a breakdown as to how many times an individual was stopped in a year was requested. The statistics could relate to the same person therefore there could be merit in obtaining this information.

Supt. McCalmont stated that it would be considered as to how this could be presented and would feed back to members.

PSNI

Drug Charges – explanation was required as to why drug charges are not reported.

Supt. McCalmont stated that the data for drug charges is not available as yet. This will be provided by Headquarters Statistics Branch in due course. Charges in this area are at high level as resolution with proper support is a more meaningful solution.

It was discussed by members that a presentation on drugs covering arrests and evidence may be beneficial.

Supt. McCalmont suggested that officer J O'Friel may be able to do a presentation and provide an insight into the work that she does. He will check this out and revert to members. The Chair thanked Supt. McCalmont and stated the presentation would be useful.

PSNI

PCPM 15/19

Local Policing Review 2018 Public Consultation

Supt. McCalmont referred to the report and is confident that information was addressed. He advised that the value of NPTs was the one main area that arose as part of this consultation and this is why additional resources are being provided to NPTs.

Drugs is a major issue that was raised and specific targeting is to be carried out rather than low level issues. Multi-agency work will continue in this area to validate the ongoing work.

PCPM 16/19 **Any Other Business**

Condolences - The Chair gave condolences to William Sayers on the recent death of his mother.

Discussion took place on the following:

Delay in MOT – If date is secured for MOT can car be driven prior to MOT.

PSNI confirmed that car will not be covered through insurance therefore the vehicle cannot be driven during this time. Contact MOT centre regularly for cancellation.

Searches in Strabane – during searches in the Strabane area the wrong house was searched and the conduct of one officer was questioned. It was questioned if community police were there.

Supt. McCalmont confirmed NH Team were there. R Thompson to discuss further with elected member after the meeting.

Previous PCSP Members – thanks to be passed onto elected PCSP members who were either not returned or didn't stand for election for their work throughout their time on the PCSP.

Flags – there is still concern over Parachute Regiment flags which are being flown, the link to soldier F, and members are concerned it is a hate crime. There was concern also that if challenged it may exacerbate the issue and poses pressure for that community. If one area is challenged about flags then all areas should be challenged on their removal.

An independent member stated PCSP members were leaders in own communities and elected by them. He felt that members should show leadership through PCSP and address it through PCSP going forward.

Supt. McCalmont expressed concern as it is not yet the summer and there is contention over the issue. The reality is that unless it is a public safety issue it is not PSNI responsibility when flags are put up nor is it their responsibility to take them down. It is not a crime to put up/take down a flag. It is illegal if it is a breach of peace.

Solutions are required with regard to protocols. It is difficult and frustrating for the PSNI to manage as there are sensitivities around it and leadership is required.

After further discussion on issuing a statement in relation to flags it was felt by some PCSP members that it would make things more difficult putting communities, PCSP members, and families under more pressure.

Bomb at Courthouse 2018 – An update on progress of investigation was requested.

Supt. McCalmont stated that without compromising the investigation there are clear lines of enquiry and that there are a lot of specialists involved in the case. PSNI have been successful in preventing other attacks within the City.

PCPM 17/19 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next PCSP Meeting is to take place on Monday 24 June 2019 in St Columb's Park House, Derry at 2.00pm. The meeting closed at approximately 3.45 pm.