

## REPORT ITEM 4.3



### Minutes of Public Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Venue: Roe Resort, Limavady

Duration: 7pm – 9.15pm

Present:

Chair: Councillor D. Wilson

Ald. G. Duddy, Cllr. A. Schenning, L. Abernethy, P. McQuillan, S. McGregor, A. McNickle, S. Chambers

Officers in Attendance: Head of Community & Culture, PCSP Manager, Business Support Officer

Statutory Agencies: Superintendent I. Magee PSNI, Chief Inspector R. Bradley, Chief Inspector M. Reid, Detective Superintendent A. Kelly, Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF),

Agenda Item		Actions
<b>1.</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	
	<p>Chair, Cllr. D. Wilson welcomed and thanked the Public, Roe Resort, PSNI, PCTF, PCSP member and local Elected Members on attending.</p> <p>The purpose of the Public Meeting is so that the PCSP Partnership can find out first-hand what the public think about policing, which will help the PCSP to develop action plans.</p> <p>He explained there would be an opportunity to ask questions. It was also requested no photographs or recordings of the event were taken, a note of the event will be recorded by PCSP staff and will not refer to any names.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Policing and Community Safety Partnership</b>	
	<p>The Chair gave a short presentation on the role of the PCSP.</p> <p>Policing and Community Safety Partnerships are statutory bodies established under the Justice Act</p>	

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	<p>(NI) 2011. There are 11 throughout Northern Ireland, one in each council area.</p> <p>Each PCSP has a Policing Committee to take forward specific police monitoring and engagement functions, with the wider PCSP taking forward community safety related functions. "Community Safety" is about developing local solutions to local problems in respect of crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, enabling a partnership approach to resolving local community safety issues.</p>	
3.	PSNI Presentation	
	<p>Superintendent I. Magee</p> <p>SI. Magee asked if those attending wished to hear the presentation, due to those present having attended the previous meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> December in Ballymoney. Everyone present were happy to proceed without the PSNI's presentation.</p> <p>Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF) Detective Superintendent A. Kelly, gave a presentation.</p> <p>Background to PCTF PCTF established as part of the Fresh Start Agreement 2015, with a number of recommendations, one of which was to tackle paramilitary activity and organised crime through the creation of the PCTF. An independent panel of three people was set up make recommendations on the disbandment of paramilitary groups, from their recommendations the Executive published the Action Plan.</p> <p>The PCTF has been operational since 2018 and partners are PSNI, HMRC and NCA. It focuses on organisational crime linked to non national security paramilitary groups. Based in locations around Northern Ireland and has close links with District Neighbourhood Policing Teams.</p> <p>PCTF deal with the highest threat, harm, risk and focus on six groups across Northern Ireland; East Belfast UVF INLA – North West Belfast &amp; North West Derry/Londonderry North Antrim UDA South East UDA</p>	

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	<p>West Belfast UDA</p> <p>There is a wide range of criminality these groups are involved in, assaults, shootings, supply and distributing controlled drugs, blackmail, money laundering, intimidation. PCTF focused on organised crime with the C2 - Terrorism Investigation Unit focuses on national security issues including dissident republicans.</p> <p>The costs caused by paramilitary groups cannot be counted, they seek to exploit the vulnerable, intimidate communities. Organised crime costs the exchequer 37billion per year and £69,000,000 to the PCTF per year. The wider cost to the community cannot be quantified.</p> <p>Group Review and accountability process PCTF are accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) and the Independent Review Commission monitors the progress on tackling paramilitary crime.</p> <p>Performance Data</p> <p>Across Northern Ireland January – November 2021 Arrests: 74 Charge &amp; report: 99 Searches: 166 Drug Seizures: 65 Vehicle Seizures: 5 Weapon Seizures: 12 Cash Seizures: £137,252</p> <p>Since PCTF was established 2018 the PSNI has delivered a number of outcomes that has led to a quantifiable level of disruption and detection of criminality within Northern Ireland. Key statistics shown which details outcome reported Arrests( PSNI, HMRC &amp; NCA): 391 Searches: 873 Charge &amp; Reports: 264 Drugs Street Value £: £2,700,763 Weapon Seizures: 201</p> <p>PCTF activity in Causeway Coast and Glens Area, July 2020 to November 2021</p>	
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	<p>PCTF increased activity from July 2020 in response to increase in violence supported by intelligence</p> <p>36 operations carried out</p> <p>16 arrests under the Terrorism Act</p> <p>19 active investigations underway</p> <p>3 investigation reports with the Public Prosecution Service</p> <p>60% reduction in the number of violence related incidents linked to paramilitary groups</p> <p>50% reduction in the number of shooting incidents linked to paramilitary groups</p>	
4.	Questions & Discussion	
	<p>Question</p> <p>A query in relation to the labelling of groups perceived involvement in paramilitary activities</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>No they are paramilitaries involved in criminality.</p> <p>Question</p> <p>Have you any evidence of coercive control of selling of drugs in North Antrim.</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>Cannot discuss a live investigation.</p> <p>Statement</p> <p>You talk about paramilitaries, if police would deal with drugs then paramilitaries would go away. The Aims project, up to 2018, were working with transitioning and then that fell away when the community lost confidence in policing. The information before 2018 should be shown in the presentation.</p> <p>Question</p> <p>If you are going to remove paramilitaries from society where are you going to put them, especially in the long term?</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>I will work with any organisation to make the community a better and safer place, everybody has a part to play. I have met with many people in this area and they want to be prosperous, let's work together to make things better.</p> <p>Statement</p>	

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	<p>I have worked with paramilitaries and have had death threats towards myself and family. I have every sympathy for the PSNI. I would encourage the PSNI to work with this community to address issues discussed here tonight.</p> <p>Question When Fresh Start began, I remember conversations that it was money to keep the paramilitaries quiet. Have you seen criminal activity, paramilitary activity moving to areas where Fresh Start money wasn't available, i.e. Limavady?</p> <p>PSNI Answer No we haven't seen that.</p> <p>Answer 2 In the Limavady area we are looking at ASB and working with the Youth Justice Agency.</p> <p>Question What has the impact been of Early Intervention for 14-16 year olds?</p> <p>PSNI Answer We are working to develop bespoke ideas.</p> <p>Statement The meeting in Ballymoney was the right thing to do. The police are not going to stop the recruitment to various organisations. Recruitment to organisations in Limavady is because of what is happening in Derry/Londonderry and is recruitment is happening across all NI. I work with groups who want to transition, you can't target a whole community for one person or use legislation wrongly. You are actively encouraging people to work with paramilitaries and marginalising young people. - Question Can the Panel agree that organisations that have criminal behaviour within their membership need a variety of support systems to transition?</p> <p>PSNI Answer We will work with the local groups and our job is about engagement. We can't influence the overall strategy but I can say if you look at the Chief Constables objectives its about Community Policing and resourcing and in front of that is linking with the</p>	
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	<p>community. Only way we can do that is engagement and by working in partnership. Its not about funding.</p> <p>Question There has been change and none of that transition will ever be seen, the work behind the scenes doesn't need money. There needs to be genuine conversations between community and the Police.</p> <p>PSNI Answer I support restoration, rehabilitation and reintegration in order to see people move, it takes time to transition, and history tells us that.</p> <p>Chair It would good to see how much support there has been from Central Government and lack of funding. People are not willing to engage because of that.</p> <p>Question Why are we asking about Performance when the arrests have no outcomes/no charges and not taken to court.</p> <p>Answer If they are charged it will always go to court. People ask that question regarding arrests/charge. We are not fixated on outcomes we want the best overall outcome for that person. A lot of how we report is how are asked to report centrally.</p> <p>Question We don't close the door to anyone, both paramilitaries and open to the Police. We have a good relationship. We are still talking to organisations who want to transition. We want to tell them you/we can support transition. We are still there for everybody working towards transition. The organisations are telling us if the Police would deal with the drug dealers, we will disappear into the background.</p> <p>PSNI Response Regarding drugs we had a discussion with intelligence since the last public meeting and what we expect to see in our intelligence report going forward. Want to ensure you that we have moved on this on the back of the meeting last week.</p>	
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	<p><b>Secondary Comment</b> Good to get feedback there is not enough information, there is a communication breakdown.</p> <p><b>PSNI Response</b> The information is good, but by the time we get it, it is so sanitized we can't act on it.</p> <p><b>Chair</b> Everyone wants to see relationships built with the community and to build confidence.</p> <p><b>Statement</b> If there was more confidence in policing the public would get more information.</p> <p><b>Statement</b> Pleased with tonight and hope that the dialogue can continue. A quick win is to be seen to hammer the drugs problem, put community officers on the streets meeting normal people. Community Policing has the capacity to "mop up" at that level. PSNI are being replaced constantly, so the relationships are lost.</p> <p><b>PSNI Response</b> Understand the frustration and this will only become even more challenging as PSNI numbers could potentially be reduced further due to budgetary constraints.</p> <p><b>Statement</b> Only one organisation tried to de-prescribe themselves but it fell at the last as one person had to confirm it in writing and that put the individual off as they were scared they could potentially be prosecuted. The community in Ballymoney need a high level of support to enable them in the process. If there was a route into politics to "stand for election", learn new skill set for employers and community organisations. Need to be more tried and tested ways.</p> <p><b>Question</b> Is the statistics you gave that of Deal Breaker or your own statistics?</p> <p><b>PSNI Answer</b> Every district has Deal Breaker and the statistics are within our command area.</p>	
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	<p>Statement PSNI launch Deal break in July, it would be interesting to the PCSP to have the figures supplied to us. If you want the public to know, put it in the press.</p> <p>PSNI Response We do post on Social Media, but I do take your point.</p> <p>Statement PSNI need to look at their media policy What you have to do is change what you are putting into the press because you are pushing away the public. PCSP aim to build confidence, but this is very difficult for us as, you can't breakdown doors and then expect people to give you information. There is no Neighbourhood Police Teams in the Heights, Ballysally, the Glens in Limavady. People want to see the NPT on the ground and moving them on one year later does not help. Chief Constable needs to stop moving people around.</p> <p>Out of four arrests in 2021 only one had an outcome, do you think that is acceptable?</p> <p>Answer Reporting of crimes has changed and in addition to this the type of crime has changed, eg. Cyber crime</p> <p>Question 12% of population who have been victims of crime with no outcome. 24% rise in incidents and 7% drop in outcomes, explain the rise in incidents and drop in outcomes.</p> <p>PSNI Response One of the reasons for this is down to not having CCTV.</p> <p>Chair We would like to see CCTV but would like central government to pay for it.</p> <p>Statement Your figures and results, you can't blame it on not having CCTV. Trying to find why things have changed from 2018. Crime is still rising and your outcomes have plateaued. I attended an event in Belfast on</p>	
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	<p>Domestic Violence, when and how is PSNI working to change that.</p> <p>PSNI Answer End of October crime on previous year was down 3%.</p> <p>Chair We have heard first-hand about the frustration on the ground and want to pay tribute to you who continue to reach out and pay tribute to PCSP members and Elected Members who continue to engage. When I took on this role I wanted to see relationships improve. We have held two meetings that have been very good and heard the views of the community. I would like to see a reduction in crime and police presence.</p> <p>Question What is the way forward as the result of these two public meetings? Is there anything we can do to see police on the ground, see engagement with community and Elected Members?</p> <p>Response Further meetings in Limavady. PSNI to engage with various community organisations.</p> <p>PSNI agreed to engage further.</p> <p>An organisation at the meeting stated that they can provide restorative justice training and will engage with any organisation wanting to.</p>	
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Meeting ended 9.15pm