

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Policing and Community Safety Partnership
held remotely by zoom on Tuesday 16th March 2021 at 5.30 pm**

PRESENT:

Ms A Twomey (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor N Anderson
Councillor A Ewing
Councillor A Gowan
Councillor M Guy
Councillor A McIntyre
Councillor T Mitchell
Councillor S Skillen
Mr J Bentley
Ms G Conroy
Mrs Y Craig
Ms A Landa
Mrs P Leeson
Mr D McBurney
Mrs P Yellamaty

IN ATTENDANCE:

Acting Member Services / PCSP Manager
PCSP Officer (JB)
PCSP Officer (SA)
Member Services Officer (MC)

Designated Organisations

Chief Inspector J Wilson, Police Service of Northern Ireland
Ms J Harkness, Youth Justice Agency
Mr C Stitt, Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Ms E Millar, Education Authority

The Vice Chairman, Ms A Twomey, welcomed everyone to the meeting advising that it was being held via zoom due to the current Covid-19 restrictions and advised that she would chairing the meeting as the Chairman, Councillor A Swan was unable to attend.

1. **Apologies**

It was agreed that apologies be recorded on behalf of the Chairman Councillor A Swan and Councillor R Carlin, Ms F McKibben (Probation Board of NI), Mr P Blaney (NI Fire and Rescue Service), Superintendent J Mullan (PSNI) and Mrs A McCann, (Acting Head of Communities, LCCC). The Vice Chairman stated that an apology had been submitted for Mr D Marley (NI Housing Executive) and that Mr C Stitt would be attending in his place. An apology was submitted after the meeting for Mr G Doran.

2. **Minutes**

It was proposed by Councillor N Anderson, seconded by Councillor T Mitchell and agreed by the Partnership that the Minutes of the Private Meeting of the PCSP held on 19th January 2021 be confirmed and signed.

Councillor A McIntyre referred to the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policing Committee held in on 16th February 2021 and asked that further detail relating to the Lisburn SAFE presentation be included, namely the groups and the areas the organisation works with and reference to the inaccuracy included in the financial information provided by the organisation in their written submission which was clarified during the presentation.

It was proposed by Mrs Y Craig, seconded by Councillor T Mitchell and agreed, that subject to these amendments, that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policing Committee held on 16th February 2021, could be confirmed and signed.

During this item Councillor A Gowan and Mr C Stitt joined the meeting at 5.34pm.

3. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

The Vice Chairman, Ms A Twomey, outlined the procedure in respect of Declarations of Interest after which no declarations were made.

4. Report of the Acting PCSP Manager

It was agreed that the report and recommendations of the PCSP Manager be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below, and other items noted.

4.1 Update from Statutory Organisations

The Vice Chairman, Ms A Twomey, invited representatives from Statutory Organisations to provide updates on the work of their respective organisations with regards to community safety priorities. The following updates were provided:

Update from Chief Inspector J Wilson, PSNI

Chief Inspector, J Wilson stated that he would provide an update regarding the questions asked of Superintendent J Mullan by the Members at the previous meeting.

- There has been nine fixed penalty notices issued in the last quarter since the introduction of the new legislation regarding drivers using hand held phones – Chief Inspector J Wilson stated that the figures for this quarter were still provisional;
- There had been 4,249 scams registered with the PSNI across NI since January 2020 (figures exclude three months were figures were not available due to the Covid-19 response). 65.5% of these scams were carried out over the telephone, 26.5% over the internet with postal and door step scams accounting for 4% each. Mr J Bentley thanked the Chief Inspector, J Wilson for this update and it was agreed that he would forward these figures to Mr J Bentley by email.

The Vice Chairman, Ms A Twomey then asked if any Member had questions for Chief Inspector J Wilson.

- Councillor N Anderson referred to recent protests that had taken place in London and the response by the Metropolitan Police Service. He asked how the PSNI generally and the local district approach policing any protests. Chief Inspector J Wilson advised that restrictions relating to Covid-19 has made protests more difficult to police as large gatherings were now considered a breach of Covid-19 regulations, however the PSNI acknowledged that people's right to protest was a freedom in any democratic society. He referred to the PSNI's dedicated control service which manages the PSNI's response to Covid-19 related calls. This control room further allows the PSNI to seek specialist advice and guidance on how to respond to any incident or event which may not be complaint with Covid-19 restrictions. Each protest will present different challenges and therefore, the PSNI does not have one single response to how it would police protests but provide a comprehensive response to each individual one.

Update from Ms E Millar, Education Authority

Ms E Millar provided an update on the work undertaken by the Education Authority (EA) and stated that the majority of their work with young people remains online with face to face support being provided to the most vulnerable young people. She reassured the Partnership that the EA has been continuing to work with the PSNI and PCSP in relation to addressing Anti-Social Behaviour in Duncan's Dam. Ms E Millar advised that due to the Covid-19 restrictions the Youth Academy had not met, meaning that this engagement with vulnerable people had not been able to proceed and the EA was looking forward to the restrictions being eased so that these personal relationships could be re-established.

Ms E Millar wished to draw the following two issues to the Partnership's attention:

- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Youth Council will be holding a school conference on 26th March 2021 and will look at themes relating to environment, safe spaces, mental health and Covid-19. Ms E Millar encouraged members of the Partnership to engage with this conference as there were a number of themes which crossed over to the remit of the PCSP. At the Vice Chairman's request, it was agreed that the details of the school conference be circulated to all Members of the Partnership.
- EA Action Plan – Ms E Millar advised that this was currently being finalised with the EA identifying the priorities for the year ahead while addressing the impact of Covid-19, in particular the impact on mental health and the issues of isolation. This action plan will be circulated to the Partnership once finalised.

Mrs P Leeson asked if the EA had developed any contingency plans for how youth workers would engage with young people in the future if another Covid-19 wave occurs and if the EA will have youth workers available in person when young people have returned to school. Ms E Millar advised that youth workers will follow the guidance as outlined by the school and referred to the possibility of specific guidance for youth services being brought forward by the Education Minister. She further reconfirmed that personal relationships and face to face contact continues to be the preferred method for youth workers to engage with

young people but that as part of the learning process from Covid-19 experiences, the EA have developed a blended approach with face to face and remote interventions taking place, allowing for plans to be put in place for any further waves of Covid-19.

Update from Ms J Harkness, Youth Justice Agency

Ms J Harkness stated that the Youth Justice Agency (YJA) were also currently operating using a blended approach of remote and face to face interactions with young people. A new Youth Diversion Forum initiative will be launched next week. This will be a multi-agency group tasked with preventing young people from offending for the first time. This forum has been used by other council areas successfully.

Update from Mr C Stitt, Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Mr C Stitt advised that whilst the NI Housing Executive (NIHE) offices have been closed to the public due to the current Covid-19 restrictions, work has still been continuing especially with regards to repairs and maintenance. The NIHE have developed a customer portal which clients have been asked to use to register and report any issues online. He further stated that there were still officers physically patrolling estates but in smaller numbers than previously and that Patch Managers were always available, even outside normal working hours. Mr C Stitt advised that NIHE had recently appointed a new contractor and that due to staff having to self-isolate, there had been delays with some repair work, however this backlog was being addressed. He further advised that a support service was available for those who have found themselves in arrears due to circumstances brought on by Covid-19.

4.2 Action Plan 2021/22

The Acting PCSP Manager presented the Partnership with a revised Action Plan for 2021/22 reflecting the decision taken at the January 2021 meeting of the PCSP. The revisions include the following:

- £5,000 reduction in the Project Support Programme
- £4,000 reduction in the 4 Tier Programme
- £5,000 reduction in the Participatory Budgeting Programme
- £2,000 reduction in crime prevention
- £1,000 reduction in drugs and alcohol related violence
- £1,000 reduction in retail initiatives

These amends will facilitate the provision of a £20,000 contribution to Lisburn Safe and the purchase of up to four Speed Indicator Devices (SID), pending the outcome of a review scheduled for later in the financial year. The NI Policing Board also require the development of a strategic review and three year action plan for 2022-2025 and this has been reflected in the re-profiling of the budget.

Councillor M Guy thanked the Acting PCSP Manager for the report regarding these financial changes and referred to her concerns last month that a discussion regarding this had taken place without a formal report being brought forward for

consideration. She welcomed that in future any financial decisions would be accompanied by a report for Members to consider in advance of the meeting.

It was agreed to recommend that the revised draft PCSP Action Plan 2021/2022 be approved.

4.3 Participatory Budgeting (PB) – Grand Choice

The Acting PCSP Manager advised the Partnership that the Participatory Budgeting – Grand Choice scheme will be launched in April and rolled out across the entire Council area. The Council, through its DEA Investment Plan will contribute an additional £90,000 funding to this project along with contributions from Sport NI, LCCC Good Relations and potentially the Carnegie Trust. This will give an investment of approximately £18,000 - £20,000 per District Electoral Area. Due to the contribution from the Council through its DEA Investment Plan, the detail of the programme will have to be agreed through the appropriate governance arrangements, namely reported through the Leisure and Community Development Committee, and as a result of this, the timeline previously provided to Members has been revised as follows:

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| • 28 th April | Launch of the Scheme |
| • 5 th , 6 th and 7 th May | Online information sessions |
| • 7 th May – 28 th May | Scheme open for applications |
| • 18 th June – 2 nd July | Online voting takes place |
| • 7 th July | Announcement of winners |

It was agreed that the Partnership note the update on the Participatory Budgeting Grand Choice Scheme and it was further agreed that the revised timeline would be circulated to the Partnership, when confirmed.

4.4 Project Support Programme – 2021/22 – Proposed Time Scales

The PCSP Officer (JB) presented this item and advised that the Project Support Programme offers funding to local groups, organisations and partnerships wishing to undertake a Policing and Community Safety Project. The funding specifically aims to obtain the co-operation of the public to work with the police to prevent crime and enhance community safety. Due to the launch of the Grand Choice scheme the PCSP Officer advised that the proposed timescales for the Project Support Programme had been moved to later in the year, as follows:

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| • 10 th May 2021 | Launch of Project Support Programme |
| • 4 th June 2021 | Closing date for receipt of applications |
| • 9 th June 2021 | Assessment of applications |
| • 15 th June 2021 | Outcome of assessment panel considered by PCSP |
| • 21 st June 2021 | Notification to applicants |
| • 25 th February 2022 | Completion of projects and monitoring/evaluation details submitted to PCSP. |

It was agreed to recommend that the Programme be approved with an estimated budget of £40,000 and Officers commence the process of launching the project.

4.5 Schedule of PCSP Meetings 2021

It was agreed by the Partnership that the schedule of PCSP Meetings for 2021 be approved as outlined in the report.

4.6 Police Property Fund

Members of the Partnership were advised by the Vice Chairman, Ms A Twomey that the Police Property Fund will be launched online on Thursday 18 March 2021 at 11am. Due to current COVID restrictions the application period has been extended from 12 to 16 weeks to assist applicants - the first call for applications will close on 8 July 2021. There will be multiple calls for the Small Grants Scheme (which opens first) and the first call will have £100,000 funding available. Applicants can apply for funding ranging from £1,000 to £10,000. A Large Grants Scheme will open for applications later in the year. Whilst the Partnerships would not be involved in the assessment/selection process, the PCSPs have been asked to publicise the scheme via its networks and social media platforms and that this would be done through the PCSP and Council networks.

It was agreed by the Partnership to note this information.

4.7 Safe City Charter Status

The Vice Chairman, Ms A Twomey invited the PCSP Officer (JB) to update the Partnership on this item. Mr J Bingham informed the Partnership that Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council has been awarded Safe City Charter Status by Safe Place Advocates, supported by Onus and provided members will some background information on Onus. He further advised that through the leadership and guidance of Council Officers, ten local churches were supporting the Safe Church initiative whilst there were currently 32 Bronze, 4 Silver and 3 Platinum Safe Employer organisations in the Lisburn Castlereagh area. Mr J Bingham advised that he was keen for this programme to be rolled out across the Council area and to more spaces than churches.

The Vice Chairman, Ms A Twomey, thanked all those involved with this achievement, in particular the PCSP Officers, Mr J Bingham and Mr S Addley.

Members of the Partnership echoed their thanks for this scheme, with Councillor S Skillen reminding the Partnership that the DUP offices within Lisburn were also a designated safe space. The Partnership agreed to note the update.

4.8 Department of Health Draft Mental Health Strategy 2021-2031

The Partnership were provided with a draft response to the Department of Health's consultation on the Draft Mental Health Strategy 2021-2031 for review and comment.

It was agreed that the Partnership note this draft response and if any Member had any points that they sought to have included in the submission that Members would forward these to the Acting PCSP Manager as soon as possible.

During the discussion of this item, Ms A Landa joined the meeting at 6.08pm.

4.9 Department of Justice – Protection from Stalking Bill

The Acting PCSP Manager advised that The Protection from Stalking Bill moved to Committee Stage on 9 February 2021 and the Council have been contacted by the Committee for Justice seeking views/comments on the content of the Bill. The Partnership were provided with a draft response for consideration and comment.

Councillor S Skillen asked if there was any ability for victims to provide evidence in the setting of family court or to receive anonymity during the court process to encourage victims to come forward and provide confidence in the system. The Acting PCSP Manager advised that the response was to be considered at the Corporate Services Committee meeting and suggested that these comments be brought to that committee for inclusion.

It was agreed that the Partnership note this draft response and if any Member had any points that they sought to have included in the submission that Members would forward these to the Acting PCSP Manager before Wednesday 7 April 2021.

4.10 Domestic Abuse and Civic Proceedings Bill

The Acting PCSP Manager advised the Partnership that the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Bill received Royal Assent on Monday 1 March 2021 and advised that there were a number of associated reforms to criminal procedure, evidence and sentencing also included within the legislation. The Department of Justice intend to have this new offence in force before the end of the year, allowing for a crucial period of training, awareness raising and system changes.

During the discussion of this item, members of the Partnership welcomed the introduction and implementation of this important legislation. It was agreed to note this update.

4.11 Citywatch

The Partnership were provide with a report from Lisburn Commerce Against Crime detailing CCTV detections and incidents recorded for January and February 2021. It was agreed that the Partnership note this report.

5. Any Other Business

7.1 Lisburn Commerce Against Crime (LCAC)
Mrs Y Craig

Mrs Y Craig wished to congratulate LCAC on the work it carries out in detecting crime and in the confidence it gives to people in the area. These comments were echoed by Councillor N Anderson and stated that he hoped the work of the LCAC could be extended across the Council area to the businesses in Castlereagh East and Castlereagh South DEAs.

7.2 Personal Alarms
Councillor S Skillen

Councillor S Skillen wanted to thank Mr S Addley, PCSP Officer, in providing her with personal alarms for constituents as requests for these have increased following the recent tragic disappearance and death of Ms S Everard in London. She acknowledged that there were additional alarms on order and that there would be a limited supply. Later in the meeting, Councillor M Guy asked for more information regarding these alarms and how they could be ordered. Mr S Addley, PCSP Officer, advised that he would contact Councillor M Guy regarding this and reconfirmed that there would only be a limited supply available.

7.3 Scams
Mrs P Leeson

Mrs P Leeson wished to commend the PCSP Officers for all their work, particularly with educating older people regarding ongoing scams. She asked that at a future date there could be a themed meeting on what could be done to prevent people falling victims to scams, especially those that have increased due to the pandemic. Later in the meeting, Mr J Bentley offered his professional expertise to develop a presentation on GDPR issues and what people could do to prevent being exposed to scams. This offer was welcomed by the Vice Chairman, Ms A Twomey and stated that it may perhaps be useful to hold a crime prevention and information session on the topic of scams. The Acting PCSP Manager noted both the request for a themed meeting and the offer of assistance from Mr J Bentley.

7.4 Causewayend Road, Lisburn
Councillor A Ewing

Councillor A Ewing advised that the PCSP had previously written to the Roads Services regarding reducing an area of the Causewayend Road, Lisburn from 60mph to 30mph. The Roads Service had previously agreed to pursue legislation but that Covid-19 restrictions impacted this. Councillor A Ewing requested that the Partnership write to Mr G Salmon at the Roads Service again requesting an update on this issue. This request was agreed to.

There being no further business, the meeting was terminated at 6.29pm.

Chairman