

## **NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

### **PRESS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

**RATIFIED MINUTES OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY,  
12 JUNE 2003 AT 2.00 PM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST**

#### **PRESENT:**

#### **MEMBERS:**

- (1)** Mr Tom Kelly (Chairman) (by telephone link up)
- (1)** Mr Suneil Sharma (Vice-Chairman)  
Mr Joe Byrne
- (2)** Mr Ian Paisley Jnr
- (3)** Professor Desmond Rea (Chairman of the Board)
- (4)** Mr D Bradley (Vice-Chairman of the Board)
- (4)** Mrs P McCabe

#### **POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:**

- (4)** Director of Media and Public Relations
- (4)** Two PSNI Officers

#### **OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Bob McCann (Chief Executive)  
Head of Policy and Accountability  
A/Head of Communications  
Two Board Officials

- (1)** From part of item number 3 onwards
- (2)** Item number 1 – part of item number 3
- (3)** Item numbers 1 - 3 and item numbers 11-16
- (4)** Item numbers 1 - 3

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee the Chairman of the Board took the Chair until the Vice-Chairman joined the meeting.

#### **1. APOLOGIES ETC**

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Mr Alex Attwood and Mr Brian Dougherty.

## **2. MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

The Committee noted the contents of a paper which outlined details of the membership and responsibilities of the Press and Public Relations Committee.

## **3. PRESENTATION ON THE MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE IN RELATION TO COMMUNICATIONS, MARKETING AND IMAGE**

The Chairman welcomed the Director of Media and Public Relations and his colleagues to the meeting and invited them to address the Committee on the management of change in relation to communication, marketing and image.

The Director gave a presentation during which he gave a flavour of some of the major press and public relations issues which PSNI Media and Public Relations Department had handled in recent months. A copy of the script of the presentation is attached at Annex "A".

During a subsequent discussion, the following issues were covered:-

- The level of the media story depended on whether the issue was dealt with at a local level or by the Media and Public Relations Department.
- The good working relationships which the PSNI Press Department had with the Board's Press Office.
- The number of media enquiries which the PSNI Press Office dealt with each day.
- The level of staffing in the Press and Public Relations Department.
- The budget for the Press and Public Relations Department.
- The updating of PSNI Station Reception Areas.
- The internal communications systems within PSNI.

The Chairman expressed the view that the PSNI Media and Public Relations Department had a large staff and the resources needed to be reviewed. He also questioned the size of the Department's budget.

In conclusion, the Director of Media and Public Relations referred to a Qualitative Communication Audit which had been undertaken and said that copies of the report would be made available for Members of the Board.

At this point the Chairman thanked the Director of Media and Public Relations for the presentation and the representatives from PSNI then left the meeting.

#### **4. MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2003**

The minutes of the meeting were agreed and signed.

#### **5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

##### **5.1 Press And PR Resources – BDS Review (Item 4 of Minutes refers)**

The Committee noted that the shortlisting of applicants for the post of Director of Communications would be held during the following week. Interviews for the post would be held a few weeks later.

It was suggested that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board, together with representatives from the Committee should interview applicants for the position. The Chairman of the Committee indicated that he would be prepared to sit on the Interview Panel with one caveat, that if there was any conflict of interest he would have to withdraw.

## **5.2 Proposal For The Production Of A DVD On The Role And Work Of The Policing Board (Item 6 of Minutes refers)**

Officials explained that a formal tendering process would have to take place to appoint a company to produce a DVD on the role and work of the Board.

The Committee agreed to defer making a decision on the production of the DVD until the Director of Communications was appointed in order that the Director could have an input.

## **6. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

The Chairman had no matters to draw to the Committee's attention.

## **7. RECEPTION TO OFFICIALLY OPEN THE NEW PRESS ROOM**

Officials presented a paper which sought Members views in relation to the hosting of a media reception to officially open the new Press Room in Waterside Tower.

The Committee agreed:-

- that a media reception should be hosted by the Board.
- the provisional guest list for the reception.

## **8. PUBLIC RELATIONS, DESIGN AND PRINTING AND ADVERTISING CONTRACT**

Officials presented a paper which sought Members views on the awarding of the Public Relations, Design and Printing and Advertising Contracts for the Board.

The Committee noted details of the background to the temporary contract arrangements which the Board had put in place for public relations, design and printing.

Officials explained that the Board had to ensure that proper procurement procedures were being operated and that the Northern Ireland Audit Office was likely to be critical of the Board for not putting a permanent contract in place.

The Committee discussed the matter and agreed:-

- That given the changed needs of the Board it would be reasonable not to award the contract for the three services on a one contract basis.
- To defer taking a decision on the awarding of the contracts until the Director of Communications was appointed in order to ensure that the level of external services which were required by the Board could be fully assessed.
- To continue to use the services of **.(b)(1)**.....until the contract situation is resolved.
- That clarification should be obtained on the terms of the contract for the Official in the Board's Press Office.

## **9. TRANSPARENCY POLICY**

Officials presented a paper which advised Members of the current position regarding the PSNI Transparency Policy.

Members agreed that ACC Toner and the Director of Information Management should be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee to make a presentation on the progress which had been made by PSNI regarding the implementation of the transparency policy.

## **10. MEDIA BRIEFINGS**

Officials presented a paper which sought Members views on the hosting of a series of Board media briefings.

The Committee agreed that general briefings on the work of the Board and themed briefings should be arranged.

## **11. MEDIA RELATIONS AND EVENT SCHEDULE**

The Committee noted details of a schedule which outlined details of forthcoming events and issues together with media activity which has been completed during April and May 2003.

## **12. ANNUAL REPORT – PRESENTATION OF DESIGN VISUALS**

Officials explained that consideration of this paper would be deferred until the next meeting of the Committee.

## **13. MATTERS TO BE RAISED WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE AT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING**

The Committee agreed that a question should be composed to ask the Chief Constable at the next Board meeting in relation to the number of people who are employed in the PSNI's Press and Public Relations Department and the size of the Department's budget.

## **14. PRESS ISSUES**

The Committee agreed that they had no matters to raise with the press arising from the meeting.

## **15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **15.1 DPP Interim Communications Strategy**

The Committee noted details of the DPP Interim Communications Strategy. Officials explained that Members would be kept informed of developments regarding dates for the Press and Public Relations training for DPP Managers.

## **16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on 14 August 2003 at 2.00pm.

(Meeting closed at 3.30 pm)