

**Fermanagh and Omagh District Council**  
**Fermanagh and Omagh Policing and Community Safety Partnership**

**Policing Committee Meeting**

Minutes of the Fermanagh and Omagh Policing and Community Safety Partnership Policing Committee meeting held on Tuesday 27 October 2020 at 6 pm via MS Teams.

**Present: Councillors**

John McClaughry (Chairperson), Paul Blake, Josephine Deehan, Stephen Donnelly, Keith Elliott, Deborah Erskine, Tommy Maguire, Barry McElduff, Thomas O'Reilly and Allan Rainey.

**Independent Members**

Monica Coyle (Vice-Chairperson), Norman Kirkpatrick, Vida Lake, Bernie McCrory, Margaret McCrory, Sarah McQuaid and Pauline Treacy.

**Designated Members**

Superintendent Alywin Barton (PSNI) and Allen Fleming (EANI)

**Apologies:**

Maria Thompson, Michael Curran (NIFRS), Sinead Dolan (YJA), Brian Hetherington (NIFRS), Oonagh McAvinney (NIHE) and Ryan McGee (EANI).

**In attendance:**

Chief Inspector Graham Dodds (PSNI), Chief Inspector Roy Robinson (PSNI), Carol Follis (PCSP Manager) and Maggie McManus (Committee Clerk).

PC 09/20

**Welcome and Apologies**

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting. He welcomed Superintendent Alywin Barton recently appointed as District Commander and Councillor Deborah Erskine who has replaced Councillor Donal O'Cofaigh. He also thanked Clive Beatty, the former Superintendent and Councillor Donal O'Cofaigh, who has stepped down as a PCSP member for their excellent contributions to the PCSP.

PC 10/20

**Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were declared.

PC 11/20

**Notification of AOB**

Councillor Thomas O'Reilly requested that the meeting consider bonfires and the associated community safety issues.

PC 12/20

**Minutes**

The minutes of the Policing Committee meeting held on Tuesday 23 June 2020 were considered and approved. Proposed by Councillor Thomas O'Reilly and seconded by Councillor Allan Rainey.

PC 13/20

**Matters Arising**

PC 07/20

Engagement with ethnic groups

The PCSP Manager reported that a member of PCSP staff is now participating in the Interagency BMET Forum and would be bringing updates to the PCSP as appropriate.

PC 07/20    RAPID Bins

The PCSP Manager reported that information on the drugs items recovered from one lift from the RAPID Bins had been emailed to Members in July.

PC 14/20

**Members' Questions**

No members questions were received.

PC 15/20

**6 Monthly Update on Local Policing Plan 2020-2021**

Superintendent Barton presented a comprehensive report on the first six months delivery of the Local Policing Plan 2020-21.

Some of the facts highlighted included:

- A decrease of 553 crime incidents from the same period in the previous year. This is compatible with a lockdown environment.
- In the year to date 66 burglaries have been reported to the PSNI a decrease of 113 from the same period in the previous year.
- Each DEA has a dedicated Neighbourhood Policing Team, with at least one beat officer assigned to each electoral ward.
- Hate crimes show an increase of 7 from the same period in the previous year but is still the lowest throughout all the districts.
- Increase of 565 in the number of anti-social behaviour incidents. Covid-19 related incidents are all recorded as ASB.
- Domestic abuse related crime is down 59 from the same period in the previous year.
- Drug seizures continue to feature across the District, with cannabis the most common drug seized.
- Cyber motivated crime is taking over from traditional crime, with 143 crimes being report so far this year, up 70 from the same period last year.

Superintendent Barton stated that when restrictions allow it is his intention for Members to meet each of the Neighbourhood Policing Teams.

The Chairperson thanked Superintendent Barton for his report and invited the Members to ask questions.

## **Members raised the following questions:**

### **Question 1**

Councillor Stephen Donnelly asked if the West Tyrone NPT were assisting the Erne North NPT, impacting on resources available in West Tyrone.

Was there confusion with licensed premises regarding restrictions?

### **Response**

Superintendent Barton advised that some members of the Erne North NPT were assigned to Covid Team and that some assistance had been given from the West Tyrone NPT. The intention is to have the NPTs at full capacity as soon as possible.

Superintendent Barton commented that he was not of the opinion that there was much confusion regarding the regulations. He understood that licensed premises are aware of the regulations as they pertain to them and that the PSNI has worked in partnership with licensees to ensure premises are compliant.

### **Question 2**

Norman Kirkpatrick asked why the way offences of harassment are recorded had been changed.

### **Response**

Superintendent Barton informed that instruction had come from the Home Office regarding how these crimes should be recorded. This was not a decision of the PSNI.

### **Question 3**

Norman Kirkpatrick asked if the PCSP funding for cycling clubs for items of equipment had delivered value for money?

### **Response**

Superintendent Barton stated that he did not have any statistics available at the meeting and would look into this.

### **Recommended:**

- That Superintendent Barton provide information relating to cyclist incidents/accidents at a future meeting.

### **Question 4**

Sarah McQuaid raised concern about drugs use in Enniskillen, in particular swapping/selling of prescriptions drugs especially within the vulnerable community, who are often targeted/bullied when they have just got a new prescription filled.

**Response**

Superintendent Barton said this is indeed a major problem and is keen to know if this is an organised situation and how is it easy for them to get a further supply? The Support Hub can facilitate a multi-agency response for those individuals facing such circumstances.

**Question 5**

Councillor Deborah Erskine complimented the Erne North NPT for its work during Covid and dealing with ASB issues, especially in the Tempo area. She asked if the PSNI had enough power to deal with breaches of Covid regulations and if the public is confused about PSNI powers?

**Response**

Superintendent Barton believed that the PSNI has sufficient powers to deal with policing Covid regulations. He added that adhering to Covid regulations is a personal responsibility, with the PSNI taking a navigational role. He did suggest there was perhaps some confusion over what was set out in legislation and what was guidance.

**Question 6**

Councillor Thomas O'Reilly commented on the Erne East NPT promoting good connection with PCSP members. He asked if personal alarms or other PCSP merchandise was available for distribution.

**Response**

Superintendent Barton said Erne East NPT had a very good relationship with local PCSP Members. He added that it would be a very good idea for NPTs to liaise with PCSP Members to get personal alarms for vulnerable people.

**Question 7**

Councillor Josephine Deehan stated that she, as a GP was fully in support of earlier comments regarding prescription drugs and that GPs were aware of this huge issue and try to limit issuing of such drugs. She asked to what extent are the PSNI getting support from medical professionals.

**Response**

Superintendent Barton said there is co-operation working within GDPR restrictions.

Councillor Deehan said that as a professionals GPs will do everything they can, but it is difficult getting people to engage with alcohol/drugs programmes.

**Question 8**

Norman Kirkpatrick asked if would be possible to get personal alarms from PCSP to issue to vulnerable people? He asked for an email to be sent to Members of what PCSP had available for packs.

### **Response**

The PCSP Manager said that would not be a problem, that packs could be made up to be collected in Enniskillen but asked that Members give at least two days notice to get packs made up, as staff are not in the office every day.

### **Recommended**

- The PCSP Manager to email the Members with a list of PCSP merchandise available for distribution.

PC 16/20

### **AOB**

#### **Fireworks/Bonfires/ASB**

Councillor Thomas O'Reilly said that it was yearly practice trying to make the community safe with regards to bonfires, fireworks and associated ASB. Could PCSP upstream adverts relating to dos/don'ts and ASB? Could we look at longer term preventative measures? Could we give advice on what should/should not be put on a bonfire?

Councillor Stephen Donnelly said that a lot of community organisations were involved with offering an alternative to fireworks and asked if there was any local engagement?

Councillor Keith Elliott said that the NIFRS are proactive with Council and PSNI, paying attention to potential bonfire sites. He added there is a big problem in Enniskillen with fireworks being set off at night, all week long.

The PCSP Manager confirmed that the PCSP facebook page had regular posts regarding fireworks/bonfires. She asked the Members share these posts as much as possible and added that it is problematic giving advice on how to make a bonfire safe, as the burning of waste such as tyres often found on bonfires contravenes legislation such as the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act.

Allen Fleming informed the meeting that EA youth workers have been on the ground with PSNI on Friday nights focusing on bonfires/ASB in Enniskillen, in particular in housing estates. This initiative has worked well, and the feedback is that bonfires are a legacy thing. He asked that if people are determined to have bonfires is there anything we can do to support them and reduce the stigma of PSNI going into communities?

Councillor Tommy Maguire added that it may be of benefit to educate people as to where the tradition has come from.

In summing up the discussion Councillor Thomas O'Reilly concluded that the PCSP should look at this as part of a longer term strategy focusing on the realities of what can be achieved to reduce the number of bonfires in the district.

**Sale of Fireworks**

Councillor Allan Rainey asked the licencing procedure for the sale of fireworks.

**Response**

Superintendent Barton confirmed that a licence is required to sell fireworks, and sellers must maintain a register of who has purchased fireworks. Superintendent Barton asked that Members pass on any concerns they may have on the sale of fireworks to the PSNI.

**Speed Indicator Devices**

Sarah McQuaid commented on the excellent PSNI engagement with schools in Maguiresbridge. Are there was plans to do more of these?

**Response**

Superintendent Barton said absolutely, the PSNI have Schools Officers working with schools and the NPTs are encouraged to liaise with schools, especially with regards to road safety.

The PCSP Manager said that the staff team do a lot of work with schools. All post-primary schools have been written to regarding booking the Crash Car Simulator. As there have been no responses from schools they will be contacted again after Hallowe'en. Covid restrictions have restricted/cancelled some planned engagement/events. Two primary schools have received Community Cash funding to deliver road safety projects.

**New Speed Cameras**

Councillor Thomas O'Reilly asked if new hidden camera signs around the district were PSNI cameras? Also do PSNI have enhanced stop and search powers in Erne East.

**Response**

Superintendent Barton asked Councillor O'Reilly to contact him with details of the camera locations. He said there were no enhanced stop and search rules anywhere, this is a myth.

**Teams Meetings**

Norman Kirkpatrick thanked the PCSP Manager for getting the meeting set up on MS Teams tonight, much better and getting more comfortable with it. The PCSP Manager thanked him for his comments.

**Date/time of next meeting**

Policing Committee Meeting Tuesday 15 December at 6.00 pm via MS Teams.