

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the PCSP Policing Committee Held in Public at Harmony Hill Presbyterian Church Hall, Lisburn on Tuesday, 17 June 2025 at 7:04 PM

PRESENT: Councillor A Martin (Chair)
Mr B Corr (Vice-Chair)
Councillor A Givan
Councillor B Higginson
Councillor J Lavery BEM
Councillor S Lowry
Councillor D Lynch
Councillor M McKeever
Councillor T Mitchell
Mr N Anderson
Mr D Cairns
Mr D Drysdale
Mrs A Playford

IN ATTENDANCE: Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

PCSP Officer (JB)
Community Planning Manager (PT)
Community Planning Support Officer (HB)
Member Services Officers (CH and EW)

Designated Organisations

Chief Inspector M Rocks, PSNI
Inspector D Burke, PSNI
Mr J Crymble, EA
Mr Glen Cleland, NIFRS
Ms C Cullan, YJA
Mr D Marley, NIHE
Mr C Stitt, NIHE

Commencement of the Meeting

The Chair, Councillor A Martin, welcomed everyone to the meeting of the PCSP Policing Committee in Public. The Chair extended his thanks to Harmony Hill Presbyterian Church for the use of their excellent facilities and to the members of the public in attendance.

1. Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors J Gallen and C Kemp, Mrs Y Craig (Ind Member), Mr G McClory (Ind Member), Mr G Walker (Ind Member) and Superintendent K Moore (PSNI).

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. 12-Month Report on Policing in the Lisburn and Castlereagh District

In the absence of Superintendent K Moore, Chief Inspector M Rocks delivered a verbal presentation of the report, which had been circulated to attendees. The report covered the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. Chief Inspector Rocks was accompanied by Inspector D Burke from the City and Rural Neighbourhood Team in Lisburn. The report addressed three key outcome areas: (1) Victim-Focused Policing, (2) Safe and Engaged Communities with Confidence in Policing, and (3) A Representative, Valued, and Enabled Workforce.

During her presentation, Chief Inspector M Rocks highlighted the following key points in regard to the Lisburn and Castlereagh area:

- **Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWAG):** 1,129 arrests were made in the past year, with 1,028 resulting in charges, reports, or other criminal justice outcomes.
- **Community Engagement:** ‘Walk for Women’ events were held in March at Moat Park, Dundonald, and Barbour Playing Fields, Lisburn. A total of 16 events covering the theme of EVAWG were organised involving PCSP & PSNI.
- **Trauma Training:** Operational officers from B District received trauma-informed training delivered by Women’s Aid, alongside over 100 stakeholders and partners. This was funded by PCSP.
- **Operation Encompass:** 314 referrals were made in the last three months.
- **Youth Diversion:** In Q4, 438 young people were referred to the Youth Diversion Team, with 70 cases referred to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS).
- **Education and Engagement:** Sessions were delivered in schools and communities, including the Bee Safe event (28–30 January), which engaged approximately 900 schoolchildren on internet safety.
- **Hate Crime:** A reduction in reported hate crimes was noted. Two arrests were made in relation to recent incidents in Altona. Ongoing police operations continuing across the province relating to recent Hate Crime incidents.
- **Victim Satisfaction:** Satisfaction rates ranged between 80% and 100%.
- **Repeat Victimisation:** 75 referrals were received by the Crime Prevention Officer during the reporting period.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB):** A 15.1% decrease in ASB reports was recorded, equating to 457 fewer incidents.
- **Burglaries:** A 24% reduction was reported, with 50 fewer burglaries compared to the same period last year.
- **Drugs:** 171 drug-related arrests were made, and 500 drug seizures recorded.
- **No Cold Calling Zones:** There are now 18 zones established across the district.
- **Farm Watch and Text Alert:** 110 Farm Watch schemes are active, with 2,655 users subscribed to the Text Alert scheme. 28 messages were issued during Q4.

3. 12-Month Report on Policing in the Lisburn and Castlereagh District (Cont'd)

- **Repeat Offending:** 12 priority offenders were managed in Q3. Over the past year, 59 arrests were made and 27 individuals charged.
- **District Support Team:** Seizures this quarter included over 5,000 pregabalin tablets (valued at £15,000) and over 10kg of cannabis edibles (valued at £7,000).
- **Road Safety (Q4):** Six incidents of careless driving causing death or serious injury were recorded. Additionally, 371 motoring offences were detected, 215 fixed penalty notices issued, and 366 breath tests conducted.
- **Complaints Against Police:** A decrease in complaints was noted within the LCCC area.

4. Question and Answer Session

Councillor B Higginson left the meeting during questions to the panel (7.30 pm).

Responding to questions from the Partnership and members of the public, Chief Inspector M Rocks provided clarification on several matters, including:

It was noted that the majority of the 500 drug seizures involved Class C substances.

In response to a question regarding repeat offender statistics, Chief Inspector Rocks confirmed that there had been no increase compared to the previous year.

A resident of Saintfield Road, Lisburn raised safety concerns following several fatalities and a number of accidents on the road. The resident also highlighted visible subsidence of the roadside verges, attributed to the weight of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) that frequently use the route. A request was made to monitor the speed of traffic on the road and to consider reducing the speed limit to 45 mph. Other attendees expressed agreement with the concerns raised. Chief Inspector Rocks acknowledged awareness of the incidents and explained that the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) was responsible and agreed to raise the matter with DfI for further assessment.

In response to a concern raised by a member of the public regarding the speed of traffic and speed limit on Hillhall Road—particularly near a grassed area used by children for play—the individual expressed fear that a child could be seriously injured. Chief Inspector Rocks agreed to relay the concerns raised during the meeting back to DfI.

Mr D Drysdale raised concerns regarding the process for determining the placement of speed enforcement vans. He noted a perceived lack of engagement between the PSNI and the agency responsible for deploying the vans, citing an example of a van regularly stationed on the carriageway in Dundonald every Sunday morning. He observed that drivers tend to slow down because they expect the van to be there. Mr Drysdale requested that Council Officers write to the Chief Constable to recommend that speed enforcement vans be deployed in areas where speeding is a known issue.

4. Question and Answer Session (Cont'd)

Residents of Mountview Drive requested the installation of a “Dead End” sign, citing frequent vehicle damage caused by cars turning around upon realising the road did not provide a through route. Additional concerns were raised about vehicles speeding under the mistaken belief that the road was a cut-through, posing a serious risk to children playing in the area. The Chair, Councillor A Martin, requested that the residents speak with him and the other Councillors present after the meeting to provide further information and discuss potential solutions.

In response to concerns raised about the high volume of traffic on Station Road and the parking of vehicles in and around the park - creating challenging conditions and raising fears that a child could run out of the park into oncoming traffic - the PCSP Officer confirmed that a site meeting had been held with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) approx. 18 months ago. A one-way system was currently under consideration; however, no timescale had been agreed upon at this stage.

A resident raised serious concerns about ongoing antisocial behaviour and domestic abuse in Mountview Drive, expressing dissatisfaction with the police response and lack of support services. She reported feeling unsafe and unsupported over a prolonged period, with the situation also affecting neighbouring families. Chief Inspector Rocks requested that the resident remain after the meeting to provide further details for appropriate follow-up.

In response to a query regarding support for victims of crime and hate crime, Chief Inspector Rocks confirmed that Crime Prevention Officers (CPOs) conducted assessments for various home security measures, including CCTV. Victims could apply for this support through the police. The PCSP Officer added that while the police conducted the assessments, the PCSP funded the recommended security measures, which may include locks, external lighting or sensors, and CCTV systems.

A query was raised regarding children involved in drug dealing and whether parents were being held accountable. Chief Inspector Rocks explained that when an incident involved a juvenile, a Youth Diversion Officer was engaged, and the process typically included involvement from social services. In terms of holding parents responsible for offences committed by their children, she noted that there was a legal threshold that must be met before any such action could be taken.

In response to a query about PSNI’s presence on social media—specifically why the PSNI and PCSP were not using TikTok, a platform widely used by young people—Chief Inspector Rocks acknowledged the challenge of effectively engaging with younger audiences in a way that resonated with them. She noted that this was an area under consideration.

Councillor S Lowry and Mr N Anderson left the meeting (7.51 pm).

4. Question and Answer Session (Cont'd)

Following a discussion regarding ongoing antisocial and criminal behaviour in Mountview, which had been affecting residents over a prolonged period, Chief Inspector Rocks requested that those impacted remain after the meeting to provide further details. Representatives from the Harmony Hill Community Group also advised that they were engaging with Clanmil Housing Association to address the issue and that the group would be establishing an interagency meeting to help resolve the matter.

In response to a question regarding PSNI resources, Chief Inspector Rocks acknowledged that the PSNI was currently under-resourced and underfunded. She commended neighbourhood officers for the outstanding work they continue to deliver despite these challenges. It was noted that recruitment of new officers was ongoing. Chief Inspector Rocks noted that performance in the LCCC district remained strong, attributing this to the dedication and quality of local officers who were achieving more with less. She expressed hope that the current resourcing situation would improve in the future.

It was noted by a member of the audience that the police in Lisburn and Castlereagh continued to deliver an exceptional service despite operating with limited resources. However, this under-resourcing had an impact on community safety. Statistics presented in the report highlighted the outstanding work being carried out under challenging circumstances. While this dedication should be recognised and commended, it was emphasised that additional resources were urgently needed to support and sustain effective policing in the area.

It was agreed that the 12-month report for the district, which covered the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 be noted. The Chair, Councillor A Martin, thanked those present for attending and commended the PSNI on the report for the 2024/25 reporting year.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.07 pm.

Chair