

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY, 1 NOVEMBER 2007 AT 9:30AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

- (1)** Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Chairman)
Mr Barry Gilligan (Vice Chairman)
Ms Martina Anderson
Mr Tom Buchanan
Mr Leslie Cree
- (2)** Rt Hon Jeffrey Donaldson
Mrs Dolores Kelly
Mr Alex Maskey
- (3)** Mr Basil McCrea
Mr Daithí McKay
Ms Mary McKee
Mrs Rosaleen Moore
Mr Gearóid Ó hEára
Mr Brian Rea
- (4)** Mr Trevor Ringland
- (5)** Mr David Rose
Mr Suneil Sharma
Mr Peter Weir

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

- (6)** Mr Paul Leighton (Deputy Chief Constable)
- (6)** Mrs Judith Gillespie (ACC Rural Region)
- (6)** Mr Duncan McCausland (ACC Urban Region)
- (6)** Mr Peter Sheridan (ACC Crime Operations)
- (6)** Ms Donna Scott (Legal Advisor)
- (6)** Mr Joe Stewart (Director of Human Resources)
- (6)** Superintendent Rob Drennan, Criminal Justice Department
- (6)** Ms Gail McGreevy, Media and Communications
- (6)** T/Superintendent, Command Secretariat

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Trevor Reaney (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) Items 1 to 5 and 14
- (2) Part item 2 and items 3 to 9 and 14
- (3) Items 1 to 9 and 14
- (4) Part item 2 to close
- (5) Items 1 to 10.1 and 14
- (6) Item 14 only

1. APOLOGIES, ETC

Apologies were received on behalf of Mr David Simpson. NOTED.

The Chairman informed Members, that due to his attendance at a meeting in England on Board business, he would be leaving the meeting early and the Vice Chairman would take the Chair. NOTED.

2. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE POLICING BOARD

2.1 Minutes Of The Policing Board Meeting Held On 4 October 2007

The Board considered the draft minutes of the previous meeting.

The Sinn Fein Members on the Board requested that the minutes at item 10.2 headed TASER be amended to record the opposition of their party to any introduction of TASER by PSNI.

Mrs Kelly requested that the minutes at item 10.2 headed TASER be amended to record the opposition of the SDLP to any introduction of TASER by PSNI.

Mr Cree requested that the minutes be amended at item 16 to record that the Chief Constable had confirmed that he considered that the deployment of TASER was an operational matter for decision within his remit as Chief Constable of PSNI.

Subject to these amendments:-

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That the draft minutes of the Policing Board meeting held on 4 October 2007 be approved.

2.2 Minutes Of The Policing Board Meeting In Public Held On 4 October 2007

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That the draft minutes of the Policing Board meeting in public held on 4 October 2007 be approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING

3.1 Historical Enquiries Team (Item 3.1.1 Of Minutes Refers)

The Board considered correspondence received from the NIO regarding progress on the proposed Historical Enquiries Team (HET) stocktake. The correspondence included Terms of Reference for the stocktake.

Members discussed the work of the HET, particularly financial provision and the timing of the stocktake.

It was:-

AGREED:

That the Chairman should write to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Northern Ireland recommending that the stock take should be deferred until the Consultative Group on the Past had presented its findings.

3.2 RUC GC Foundation (Item 3.1.2 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman informed the Board that following the selection process, the Secretary of State had appointed Mr Trevor Ringland as a Trustee for the Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross Foundation. NOTED.

3.3 Invitation To Meet With DPOA (Item 3.1.6 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman informed the Board that 6 Members had now indicated that they wished to meet with the Disabled Police Officers Association (DPOA) and that those involved would be contacted by officials when the arrangements had been finalised. NOTED.

3.4 Meeting With The Strategic Review Of Parades Panel (Item 3.1.7 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman informed the Board that he and a number of Members had met with the Strategic Review of Parades Panel on 8 October 2007 and that any Member who wished to be updated on the meeting should contact the Director of Policy. NOTED.

3.5 Monitoring Of Blakey, Crompton & Stevens 3 Reports (Item 3.1.11 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman informed Members about the content of a letter he had received from Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC) concerning the sharing of the Blakey, Stevens 3 and Crompton reports. NOTED.

Members sought clarification about the status of the Stevens 3 report and officials undertook to obtain further information. Officials also undertook to circulate a copy of HMIC's letter to all Board Members.

3.6 Members' Training And Development (Item 5.5 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive confirmed that the training and development session arranged for Members for the afternoon of 10 October 2007 had been postponed due to the unavailability of a sufficient number of Members.

It was:-

AGREED:

That the training and development session for Members should be rearranged for 3 January 2008.

3.7 Consultative Group On The Past (Item 6.2 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman reminded Members that at the October 2007 Board meeting, Members had discussed meeting with the Consultative Group on the Past. It had been agreed that a paper would be prepared and consideration would be given to facilitating a discussion among Members prior to any meeting with the Consultative Group. The Chairman advised that the discussion on the subject at the dinner hosted by the Secretary of State, suggested that given the evident high degree of disagreement, it was unrealistic to expect that consensus could be arrived at; a majority of Members agreed.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

- that the political Members of the Board should engage with the Consultative Group through their respective political parties;

- that independent Members, including the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board, could meet with the Consultative Group in an independent capacity to present their own views as individual Members;
- independent Members would discuss whether to make arrangements for a separate meeting with the Consultative Group and advise the Chairman accordingly.

3.8 TASER (Item 10.2 Of Minutes Refers)

A Member referred to the position of the Board regarding TASER, as stated in the minutes and in a news release issued by the Chairman following the Policing Board meeting on 4 October 2007. The Member indicated that the Sinn Fein political Members on the Board considered that the Board's position represented a direction to the Chief Constable rather than a view. The Chairman and other Members affirmed that it had been clearly stated that the position was *the view* of the Board.

A discussion followed on the debate that had taken place concerning TASER in the private session of the October Board meeting. Members discussed the Board's role in holding the Chief Constable to account and previous legal advice that the Board had received relating to the interpretation of Section 6 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 regarding the provision of equipment.

The Chairman indicated that if a motion was received and it was the majority view of Members that there should be further consideration of the Board's statutory role and responsibilities, then this would be facilitated at a future meeting. NOTED.

The Board considered a letter, tabled at the meeting, from the Police Federation for Northern Ireland in relation to the Board's position regarding TASER.

It was:-

AGREED:

That the Chairman should respond to the letter from the Police Federation for Northern Ireland and provide the Police Federation with a copy of the advice received by the Board from its Human Rights Advisors.

3.9 Public Engagement Meetings (Item 12 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive reminded Members of previous discussion concerning the arrangement of the first Board Public Engagement meeting. He informed Members that arrangements were in place to hold the meeting on 27 November 2007 and sought Members' approval to a number of details concerning the event.

Following discussion, it was:-

AGREED:

- that the arrangements made in respect of the meeting on 27 November 2007 should be cancelled;
- that officials should review the purpose, format and venues for Public Engagement meetings and bring a paper for discussion to a future meeting;
- that the Board should review the current arrangements to hold its monthly meetings outside Waterside Tower, given the decision to hold Public Engagement meetings at venues throughout the province.

3.10 Status Of Human Rights Advisors (Item 10.2 Of Minutes Refers)

A Member requested that the Board should receive a report on the Terms of Contract of its Human Rights Advisors. The Member referred to a contribution made by the Board's Human Rights Advisor to a recent television programme.

It was:-

AGREED:

- that all Members should receive a DVD copy of the relevant television programme;
- that the Chairman should deal with the issue informally.

4. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

4.1 Engagements

The Chairman highlighted the following engagements which he had undertaken on behalf of the Board:-

- dinner in honour of the visit to Northern Ireland by the President of the Republic of Croatia – Hillsborough Castle – 17 October 2007;
- end of Blessed Month of Ramadan – Northern Ireland Muslim Family Association – Belfast – 21 October 2007;
- Police Federation Health and Safety Conference Dinner – La Mon House Hotel – 25 October 2007.

NOTED.

4.2 Publications

There were no matters arising.

4.3 Correspondence

The Chairman informed Members that the following correspondence had been received:-

- letter dated 27 September 2007 from the Training Co-ordinator Northern Ireland Alternatives regarding a joint meeting. NOTED.

4.4 News Releases

The Chairman highlighted the following news release:-

- No evidence of collusion in brothers' double murder but investigation was brief and flawed: Police Ombudsman – OPONI – 30 October 2007.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

5.1 Members' Attendances At Meetings And Events – 30 May – 30 September 2007

The Chief Executive referred Members to a paper detailing their attendances at meetings and events during the period 30 May to 30 September 2007. He asked Members to advise Secretariat by 8 November 2007 of any inaccuracy or omissions prior to publication of the schedule on the Board's website. NOTED.

5.2 DPP Reconstitution - Publicity

The Chief Executive informed Members that publicity for the recruitment of independent members of District Policing Partnerships would commence during week beginning 5 November 2007 and would include radio, local media and internet coverage. NOTED.

5.3 Format Of Board Papers

A Member referred to the revised "loose leaf" format for Board papers which had been introduced in September 2007 and suggested that the pilot format be reviewed. A number of Members commented that they were content with the current format. The

Chief Executive indicated that the views of Members would be sought concerning the pilot format of Board papers. NOTED.

5.4 Board Staffing

The Chief Executive informed Members on the progress regarding the appointment of a new Director of Corporate Services and the overall staffing position within the Board. NOTED.

6. CORPORATE POLICY, PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

6.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee Held On 17 October 2007

The Vice Chairman highlighted the following matters considered by the Committee and outlined Committee discussions/recommendations:-

6.1.1 Retirement Of Police Ombudsman (Item 4.5 Of Minutes Refers)

The Vice Chairman informed Members that a date of 15 November 2007 had been agreed with the Police Ombudsman for a Board dinner to mark her retirement. Officials would provide further details in due course. NOTED.

6.1.2 Format Of Minutes Of Meetings Of The Board And Committees (Item 14 Of Minutes Refers)

A number of Members indicated that it would be helpful if the amount of detail contained in the minutes could continue to be reviewed to achieve the optimum balance of brevity and substance. NOTED.

6.1.3 Publication Of Papers On The Board Website (Item 14 Of Minutes Refers)

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the draft minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee held on 17 October 2007.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

7.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Community Engagement Committee Held On 27 September 2007

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the draft minutes of the meeting of the Community Engagement Committee held on 27 September 2007.

7.2 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Community Engagement Committee Held On 25 October 2007

The Chair of the Committee highlighted the following matters considered by the Committee and outlined Committee discussions/recommendations:-

7.2.1 Community Engagement Strategy (Item 3.1 Of Committee Agenda Refers)

The revised Community Engagement Strategy had been considered by the Committee and circulated for comment to the Board's reference groups.

7.2.2 DPP Reconstitution (Item 3.3 Of Agenda Refers)

Following the tendering process, PriceWaterHouse Coopers had been appointed to work with the Board on the selection process for the appointment of independent members to DPPs. It is anticipated that a public campaign will commence shortly.

7.2.3 Round Table Discussion (Item 4.1 Of Agenda Refers)

The Chair of the Committee highlighted the meeting held on 15 October 2007, attended by a number of church leaders and senior staff from statutory bodies and the police. The Committee had agreed that the Board should convene a series of bi-lateral meetings with relevant participants and reconvene the main groups in 3 months time.

7.2.4 Briefing – Policing With The Community – Monitoring Framework (Item 7 Of Agenda Refers)

The Chair outlined a briefing received by the Committee from Mr Bob Lunney, an Independent Consultant to the Committee, concerning the development of a monitoring framework in relation to Policing with the Community. Round table discussions had been planned with the Deputy Chief Constable and ACC Criminal Justice regarding the Community Engagement Strategy Framework. Two “seeing is believing” visits were also being arranged.

7.2.5 Joint DPP, Community And PSNI Problem Solving Funded By IFI (Item 15.1 Of Agenda Refers)

The Chair informed the Board that bids had been received from four organisations to deliver the problem solving project and officials were working with the NIO Procurement Unit to select the best bid.

8. HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS

8.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Human Resources Committee Meeting Held On 11 October 2007

8.1.1 OSPRE Assessment Centre (Item 5.2 Of Minutes Refers)

The Vice Chairman of the Board informed Members that information in relation to the OSPRE assessment process had been circulated to all Board Members.

8.1.2 Briefing By Independent Validator And The PSNI Regarding The Human Resources Planning Strategy (Item 9 Of Minutes Refers)

The Vice Chairman of the Board informed Members that the Chairman of the Board had spoken to the Chief Constable regarding the PSNI's written response to the Independent Validator's report and that a letter had been issued seeking a written response to the HMIC Inspection of the PSNI Human Resources function. A reply had been received from PSNI and it would be considered by the Committee at its next meeting.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the draft minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 11 October 2007.

8.2 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Human Resources (Quorum) Committee Held On 11 October 2007

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the draft minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources (Quorum) Committee held on 11 October 2007.

9. HUMAN RIGHTS AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING

9.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Human Rights And Professional Standards Committee Held On 10 October 2007

The Chair of the Committee highlighted the following matters considered by the Committee and outlined Committee discussions/recommendations:-

9.1.1 Proposal To Introduce TASER To The PSNI (Item 3.6 Of Minutes Refers)

9.1.2 Engagement With Human Rights NGOs (Items 3.7 and 10 of Minutes Refers)

9.1.3 Review Of The PSNI Code Of Ethics (Item 8 Of Minutes Refers)

The final consultation on the PSNI Code Of Ethics is currently ongoing and will be brought to the Board for sign-off in December 2007.

9.1.4 Attenuated Energy Projectile (Item 9 Of Minutes Refers)

9.1.5 Consultation – Police Ombudsman Review (Item 12 Of Minutes Refers)

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the draft minutes of the meetings of the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee held on 10 October 2007.

10. RESOURCES AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

10.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Resources And Improvement Committee Held On 19 October 2007

The Chair of the Committee highlighted the following matters considered by the Committee and outlined Committee discussions/recommendations:-

10.1.1 Compensation Information (Item 11 Of Minutes Refers)

10.1.2 Comprehensive Spending Review (Item 7 Of Minutes Refers)

10.1.3 Outstanding Patten Recommendations (Item 10 Of Minutes Refers)

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the draft minutes of the meeting of the Resources and Improvement Committee held on 19 October 2007.

10.2 Site Of Former Coalisland PSNI Station

The Board considered a paper regarding the retention of land on which the former Coalisland PSNI stood.

The Vice Chairman reminded Members that in September 2006, the Board took a decision to endorse the PSNI's recommendation to close and demolish Coalisland PSNI station but did not agree to the disposal of the land. The unresolved issue of the retained land was brought before the October 2007 meeting of the Resources and Improvement Committee, prompted by comments made by the Oversight Commissioner in his final report in May 2007.

Members discussed the Government policy and procedures concerning the disposal of surplus assets.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That approval should be given by PSNI to dispose of the site on which the former Coalisland PSNI station stood.

11. NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD LANGUAGES POLICY

The Board considered a paper regarding the Board's revised (draft) policy relating to "Carrying out the work of the Board in languages other than English", and a recommended protocol. Following discussion, it was:-

AGREED:

- that officials should discuss the draft policy with Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster Scots Agency;
- that subsequent to discussions with the two organisations, a paper should be brought to a future Board meeting;
- officials should obtain further information regarding the budget implications of the draft policy.

12. INFORMATION PAPERS

There were no matters arising.

13. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

There were no matters arising.

14. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

Members discussed the 7 day deadline for receipt of questions and the process for raising questions with the Chief Constable.

It was suggested, that the Board should revisit this matter at another occasion.

The Chief Executive informed Members that a briefing on questioning the Chief Constable would be included in the programme for the Members' Training and Development session now arranged for 3 January 2008. NOTED.

The Chairman welcomed the Deputy Chief Constable and other PSNI representatives to the meeting.

The Deputy Chief Constable made apologies for the non-attendance of the Chief Constable who was out of the country, attending an approved personal development programme.

The Board received further information in relation to:-

- the PSNI legal strategy in dealing with hearing loss claims, particularly those settled out of court;
- an assessment of the threat from Dissident Republican organisations;
- a police investigation into an attack on an Orange Hall in Strabane;
- a police investigation into a petrol bomb attack on the home of a named individual in 2006;
- a police investigation and the circumstances surrounding the recent arrest of a named individual;

- progress in reducing the delay in processing POCVA checks for people employed in working with children and vulnerable adults;
- an update on the current position regarding the recruitment and training of Police Community Support Officers;
- meeting PSNI planning targets for the delivery of Neighbourhood Policing, following a reduction in the strength of the Full-Time Reserve.

The Board then moved into public session and following the Board meeting in public the PSNI representatives left the meeting.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no matters arising.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was arranged for 6 December 2007 at Waterside Tower, Belfast.

(Meeting closed 3:15pm)

Secretariat

November 2007

Chairman