



Subject:	Multi Agency Demonstrator – Supporting those at risk
Date:	8 th February 2022
Reporting Officer:	Ryan Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Michelle Wilson, Safer City Co-Ordinator

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To further update on the progress of Phase 2 and Phase 3 Department of Justice offer of funding to Belfast City Council to undertake a multi-agency demonstration project to support those at risk of paramilitary attacks in West and North Belfast and their families.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note the Phase 2 update and;• Agree the extension of this demonstrator as detailed in the report.
3.0	Main report
	Background
3.1	A number of years ago the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) requested Belfast City Council (BCC) to act as the lead co-ordinating agency for

organisations who had a role in addressing the systemic issues associated with paramilitary style assaults in the Lower Falls geographical area of Belfast.

3.2 It was hoped that the sharing of such information would provide an opportunity for early intervention by the organisations to protect victims, their families and improve how organisations involved could react and provide an adequate co-ordinated service. The following work has been undertaken in progressing this.

3.3 As the Tackling Paramilitarism work (arising from the Fresh Start Agreement) developed in central government they met regularly with Belfast to better understand if the work in the city adds value, and the Department of Justice subsequently asked Belfast City Council to make an application for funding to further develop this work as they believed there were important lessons to be learned from it.

3.4 DoJ allocated £69,000 for this work to be undertaken in Belfast in the 20/21 financial year and Members were updated in February 2020 through Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on the Phase 1 approach. No funding is used to cover the support from existing statutory services, but to bolster the support needed from the community. Additionally, all funding is conditional on working only with accredited (by DoJ) restorative justice schemes as there are high degrees of vulnerability and safeguarding/legal issues with individuals at risk and their families and the appropriate levels of assurance need to be in place.

Phase 2 (April 21 – March 22)

3.5 DoJ allocated a further £95,000 for this work to be undertaken in West and extended into North Belfast in the 21/22 financial year and Members were updated in March 2021 through the People and Communities Committee on the Phase 2 approach;

- Memorandum of Understanding developed and signed by all relevant statutory partners clarifying roles and responsibilities and information sharing arrangements agreed.
- Inclusion of Northern Ireland Alternatives (NIA) to work alongside Community Restorative Justice Ireland (CRJI) as the accredited restorative practitioners and lead community partners for delivery in West and North Belfast in Phase 2.
- All partners agreed a safeguarding approach to a community information/intelligence reporting process. The core objectives of the process were to safeguard the individual, their family and protect the community;

- Fortnightly case management meetings have taken place throughout (including during COVID-19) with both statutory partners and CRJI sharing information regarding young people at risk of paramilitary style attacks and more importantly taking action to minimise that risk
- An academic from Queens University Belfast is currently undertaking an evaluation with early feedback extremely positive and the final report due by March 2022.

The agreed objectives of the DoJ funded programme are to:

3.6

Deliver a targeted, co-ordinated piece of work to address the needs of those under or at risk of threat from paramilitary groups with a particular focus on:-

1. Improve communication, co-ordination amongst service providers creating a process, which allows the sharing of information, whilst meeting all legislative requirements.
2. Improve the management and flow of information between agencies, administer, monitor and measure threat levels and support for individuals and their families. Update and liaise with all statutory partners recording actions and progress.
3. Gather the required data and statistics to demonstrate the impact of the PSA multi-agency group.

Phase 3 (April 22 – March 23)

3.7

Given the very positive feedback from Phase 2, the Department of Justice have offered a further £90,000 for the 22/23 financial year to cover the following:

- Continuation of the existing work in West and North Belfast led by CRJI and NIA
- The Phase 3 objectives continue as per Phase 2 and are entirely focussed on preventing paramilitary style attacks in North and West Belfast and supporting/protecting those affected by them.

Financial Implications

3.8

The allocated budget for Phase 3 is £90,000 during 22/23 and is entirely provided by external funding received from the Department of Justice.

3.9	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment</u> None at present, but given the sensitivity of this work, this will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None