

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2010 AT 2:00PM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

- Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
- (1) Mr Brian Rea (Vice Chairperson)
- (2) Mr Tom Buchanan
Mr Leslie Cree
- (3) Ms Mary McKee
Mr Gearóid Ó hEára
Mr Ian Paisley Jnr
- (3) Mr David Rose
Mr Suneil Sharma

INTERFACE GROUP IN ATTENDANCE:

- (4) Representatives from Suffolk Lenadoon
Interface Group

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Dr Debbie Donnelly, Deputy Chief Executive
Mr David Jackson, Director of Community
Engagement
3 Board Officials

- (1) Item numbers 1 – 6 and 15.1
- (2) Item numbers 1 – 5 and 15.1
- (3) Item numbers 1 – 15.1
- (4) Part Item number 2 only

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies. NOTED.

No conflicts of interest arising from the agenda were declared by Members. NOTED.

2. PRESENTATION FROM SUFFOLK LENADOON INTERFACE GROUP

The Chairperson welcomed the representatives from the Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG) to the meeting.

The representatives from SLIG briefed the Committee in relation to the background to the setting up of the Interface Group, the work the Group was currently undertaking and future plans.

Following the briefing, the Committee and the representatives from SLIG discussed:-

- The regeneration of the Suffolk and Lenadoon areas;
- The provision of funding for the regeneration programme;
- Proposals by SLIG to run residentials to bring people together to discuss cultural issues;
- Future changes to Woodbourne PSNI station which the representatives from SLIG would be keen to ensure that usage to any part of the site was carried out in a way which benefits and is acceptable to both of the communities living in the area.

In the ensuing discussion:-

- Members undertook to establish if there were any plans to change Woodbourne PSNI Station and to advise the representatives from SLIG;
- A Member suggested that representatives from SLIG should visit Cullybackey to see at first hand how the former police station, which had been sold to a Community Association, had been rebuilt to include units for new businesses. He undertook to provide the Group with contact details.

The representatives from SLIG explained that they had no formal contact with West Belfast DPP Sub Group, but would be keen to engage with the Group.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives from SLIG for their contribution and they left the meeting.

Following discussion, it was:-

AGREED:

That a letter should be sent to Belfast DPP West Belfast Sub-Group regarding engaging with SLIG.

3. MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

3.1 Minutes Of The Community Engagement Committee Meeting Held On 26 November 2009

It was:-

AGREED:

That the draft minutes of the Community Engagement meeting held on 26 November 2009 be approved.

3.2 Minutes Of The Community Engagement Committee Meeting Held On 28 January 2010

It was:-

AGREED:

That the draft minutes of the Community Engagement meeting held on 28 January 2010 be approved.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS

4.1 Meeting Held On 26 November 2009

4.1.1 Record Of Issues Raised By Reference Groups (Item 7.6 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee noted that the Board engaged and consulted with Irish Language Groups in relation to Irish language issues. This could be seen in the two very successful Irish language events which had been organised by the Board. At present the Irish Language Groups were content to proceed on this basis and did not wish to make the relationship more formal.

In response to a query from a Member, officials explained that representatives of the Board met regularly with the Chinese Welfare Society to discuss policing issues.

It was:-

AGREED:

- that a representative from the PSNI should be invited to brief the Committee regarding the work being undertaken with Ethnic Minority Groups;
- that consideration should be given to arranging an event for the Chinese community.

4.1.2 Policy On Funding External Projects (Item 10 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee noted that the policy in relation to providing funding to external organisations had been re-drafted and passed to the Board's Finance Department for advice and guidance. NOTED.

Following discussion, it was:-

AGREED:

That officials should prepare a paper for consideration by the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee regarding the policy for providing funding to external organisations.

4.2 Meeting Held On 28 January 2010

4.2.1 Belfast District Policing Partnerships (DPP) Effectiveness Assessment April To September 2009 (Item 2 Of Minutes Refers)

The issues relating to Belfast DPP had been actioned. NOTED.

4.2.2 Update On Policing With The Community (Item 3 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was considered at item number 5.1.

5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

5.1 Policing With The Community Update

The Committee considered a paper which:-

- provided an update to Members regarding the current work on the Policing with the Community Strategy and Implementation Plan; and
- sought Members endorsement for the Chairperson to continue to engage with PSNI on the development of the Strategy and Implementation Plan;

Members noted the content of a speaking note which had been provided to the February 2010 Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee meeting which set out the

issues which the Community Engagement Committee had raised in relation to Policing with the Community. The Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee had acknowledged that the note reflected the key issues for the Board and the Community Engagement Committee in moving forward.

The Chairperson briefed the Committee on a discussion he had held with Assistant Chief Constable, Criminal Justice regarding the Policing with the Community Strategy.

Following discussion, it was:-

RESOLVED:

To endorse the Chairperson's continued role in working with the PSNI to help drive forward their delivery of the Policing with the Community Strategy and Implementation Plan.

It was:-

AGREED:

- that relevant expertise should be used to assist with the Policing with the Community Strategy, including consultants and CJINI;
- that consideration should be given to undertaking study visits to other police services to see the work they are undertaking regarding Community Policing.

6. BELFAST DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIP (DPP) EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2009

The Committee noted a report regarding Belfast District Policing Partnership's progress against the DPP Effectiveness Framework for the period April to September 2009.

NOTED.

Officials gave a report to the Committee in relation to a meeting of the Principal Belfast DPP which had been held on 23 February 2010. NOTED.

Members noted that officials had met Belfast DPP officials and had discussed issues relating to the effectiveness of DPPs. NOTED.

In response to a query from a Member, officials explained that the DPP website had been out of action recently due to an internet security issue but work was being undertaken to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

7. DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIP (DPP) MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE – SIX MONTHLY UPDATE/REVIEW

The Committee considered a paper which provided Members with an update in relation to those DPP Members whose attendance had been previously brought before the Committee because they had failed to attend at least 75% of scheduled DPP meetings during the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009.

The Committee discussed the absence of an independent member from meetings of Carrickfergus DPP from October 2008 to date.

Following discussion, it was:-

RECOMMENDED:

That this case should be referred to the Board to consider the independent member's removal from Carrickfergus DPP.

The Committee noted details of the attendance of a political member of West Belfast DPP Sub Group during the period April to September 2009 and it was:-

AGREED:

That a letter should be sent to the political member of West Belfast DPP Sub-Group advising that their attendance would be considered again in a further six months time.

Officials reminded Members about a decision which had been made by the Board in November 2009 to defer a decision on the removal of an independent member from East Belfast DPP Sub Group until further medical evidence relating specifically to her ability to undertake her DPP duties was received in January 2010.

The Committee noted that the DPP member had attended a meeting of East Belfast DPP Sub Group in January 2010.

It was:-

AGREED:

That a letter should be sent to the independent member of East Belfast Sub Group advising that the Committee was pleased to note her return to the work of the DPP in January 2010 and her attendance record would be reviewed again in a further six month's time.

8. POLICING WITH THE COMMUNITY AWARDS 2010

The Committee considered a paper regarding plans for the Policing with the Community Awards 2010 and seeking the continued financial support of the Board for £19.5k.

Following discussion, it was:-

RECOMMENDED:

That the Board contribute £19.5k for the 2010 Policing with the Community Awards from the 2010 – 2011 budget.

9. SUMMARY OF ISSUES ARISING FROM ENGAGEMENT WITH LOYALIST AND REPUBLICAN COMMUNITIES

The Committee considered a paper regarding the work that was being carried out by way of engagement with the Republican and Loyalist communities and the most significant issues which had been identified from these discussions.

It was:-

AGREED:

That some Members of the Committee should consider the issues listed in the paper and meet with the Chief Constable to agree what actions should be taken in order to resolve the issues.

10. YOUNG PEOPLE, THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

The Committee considered a paper which provided information on a range of restorative justice approaches currently being deployed in relation to offending by young people.

It was:-

AGREED:

- that the PSNI, the Youth Justice Agency and Community Schemes should be asked to brief the Committee on the development and implementation of restorative justice practices in Northern Ireland;
- that the Board should facilitate a multi agency discussion with the restorative justice stakeholders on the issues outlined in paragraph 4 of the paper;
- that a Sub Group of the Committee should be set up to consider restorative justice approaches and the potential to keep children and young people out of the criminal justice system. Other Board Members should be invited to join the Sub Group.

11. UPDATE ON ISSUES RAISED BY REFERENCE GROUPS

The Committee noted a paper which updated Members on the wide range of issues which had been raised to date by various Reference Groups, the actions taken and outcomes achieved. NOTED.

It was:-

AGREED:

That officials should provide the Committee with an update for the next meeting regarding the issues raised by the Reference Groups.

12. INFORMATION PAPERS

The Committee considered the following information papers:-

12.1 Correspondence Regarding Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) Action In Respect Of Assets Held By An Independent DPP Member

In response to a query from a Member, officials undertook to provide the Committee with a copy of the policy for the removal of a Member of a DPP.

12.2 Update On The Human Rights And Professional Standards Committee Thematic Inquiry On Children And Young People

12.3 Briefing Paper On the NSPCC Workshop: Traveller Children Witnessing Domestic Violence – Multi Agency Challenges To Providing Support

12.4 Business In The Community And The PSNI

NOTED.

13. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

It was:-

AGREED:

That officials should draft questions on the following:-

- what steps the Chief Constable is taking to promote and encourage support for District Commanders for the Policing with the 2010 Community Awards.
- how the Chief Constable will ensure that Policing with the Community is the responsibility of all PSNI officers in terms of how they engage and work in partnership with the community;

14. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

There were no communication issues arising from the meeting.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

15.1 Correspondence from 'D' District DPPs

The Committee considered correspondence, tabled at the meeting, from Carrickfergus, Lisburn and Newtownabbey DPPs regarding changes to station opening hours within 'D' District, together with an article which had appeared in the press regarding the issue.

Members noted that:-

- the Resources and Improvement Committee had discussed correspondence received and media coverage of the issues around 'D' District opening hours at a meeting held on 19 February 2010.
- The Chairman of the Board would speak to the Chief Constable to express the concerns raised by DPPs around the issue.

Officials explained that ACC Urban Region had invited 'D' District DPP Chairs and DPP Managers to a meeting during the following week to discuss the changes to station opening hours.

Members discussed the issue and it was:-

AGREED:

- that officials should arrange a meeting with DPP Chairs and DPP Managers prior to the meeting with ACC Urban Region;

- that the Community Engagement Committee should meet with representatives from 'D' District DPPs;
- that the PSNI should be asked to draw up a template outlining the consultation process that should take place with DPPs regarding changing to opening hours of Stations;
- that officials should review the DPP Buddy Scheme and bring proposals to the next meeting.

15.2 Correspondence From Craigavon DPP On An Independent Member Vacancy

The Committee considered correspondence, tabled at the meeting, from Craigavon DPP advising of the resignation of an independent member of the DPP and requesting to carry the vacancy until the next round of Local Government elections.

During discussion, officials advised Members that the cost of running a competition to fill the vacancy would be £15,000 and that the Board and DPP did not have the resources available in their budgets to proceed with filling the vacancy. Members noted this cost and:-

RESOLVED:

That the vacancy in Craigavon DPP should be filled.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was arranged for Thursday, 25 March 2010 at 2:00pm, Waterside Tower, Belfast.

Meeting closed (4:30pm).

Secretariat
February 2010

Chairperson