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The Board is an independent body made up of 19 Members to ensure for all the people of Northern Ireland the delivery of an effective, efficient, accountable and impartial police service which will secure the confidence of the whole community by reducing crime and the fear of crime. **Click here** to see the Board membership.

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Focusing on antisocial behaviour



Anne Connolly addresses the Belfast public meeting

Antisocial behaviour continues to be an issue across our towns and cities and one the Board and PCSPs continue to tackle.

The Board, in partnership with Belfast PCSP, recently held a public meeting to discuss antisocial behaviour in the Belfast area

Describing the value of the meeting, Policing Board Chair Anne Connolly said:

Holding this public meeting in partnership with Belfast PCSP has been a great opportunity for

the Board to show support to the PCSP on an issue that is prevalent not just in this city but right across Northern Ireland. While it may not be a criminal offence, antisocial behaviour can have a big impact within a community causing fear and unease, particularly for those who are most vulnerable such as older people living on their own.

FRONT COVER CAPTION

Chief Constable George Hamilton, Daniel McCrossan MLA, Belfast PCSP Chair Cllr John Hussey and Board Chair Anne Connolly.

Chief Constable George Hamilton welcomed the discussion and gave his assurances that the PSNI is serious about tackling the issue. He said:

In each instance where antisocial behaviour occurs, there will be a unique set of circumstances that have caused it and, most likely, a unique solution to deal with it and prevent its reoccurrence. Real success is produced by effective partnerships being ready and willing to share timely information, tasking and resources in order to solve the problem.

Continued...

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Belfast PCSP Chair Cllr John Hussey welcomed the chance to discuss the issues around anti social behaviour and said:

“Belfast PCSP and its four district partnerships are fully committed to raising awareness, dealing with and combating antisocial behaviour in all of its various forms across all our communities in Belfast. We continue to work hard to make our communities a better and safer place to work, visit and live in.”

[click here](#)  to view opening remarks

As anti social behaviour is a recurring concern in many communities, the Board has asked the Chief Constable to identify where they are getting it right and to apply the lessons learned across Northern Ireland. At the meeting, the PSNI's Ryan Henderson outlined progress that has been made to date.

Nigel Grimshaw, Director of City & Neighbourhood Services at Belfast City Council, talked about how the Council and the PCSP tackle antisocial behaviour together and outlined the significant investment of funding to deal with issues.

“Antisocial behaviour affects most communities and continues to be a priority for PCSPs. It is also clear that people believe it is a policing issue as 45% of calls to the PSNI relate to anti social behaviour.”
Ryan Henderson PSNI

Questions raised from the public focused on ...

- the accessibility of drugs on the streets;
- sharing information between agencies;
- tackling the illegal use of scramblers in West Belfast;
- understanding how young people socialise;
- the provision of safe spaces;
- anti social behaviour in parks, open spaces and in the Holyland area; and
- the role of Social Media.

[click here](#)  to view Supt Ryan Henderson's input

[click here](#)  to view Nigel Grimshaw's input

[click here](#)  to view the panel discussion

“No one agency can tackle ASB effectively on their own.”
Belfast City Council

“Whatever the specific behaviours, it is their persistence and repetition that makes them antisocial.”
PSNI



Nigel Grimshaw, Belfast City Council, Supt Ryan Henderson, Chief Constable George Hamilton, Belfast PCSP Chair Cllr John Hussey and Board Chair Anne Connolly pictured at the Board and Belfast PCSP public meeting.



Debbie Hammill, Belfast PCSP Independent Member, questioning the panel at the public meeting.

Board Meeting News

Due to the Assembly Elections, there was no public meeting of the Board in February. The Board did, however, meet in private with the Chief Constable to receive his monthly report.

The Chief Constable updated the Board about the recent attempt on the lives of police officers and the blatant disregard for the lives of those in the petrol station at the time. He said he was grateful for the community support for the PSNI in the aftermath of the incident and praised his officers for their continued professionalism and commitment to serving the community. He also assured the Board that he remained satisfied that he had the operational capacity needed for the PSNI.

In his report, the Chief Constable said that the PSNI, whilst non political, can be affected by political decisions such as the Historical Investigations Unit, the future of partnership working and the budget.

Members raised a series of questions with the Chief Constable about the potential impacts on the police budget and plans being put in place to manage this.

The Chief Constable stated that the lack of a current budget is likely to cause difficulty when planning and prioritising resources and has the potential to have operational impacts. However these matters were being kept under close review and that the Board will be updated as required.

Board Members also discussed the policy and process for the police in managing bail conditions and the abscondence of the man accused of murdering prison officer David Black. The Chief Constable repeated his apology to the family, updated Members on police actions and confirmed that a review is being conducted on how bail is operated.

Questions...

A range of written questions from members were answered by the PSNI and published on the Board's website. These included:

- An assessment of the extent of paramilitary extortion of local business and how the PSNI are tackling it;
- An update on investigations into military related killings during the Troubles;

The Chief Constable provided an update on the work undertaken in the last financial year to tackle paramilitary activity, criminality and organised crime as part of the Fresh Start arrangements and was questioned by the Board Members on the funding that was made available for this Task Force.

The Chief Constable reported that:

- An estimated £250k was seized
- 100 searches were undertaken
- Police made 40 arrests
- 21 people were charged or reported to the PPS

[click here](#)

to read the Chief Constable's full report

- Cases made to the PSNI on the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme;
- PSNI attendance at children's homes; and
- The Police Ombudsman's report into the death of John Hemsworth.

[click here](#)

to see all questions and answers in full

Supreme Court Judgment

Board Members asked the Chief Constable for his initial response on the impact on the police service of the Supreme Court Judgment on the flags protest.

This Judgment clearly defines the legislative responsibilities of the police and the Chief Constable accepted the findings of the Court in full. All future operational decisions will now have to take place within this legal framework.

A number of questions were raised during the discussion and the Chief Constable was asked to provide a formal response to the Board on the findings, what it means for policing and the tactics that police deploy in the policing of un-notified parades or protests.

The Board looks forward to receiving the considered response from the Chief Constable on this Judgment.

Achieving effectiveness and efficiency in policing

Access to independent professional policing assessments from relevant bodies such as Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) on how the PSNI is performing and discharging its responsibilities in a number of key areas means the Board has an evidence base for holding the Chief Constable to account.

In 2015, the Board requested the Justice Minister to commission HMIC to undertake an inspection to provide the Board and the Justice Minister with a picture of the PSNI's strengths and areas for improvement in a number of key areas.

The Reports were published in August 2016 and since then, a significant programme of work has been taken forward by the Board to make sure the PSNI address the findings.

The Chief Constable has accepted all areas for improvement identified

by HMIC. He has devised Action Plans which have been provided to the Board and scrutinised through the work of the Performance and Resources Committees. There remains some ongoing work on the Action Plan for Efficiency to ensure the Board has the necessary information to oversee the implementation of recommendations from the Report. The Board has now published the Action Plans, the Board's response and the comments of the Chief Constable as required under section 42(6) of the Police (NI) Act 1998.

[click here](#)

to view the Action Plans.

The Board will continue to monitor the steps taken by the PSNI and will complement that work with a Human Rights Thematic Report on child sexual exploitation.

The Board has agreed that future inspection by HMIC will build on the findings of these reports to allow improvements to be measured and assessed.

The two strands to the Inspection ...

The **Efficiency Inspection** looked at how efficient the PSNI is at keeping people safe and reducing crime from its available resources; how well the PSNI understands its demand and if resources are in the right place to meet that demand. It also examined the sustainability and affordability of the PSNI workforce model and the financial position for the short and long term and assessed how the PSNI has responded to recommendations made in previous reports.

[click here](#)

to view the report.

The **Effectiveness Inspection** considered how effective the PSNI is at protecting from harm those who are vulnerable and supporting victims and examined how the PSNI identify those who are vulnerable, assess their level of risk and what the PSNI did itself and with other partners to mitigate against the risk. The inspection considered how well the PSNI respond to and safeguard specific vulnerable groups (missing persons, victims of domestic abuse), and how well prepared it is to tackle child sexual exploitation.

[click here](#)

to view the report.

Policing Board Chair Anne Connolly and Chief Executive Amanda Stewart have met with Probation Board Chair Vilma Patterson and Chief Executive Cheryl Lamont to discuss a range of areas of mutual interest. They explored areas for improvement within the PSNI and discussed views on the future of community safety.



Pictured are (l-r): Policing Board Chair Anne Connolly, Policing Board Chief Executive Amanda Stewart, Probation Board Chair Vilma Patterson and Probation Board Chief Executive Cheryl Lamont.

Putting a Plan in place



The Policing Board has been consulting with a variety of organisations and interest groups as it puts together its 3 year Plan for 2017-2020. The Board has been reflecting on the learning over the last 15 years and re-focusing to meet the significant challenges in the years ahead. People have had the chance to submit their opinions online and through a survey. The Board has consulted staff and Members and also held a discussion session with key stakeholders from across the sectors. They looked at each of the 7 priorities the Board has drafted and gave their opinions on whether they were likely to get the right results.

Policing Board Chair Anne Connolly told stakeholders that their input was important in getting the goals and priorities right. She said:

“I think it is important that we continue to listen and discuss the areas we need to be considering when it comes to policing. Like most organisations, we develop a Corporate Plan each year to act as a blueprint for how we set out our work. It will set the scene for the next 3 years and is central to the strategic direction of the Board so we want to make sure our goals are realistic and achievable.”

The 2017-2020 Corporate Plan will be published by the end of March 2017.



Custody Visitors Brian Vincent and Mervyn McCurry were recently interviewed about why they volunteer for the Board's Custody Visiting Scheme. They outlined the skills they bring to the role, what they do as Visitors and the impact they have on those in custody. The films will be shown at Volunteer Now's Conference later this year showcasing the different types of volunteering people can get involved in.