

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE POLICY, PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 4 AUGUST 2011 AT 2:00PM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

MEMBERS:

Mr Gearóid Ó hEára (Chairperson)
Mr Brian Rea (Vice Chairperson)
Mrs Anne Connolly
Mr Ryan Feeney
(1) Mr Gerry Kelly
(1) Mrs Joan O'Hagan
Mr Brian Rowntree
Ms Deborah Watters

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

(2) Mrs Judith Gillespie, Deputy Chief Constable
(2) Superintendent John McCaughan, Command Secretariat
(2) Inspector, Force Command

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Edgar Jardine, Interim Chief Executive
Mr David Jackson, Director of Community Engagement
Mr David Wilson, Director of Planning
Mr Peter Gilleece, Director of Policy
3 Board Officials

- (1) Item number 1 to part item number 4
- (2) Part item numbers 2 and 3

1. APOLOGIES, ETC

Apologies were received on behalf of Mr Jonathan Craig, Mr Trevor Lunn, Mr Stuart MacDonnell, Mr Conall McDevitt and Mr Robin Newton. NOTED.

The Chairman asked Members to declare any conflicts of interest arising from the agenda. No conflicts of interest were declared.

2. POLICING ARCHITECTURE

The Chairperson referred Members to previous discussion at the Committee meeting held on 28 July 2011 and to a paper issued to Members by e-mail on 2 August 2011 which provided a summary of the Draft Protocol on the Policing Architecture. The Chairperson informed Members that the Deputy Chief Constable would join the meeting later to comment on the PSNI's views on the draft protocol.

The Interim Chief Executive reminded Members of discussion at the July 2011 Board meeting on the role and relationship between the Board and the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Justice, and that the Board had agreed that the Committee should consider this matter as part of its overall consideration of the Policing Architecture.

Officials advised that the previous Board had been briefed on the draft protocol by the Department of Justice's Head of Policing, Policy and Strategy Division and had established a working group which had proposed a number of amendments to the Board in July 2010. The previous Board had also sought legal advice in relation to the consistency of the draft protocol with the Patten recommendations. In October 2010, the Board had written to the Department of Justice (DOJ) confirming that it was content with the draft protocol. Since that time, the protocol had remained in draft form and a number of concerns had been raised by the PSNI, and these concerns were detailed in the paper.

Members discussed the roles of the respective partners and the concerns raised by PSNI about the draft. A number of Members expressed surprise that the previous Board had not recognised potential concerns about the lack of clarity contained in some of the wording of a number of paragraphs relating to the responsibilities of the Board.

The Chairperson welcomed the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) and her colleagues to the meeting.

The DCC referred Members to a letter she had written to the Head of Policing, Policy and Strategy Division in the Department of Justice in October 2010 summarising PSNI feedback on the revised Draft Protocol on Policing Architecture.

Members and the DCC discussed the wording and possible interpretations of paragraphs 2.6, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 5.4 of the draft protocol. The Committee noted that while the protocol had no formal statutory basis and remained an administrative process, there was a need for further clarification on the role and responsibilities of the DOJ, PSNI, the Board and the Assembly Committee for Justice.

It was:-

AGREED:

- That officials should prepare a paper containing proposals on revised draft wording for specific paragraphs in the draft protocol as discussed by Members;
- That the revised draft protocol should be circulated to all Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee Members for comment;
- Subsequent to comment from Committee Members, a paper containing recommendations from the Committee should be taken to a future Board meeting for endorsement;
- Following Board endorsement, the protocol should be sent to the Department of Justice for forwarding to the Justice Committee;
- Subsequent to Board ratification of the protocol, the Board's Chairperson and Vice Chairperson should meet with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Assembly Committee for Justice.

3. PSNI PROGRAMME BOARDS

The Chairperson reminded Members that it had been agreed at the Committee meeting on 28 July 2011, that the DCC should be invited to provide a briefing on the role of PSNI Programme Boards.

The DCC outlined the background to the establishment of the Programme Boards. The DCC advised that their ultimate aim was to improve frontline service delivery. Most of the structure had been in place for 12 months and had been subject to an independent audit review which had received a 'satisfactory' assurance. The structure continued to be refined and amended in light of changing circumstances. A copy of the slides used by the DCC is attached at Annex 'A'.

The DCC outlined the purpose of the Service Executive Board, which all the Command Team attended and provided the strategic 'engine room'. The DCC described the purpose of the Risk, Demand and Resourcing Committee in identifying risk and prioritising demand. The DCC briefly outlined the responsibilities of the individual Programme Boards:-

- Security and Serious Harm;
- Leadership and Training;
- Service Excellence;
- Local Crime and Justice; and
- Communications.

During subsequent discussion, Members requested and received further information in relation to:-

- The work undertaken by the Service Executive Board in considering accountability targets;
- The inter-relationship between each Programme Board and the sharing of minutes of their meetings;
- The Terms of Reference for the Programme Boards – the DCC advised that each Programme Board had specific Terms of Reference;

- Sharing the minutes of Programme Boards with external organisations – the DCC advised that currently the minutes of Programme Board meetings were not shared externally and that PSNI would give consideration to sharing the minutes with the Board;
- The provision of an A3 Executive Summary of the meeting, rather than the minutes;
- Participation of Board Members in Programme Boards – the DCC advised that the Service Excellence Programme Board was potentially the most valuable to the Board;
- The alignment of Programme Boards and the Board’s Committee structure;
- Participation by Board Members - the DCC advised that Members had been invited to attend all of the Programme Boards except Security and Serious Harm, which dealt with operational issues;
- The rationale behind the co-chairing of Programme Boards;
- The Integrated Offender Management Scheme;
- The sharing of information on the work of Programme Boards to all staff through e-briefings and the “Call Sign” staff magazine;
- The need for good communications between senior management and personnel on the ground to ensure frontline delivery and to inculcate a new culture;
- The involvement of Members in District accountability meetings.

The Chairperson thanked the Deputy Chief Constable and her colleagues for their input and they left the meeting.

The Committee considered the invitation to Members to attend meetings of the Programme Boards and it was:-

AGREED:

- That consideration be given to receiving a briefing on Call Management and Call Handling (R4);
- To consider the most appropriate form of Board involvement in Project Boards at the next Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee meeting;

- That a paper should be prepared by officials setting out the advantages and disadvantages of Members participating in Programme Boards;
- That in the future consideration of Board Committee restructuring that thought should be given to aligning Board Committees with PSNI Programme Boards;
- That the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Board should consider the practicalities of the circulation of all correspondence issued/received by them to all Members of the Board;
- That arrangements be made to ensure Members of the Board were invited to District accountability meetings.

4. PUBLIC SESSION OF THE BOARD MEETING – 1 SEPTEMBER 2011

The Chairperson referred Members to discussion at previous Board meetings about the format for the first public session of the Board on 1 September 2011. He referred the Committee to a paper prepared by officials containing further proposals in relation to the format for the meeting.

Members discussed the proposals in the paper considering the format including:-

- i. A meeting in public to fulfil the Board's statutory responsibilities;
- ii. A public meeting;
- iii. The format for putting questions to the Chief Constable;
- iv. The layout for the meeting; and
- v. Invited attendees.

During discussion, there was consensus that the Board should focus on:-

- Holding the Chief Constable to account on behalf of the community through seeking information on current issues, particularly at a strategic level and through devoting dedicated time to pursue specific themes;
- Empowering the Chairperson to ensure that Members adhered to time constraints and avoided unnecessary duplication both in public and private sessions;

- Reviewing the format for the public session after the meeting on 1 September 2011.

During discussion, it was:-

AGREED:

- That the public session of the Board meeting on 1 September 2011 be in 2 parts – Part 1 a Board meeting in public where the Board membership put questions to the Chief Constable on topical issues and that this session should start at 2:00pm and last for a maximum of 45 minutes; Part 2 should be allocated to a public meeting, with opening comments from the Chairperson introducing the new format, introductory comments from a specialist in the theme of no more than 10 minutes, followed by open discussion with Board Members and subsequently members of the public participating, this session should last no more than 45 – 60 minutes;
- There should be a clear demarcation between the meeting in public and the public meeting and the seating arrangements for both meetings should be conducive to their purpose;
- With regard to questions to the Chief Constable, the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee should identify subject areas for discussion at the Board meeting in public and that these should be forwarded to the Chief Constable in advance of the meeting;
- That officials should give consideration to the practicality of holding public meetings outside the Board's premises, taking into account costs, health and safety, security issues etc. The Committee raised the possibility of holding such meetings in community centres;
- That a lunch-time press briefing with the Board Chairperson and Vice Chairperson should be arranged prior to each Board meeting in public;
- That Members should be asked for their views on the themes for more in-depth discussion at the public meetings of the Board;
- That all Board Members should be asked to comment on the proposals for the Board meeting on 1 September 2011;

- That the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson should consult with the Chief Constable about the arrangements for the public session of the Board meeting on 1 September 2011;
- That copy correspondence received by the Chairperson of the Board from the Chief Constable in relation to the McGurk's Bar murders should be circulated to all Members;
- That officials should provide a list of "topical issues" arising from the media prior to each Board meeting.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no matters arising.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was arranged for Thursday, 15 September 2011 at 2:00pm in Waterside Tower, Belfast.

(Meeting closed 4:30pm).

Secretariat

August 2011

Chairperson