



Belfast District Council

Report to:	Health and Environmental Services Committee
Subject:	Update on Work of the Belfast (District) Policing and Community Safety Partnerships
Date:	4th March, 2015
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP), and the four District PCSPs (DPCSPs), were formally established in May 2012. These Partnerships are facilitated by the Council and overseen regionally by a Joint Committee consisting of representatives from the Department of Justice and the Northern Ireland Policing Board. Membership is made up of elected representatives, independent members (publicly appointed) and statutory/voluntary designated organisations which play a role in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.
1.2	In the 2014/2015 financial year, the Joint Committee provided the PCSP with £761,520 of which £486,520 and £275,000 was directed towards service delivery and core costs respectively. Members will also be aware that a further £122,500 of the Health and Environmental Services Department's revenue estimates was allocated to the (D)PCSPs to support service delivery.
1.3	(D)PCSPs aim to make our community safer. They do this by focussing on the policing and community safety issues that matter most in local areas. They consult and engage with the local community to identify and prioritise issues of concern in relation to policing and community safety and develop plans to tackle these issues. They also monitor police performance and work to gain the co-operation of the public with the police in preventing crime; and deliver a reduction in crime and enhance community safety through various interventions and initiatives.

2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>2014/2015</p> <p>In 2014/2015, the (D)PCSPs have successfully delivered a series of community safety and policing initiatives across the city. Some examples of this work include:</p>
	<p>Strategic Contribution</p>
2.2	<p>The role of Belfast PCSP is to develop a strategic citywide response to policing and community safety needs. Some examples of this work are:</p>
2.3	<p>Human Trafficking – Belfast PCSP has continued to develop new and innovative ways of raising awareness of Human Trafficking not only in Belfast but across Northern Ireland. This approach has taken many forms including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Frontline Service Providers event attended by 200 representatives from the hospitality industry, taxi drivers, council officers and postal workers. This event was designed to improve knowledge among front line workers of the “tell tale” signs of human trafficking to improve detection. ▪ The PCSP is represented on the NI Assembly Strategic Group tasked with raising awareness of this issue. This approach has been recognised and supported by the Minister for Justice, David Ford, OFMDFM Junior Ministers Jonathan Bell and Jennifer McCann and the National Crime Agency. ▪ Hosted in conjunction with the Lord Mayor, the EU Anti-Trafficking Co-Ordinator, Maria Vassiladou to learn about the European approach to the issue. ▪ Launched the Human Trafficking Gift Box on the front lawn of City Hall. This initiative was the first of its type in Ireland which provided the community with a chance to learn more on this issue. ▪ Commissioned an awareness raising DVD and online campaign endorsed by the Minister for Justice. To date, 1,000 DVDs have been distributed as part of the training package.
2.4	<p>Drug Dealing – Belfast PCSP has also taken strategic ownership of an interagency approach to reducing drug dealing. An Advisory Group of PCSP Members, PSNI, Crimestoppers and service providers previously developed a campaign to reduce drug dealing by encouraging people to report suspicious activity to Crimestoppers. This campaign has been further developed by the PCSP this year to include an advertisement on television.</p>
2.5	<p>Furthermore, the Belfast PCSP has led a multi agency approach to the increasing issue of irresponsible disposal of sharps/needles in and around our parks and other public conveniences. This was an increasing problem for both the Parks and Waste Departments.</p>
2.6	<p>These initiatives include the installation of specific sharps bins in four of our most problematic public conveniences. This is the first time this type of intervention has been developed in Northern Ireland. This intervention also included the introduction of ‘One Hit Kits’, an education programme implemented in conjunction with the needle exchanges.</p>

2.7	<p>Night Time Economy – Belfast PCSP has secured the co-operation of all previous “Get Home Safe Scheme” partners as well as night-time volunteer groups to form the Safer Belfast Co-Ordination Team. This Group meets on a bi-monthly basis to discuss ongoing issues and to develop new and innovative ways of dealing with night-time economy issues and to respond to larger events organised by Belfast City Council including Tennants Vital, Belsonic, St Patricks Day and Freshers.</p>
2.8	<p>The Belfast PCSP is currently working with all partners on the development of a Safer Belfast Phone application in order to target those most affected by issues relating to the night-time economy.</p>
2.9	<p>Crime Prevention Event and Youth Awards – Belfast PCSP delivered a citywide Crime Prevention and Safety Event in December, 2014 with over 1,400 participants from across the city. This event provided the community with invaluable safety and crime prevention advice whilst providing a platform for engagement to the public with our statutory partners.</p>
2.10	<p>The Belfast PCSP also delivered its annual Youth Awards, opened by the Minister for Justice, David Ford. The Awards involved 300 young people from across all community backgrounds attending City Hall where they were recognised for some of the outstanding work they have achieved within their communities. The PCSP recognised the Lord Mayor’s priorities for the year and helped the First Citizen develop and deliver the first Lord Mayor, ‘Best of Belfast’ award.</p>
<p>Responding to Local Need</p>	
2.11	<p>DPCSPs in each of the four areas of Belfast (North, South, East and West) respond to local community safety needs whilst ensuring local accountability of policing. DPCSPs have undertaken this in a number of ways and one example of this work has been outlined below. However, there are also many other examples.</p>
2.12	<p>North DPCSP - Since March 2014, the North Belfast DPCSP has co-ordinated a multi-agency group called the Greater Ardoyne Tension Monitoring Group, which was established through Belfast City Council’s Peace III funded Tension Monitoring Project. The Group consists of community representatives from Woodvale, Upper Ardoyne, Ardoyne and Lower Oldpark, along with the PSNI, BELB and Belfast City Council.</p>
2.13	<p>The Group meets monthly and has developed a Neighbourhood Action Plan that addresses a wide range of issues that impact on local community tensions such as youth provision, communication, policing, diversionary activities, training and capacity building. Through the Group, a number of initiatives have taken place such as funding for a cross community Christmas event at Hillview, which was attended by more than 1,000 young people and support for local diversionary activities at Halloween, which resulted in 3 events. In addition, the Group ensured that information was shared between the communities about employment opportunities arising from the construction of a local nursing home.</p>
2.14	<p>South DPCSP - South DPCSP provided funding to the Men’s Advisory Project and Women’s Aid to develop and update their websites as well as making them mobile friendly. The websites ensure that each organisation has the opportunity to promote their services and highlight local support available to those who are victims of Domestic Violence.</p>
2.15	<p>The Partnership supported both organisations to launch their websites in City Hall. The launch event was attended by 120 participants from various community and</p>

	<p>statutory backgrounds with speakers from Women's Aid, the Belfast Domestic Violence Forum and the Men's Advisory Project. Those in attendance received information on the local services available within South Belfast. The launch event also provided an opportunity to showcase the artistic work of the young children living in the Women's Aid Hostel.</p>
2.16	<p><u>East DPCSP</u> - The Alive and Kicking project was aimed at engaging young people aged 13 to 14 years around issues relating to drugs and alcohol misuse. The project was funded by the East Belfast DPCSP and run in conjunction with the PSNI, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and FASA. The project culminated in the production of a website with the participating children outlining their views on how drugs or alcohol can ruin lives, by using examples of celebrities whose lives have been damaged through the misuse of drugs or alcohol. Strathearn School acted as the pilot for the project and it is now set to be rolled out to another two schools in East Belfast. The website containing the children's input can be viewed at www.aliveandkickingni.com</p>
2.17	<p><u>West DPCSP</u> - West Belfast DPCSP approved and delivered 14 Policing Committee projects. The Projects range from difficult and challenging diversionary and engagement initiatives with young people, particularly in areas where, historically confidence and engagement with the Police has been limited, to work with older members of our communities, providing them with vital advice and practical personal safety equipment to make them feel safer, and to also engage with the Police and each other.</p>
2.18	<p>A number of the projects delivered have engaged with and involved participants from across perceived divides in an attempt to create shared experiences and interests which may possibly cement future relationships both with themselves and with the Police. Structured engagement between the Police and our communities across West Belfast has been a vital part of the strategic delivery of the West Belfast DPCSP.</p> <p>Supporting Local Delivery</p>
2.19	<p><u>Small grants for local groups</u> – 35 groups were supported to provide services at a local level, representing an investment of around £144,000 in our city with the aim of improving co-operation between communities and local police; as well as supporting initiatives which offer positive opportunities and prevent people from becoming involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour. Some of the initiatives that the (D)PCSPs, supported alongside Neighbourhood Policing Teams, include sporting programmes, arts and culture schemes, education campaigns, cross community and intergenerational projects and community programmes.</p> <p><u>2014 onwards</u></p>
2.20	<p>The (D)PCSPs are currently developing Action Plans for the 2015-2016 period for submission to the Joint Committee. While these plans will focus primarily on the allocation of the Joint Committee's funding, they will also outline the (D)PCSPs work with neighbourhoods and organisations across the city that does not require a specific additional resource allocation.</p>
2.21	<p>In the coming year, the (D)PCSPs will continue to engage with the public as well as addressing the community safety priorities both on a strategic city-wide basis as well as within each area. It is likely that these will include issues such as anti-social behaviour, drugs and alcohol, burglary, hate crime, violent crime and fear of crime.</p>

2.22	The boundary extensions under Local Government Reform will clearly have an impact on the membership and geographies of the new (D)PCSPs. We are currently working with the Joint Committee to plan a process for moving to a new structure and securing appropriate resourcing arrangements.
2.23	The Joint Committee are currently in the process of reviewing the report from the Criminal Justice Inspectorate on the operation of PCSP's and its recommendations.
2.24	Some the key findings from the report are detailed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There should be one PCSP for each local council area – including Belfast without the need for DPCSPs. ▪ In line with the approach to good relations, a series of community safety indices should be developed and agreed. These should form the basis for the ongoing and longer term assessment of the success of PCSPs. ▪ From 2015 the local Councils should provide the compliance and assurance framework for PCSPs. The Community Plan should be the focal point for delivery of the long-term aims of the PCSP ▪ The recruitment process should actively encourage applications from young people and ethnic groups to increase diversity. ▪ Following implementation of the LGR, the cost of administration should not exceed 20% of the budget allocated to PCSPs.
2.25	The Joint Committee have committed to ongoing engagement with Council and PCSP Members before any final decisions are made on the recommendations.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<u>Financial Resources</u> £122,500 of service delivery costs per annum until March, 2016. This has already been agreed via the revenue estimates.
3.2	<u>Human Resources</u> None.
3.3	<u>Asset and Other Implications</u> None.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	None at present.

5	Call In
5.1	This decision is subject to Call In.

6	Recommendations
6.1	<p>The Committee is requested to note:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the contents of the report; and 2. that a report on a review of the (D)PCSPs will be brought before the Committee at a later date.

7	Decision Tracking
<p>Regular updates on (D)PCSP Performance reports will be brought before the Committee – Alison Allen, Safer City Manager.</p>	

8	Key to Abbreviations
<p>BELB – Belfast Education and Library Board (D)PCSP – (District) Policing and Community Safety Partnership OFMDFM – Office of the First and Deputy First Minister PCSP – Policing and Community Safety Partnership PSNI – Police Service of Northern Ireland</p>	

9	Documents Attached
<p>None</p>	