

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE POLICY, PLANNING & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 FEBRUARY 2008 AT 10:00AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

- (1) Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Chairman)
- Rt Hon Jeffrey Donaldson (Vice Chairman)
- Mrs Dolores Kelly
- (2) Mr Basil McCrea
- Mr Daithí McKay
- Ms Mary McKee
- Mrs Rosaleen Moore
- Mr David Simpson

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

- Mr Trevor Reaney (Chief Executive)
- Dr Debbie Donnelly (Deputy Chief Executive)
- Mr David Jackson (Director of Community Engagement)
- Mr Sam Hagen (Director of Corporate Services)
- Mr David Wilson (Director of Planning)
- Mr Peter Gilleece (Director of Policy)
- 3 Board Officials

- (1) **Item number 3.11 to close**
- (2) **Item number 3.3 to close**

1. APOLOGIES, ETC

Apologies were received on behalf of Mr Barry Gilligan, Mr Alex Maskey and Mr Trevor Ringland. NOTED.

2. MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE POLICY, PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 JANUARY 2008

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the previous meeting.

It was:-

AGREED:

That the draft minutes of the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee meeting held on 17 January 2008 should be agreed.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 JANUARY 2008

3.1 Chief Officers' Issues (Item 3.1 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive confirmed that work was continuing on the development of a policy paper regarding secondments and acting-up of officers at ACPO ranks. NOTED.

3.2 Research Support For Political Members (Item 3.2 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with at item 9.1.

3.3 Preparations For The Devolution Of Policing And Justice (Item 3.3 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive referred to a letter dated 6 February 2008 from the Northern Ireland Office which had been circulated to all Board Members regarding the Devolution of Policing and Justice. He advised that work was ongoing on a Memorandum of Understanding and it was anticipated that a draft was likely to be available for consideration by the Board by the end of March 2008. NOTED.

3.4 Police Pay Award 2007 – Booth II Review (Item 3.4 Of Minutes Refers)

The Director of Corporate Services reminded Members that, as highlighted at the February 2008 Board meeting, the Board had been named as an interested party in an upcoming Judicial Review. At this stage, officials were monitoring progress and any developments would be brought to the attention of the relevant Committee. NOTED.

3.5 Policing Board Monitoring Of Outstanding Patten Recommendations (Item 3.5 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with at item 9.2.

3.6 CORE Project – District Command Unit Structure (Item 3.6 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with at item 9.3.

3.7 Independent External Review – Omagh Bombing Investigations (Item 4.6 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman stated that he had informed a representative of families bereaved by the Omagh bombing of the decision of the Board prior to the public release of the decision.

Officials informed the Committee that it was anticipated that the Board would receive an interim report in early April 2008 and a final report by the first week in June 2008. The Northern Ireland Office had agreed to provide funding for the Independent External Review. NOTED.

3.8 Omagh – Fatal Fire (Item 4.8 Of Minutes Refers)

The Director of Policy advised that ACC Criminal Justice had been invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to brief Members with regard to investigations into the fatal fire in Omagh.

With regard to the meeting with ACC Criminal Justice, a Member referred to legislation in England and Wales regarding the management of sex offenders on release from prison and suggested that the ACC should also be invited to discuss the benefits of equivalent legislation in Northern Ireland. NOTED.

3.9 Study Visit For Board Members - Edinburgh (Item 5.2 Of Minutes Refers)

The Deputy Chief Executive informed the Committee, that all Members who had indicated that they wished to attend the Study Visit to Edinburgh would be provided with a briefing pack before the end of the week. NOTED.

3.10 Washington 2008 (Item 5.4 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive asked Members to reflect on the estimate of costs associated with the Board's decision to attend St Patrick's Day celebration events in Washington and to send a delegation of 6 Members to represent the Board.

Members discussed the need to send a delegation representative of the Board, the travel arrangements and the programme, in the context of a difficult CSR 07 settlement on the police grant.

It was:

AGREED:

To not fund a table at the AIF dinner.

It was:

RESOLVED:

That it was necessary for the Board to be represented across the political parties with a united delegation at this particular time and that the investment was appropriate and necessary.

The political parties represented on the Board indicated that their nominated Member would be notified to officials as soon as possible.

3.11 District Policing Partnership (DPP) Appointment Panels (Item 5.7 Of Minutes Refers)

The Director of Community Engagement updated the Committee on the arrangements associated with the panels to appoint independent members of DPPs. He reminded the Committee, that 2 training sessions for Members of the appointment panels had been arranged for the afternoons of 21 and 25 February 2008, and that there was a requirement for each panel member to have received training before taking part in the appointment process. NOTED.

3.12 Questions At Board Meetings

This matter was dealt with at item 6.

3.13 Serious And Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) (Item 9 Of Minutes Refers)

A Member referred to the decision taken at the previous meeting that the Committee should be briefed on the findings of the Northern Ireland Audit Office report on the progress in tackling organised crime in Northern Ireland. The Member requested further information about the funding of the work of the new Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA). Officials undertook to pursue the enquiry and report back to the Member concerned.

It was:-

AGREED:

That the Board should invite a representative from SOCA to brief Members on the work of the Agency.

4. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

4.1 Engagements

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

- Billy Wright Inquiry - Meeting with Mr David Wright – Belfast – 17 January 2008;
- GOC'S Dinner – Thiepval Barracks, Lisburn – 13 February 2008;
- launch of Criminal Justice Week 2008 – Belfast – 18 February 2008;
- reception to mark the work of the Community Safety Partnerships & District Policing Partnerships – Belfast – 19 February 2008;
- Organised Crime Task Force Stakeholders Group Meeting – Belfast – 19 February 2008;
- CORE – Briefing meeting with the Chief Constable – Belfast – 19 February 2008;
- master-class regarding Preventing and Reducing Offending and Re-offending – Hillsborough – 20 February 2008.

NOTED.

4.2 Publications

There were no matters arising.

4.3 Correspondence

The Chairman informed Members he had received the following correspondence:-

- letter from NIO dated 7 February 2008 regarding the police staff break from the secondment arrangements with Northern Ireland Civil Service;
- letter from NIO dated 7 February 2008 regarding Policing Plan 2008 – 2011;

- letter of thanks from Centre for Public Policy Seminars dated 7 February 2008 regarding Inclusive and Prosperous Society Event on 5 February 2008.

NOTED.

4.4 News Releases/Articles

- ARA Secures Settlement of £40,000 from East Belfast Woman – Assets Recovery Agency – 18 February 2008;
- ARA Secures Settlement of £750,000 from Dead Suspected Drug Dealer's Estate – Assets Recovery Agency – 18 February 2008.

NOTED.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

5.1 APA Review – Board Representation On APA Executive

The Chief Executive informed the Committee that he had been advised by the Association of Police Authorities (APA), that, as a result of a review of the APA, one seat had been reserved on the organisation's Executive for a representative from the Board.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That the Chairman of the Policing Board should represent the Board on the APA Executive.

5.2 Management Of Members' Time/Availability

The Chief Executive expressed the acute awareness of officials of the pressures on Members' time and the demands placed on their time for attendance at Policing Board meetings and events. He sought the views of Members on how officials could best assist Members in managing their understandably limited availability.

It was:-

AGREED:

That a small working group of Members should be convened to consider the matter and that Members interested in participating should contact the Secretariat.

5.3 National Policing Board

The Chief Executive outlined the role of the National Policing Board (NPB), which was established by the Home Office in 2006 and meets on a quarterly basis to advise on major policing issues, including a number of Police Negotiating Board issues that touch on matters concerning Northern Ireland. He asked the Committee to consider if appropriate local representation would be desirable.

It was:-

AGREED:

That the issue of representation from Northern Ireland on the National Policing Board should be raised in the first instance with the NIO.

5.4 Invitation To Attend DPP Meeting

The Board had received correspondence from ACC Crime Support regarding the protocol for dealing with a request for a named ACC to address a DPP on issues

relating to the investigation of historic enquiries. The enquiry raised a number of corporate and accountability issues.

It was:-

AGREED:

That in the first instance, a paper regarding the issues involved should be brought to the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee and that the letter should be circulated to all Board Members.

5.5 Review Of Standing Orders

The Chief Executive informed Members that work had commenced on the bi-ennial review of Standing Orders and that proposals to update the Board's Standing Orders would be brought to the next Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee. NOTED.

6. QUESTIONS AT BOARD MEETINGS

The Chief Executive reminded Members of a discussion at the February 2008 Board meeting concerning the most effective use of the opportunity to question the Chief Constable at Board meetings. The Committee considered a paper which set out a proposed approach, based on the discussion at the Board meeting.

Subject to a number of minor amendments, it was:-

RESOLVED:

- to revise the programme for Board meetings in accordance with the proposals in the paper, for a pilot period of 4 meetings;
- that the pilot period should commence at the March 2008 Board meeting.

7. POLICING BOARD PUBLICATIONS

The Committee considered a paper which proposed that all future Policing Board publications should be published on the Board website with a limited print run.

The Committee considered the print budget and Section 75 legislative requirements.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That where appropriate to the target audience, all future Board publications should be published on the Board's website with a limited print run.

8. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

The Committee considered a paper which proposed a change to the Board's Recruitment and Selection Policy.

The Committee considered the Board's current Recruitment and Selection Policy from the Northern Ireland Civil Service, public advertisements and the use of a recruitment agency for the supply of temporary staff.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That the Board's Recruitment and Selection Policy be changed to allow for trawling of the Civil Service to assist in filling vacancies at Staff Officer level and above, in addition to external recruitment.

A Member proposed that officials should also consider trawling the voluntary sector for interest.

A Member sought and received an update on 2 ongoing Employment Tribunal cases.

9. INFORMATION PAPERS

The Committee considered the following information papers:-

9.1 Research Support For Political Members

In addition to the information paper, the Chief Executive updated Members on the progress in developing a draft allocation of funding and appropriate administrative arrangements. NOTED.

9.2 Policing Board Monitoring Of Outstanding Patten Recommendations

It was:-

AGREED:

That the update on the status of the 31 of 35 outstanding Patten recommendations noted as incomplete by the Oversight Commissioner in his final report of May 2007, should be shared with all District Policing Partnerships.

9.3 Policing Plan Performance Monitoring – CORE Project

In addition to the information paper, the Deputy Chief Executive responded to a number of questions relating to the operation of the Corporate Opportunity for Resilience and Efficiency (CORE) Project. NOTED.

9.4 Surveillance Commissioner Annual Report (2007)

NOTED.

9.5 PSNI Management Of Sex Offenders And Participation Within The Multi-Agency Sex Offenders Risk Assessment And Management Committee (MASRAM)

The Committee noted that ACC Criminal Justice was due to attend the Resources and Improvement Committee meeting the following day, and proposed that the following issues be raised at the meeting:-

- the arrangements for the management of sex offenders who were under the age of 18;
- the use of a MASRAM type system to manage violent offenders.

9.6 Tribunal Cases

NOTED.

9.7 Independent Review Of Policing – Final Report

NOTED.

9.8 Recent NIO Statistical Publications

NOTED.

9.9 Correspondence Relating To The Omagh Bomb Trial

NOTED.

10. MATTERS TO BE RAISED WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE AT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING

It was:-

AGREED:

That a question should be put to the Chief Constable regarding the satisfaction level of crime victims being kept informed regarding their case.

11. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES

There were no matters arising.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 Complaint Against A Member Of The Board

The Chairman informed the Committee that he had received a letter of complaint against a Member of the Board and that he was seeking, in the first instance, to deal with the matter informally in accordance with the Member's Code of Conduct.

It was:-

AGREED:

That the Committee should give delegated authority to the Chairman, in consultation with the Vice Chairman, to take the matter to the next stage in the most propitious way, if the complaint could not be resolved informally.

12.2 PSNI Follow Up With Victims Of Crime

A Member referred to PSNI communication with the victims of crime and sought the views of Members on the Board's role in improving PSNI communication and follow-up action. Members discussed recent survey results, call handling, the PSNI Communications Strategy, training provided to police officers and agreed that the matter should be raised with the Chief Constable at the next Board meeting.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 21 March 2008. Given that a number of Members would be involved in the visit to Washington the same week, the date of the next Committee meeting was deferred until 16 April 2008 at 2.00pm in Waterside Tower, Belfast.

(Meeting closed 11:55am).

Secretariat

February 2008

Chairman