

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY, 3 APRIL 2008 AT 9:30AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

- Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Chairman)
- Mr Barry Gilligan (Vice Chairman)
- Ms Martina Anderson
- (1) Mr Tom Buchanan
- Mr Alex Maskey
- Mr Basil McCrea
- Ms Mary McKee
- Mrs Rosaleen Moore
- Mr Ian Paisley Jnr
- Mr Brian Rea
- Mr Trevor Ringland
- Mr David Rose
- Mr Suneil Sharma
- (2) Mr David Simpson
- (3) Mr Peter Weir

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

- (4) Sir Hugh Orde (Chief Constable)
- (4) Mr Paul Leighton (Deputy Chief Constable)
- (4) Mr Alistair Finlay (ACC Crime Support)
- (5) Mrs Judith Gillespie (ACC Rural Region)
- (4) Mr Drew Harris (ACC Operational Support)
- (4) Mr Duncan McCausland (ACC Urban Region)
- (4) Mr Peter Sheridan (ACC Crime Operations)
- (4) Mr David Best (Director of Finance and Support Services)
- (4) Mr Joe Stewart (Director of Human Resources)
- (4) Ms Liz Young (Head of Media & Communications)
- (6) Chief Superintendent Henry Irvine (District Commander 'D' District)
- (6) Chief Inspector David Moore (Area Commander, Carrickfergus)
- (4) T/Acting Head of Command Secretariat
- (4) 2 PSNI Personnel

INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL REVIEWER:

- (7) Sir Dan Crompton

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- Mr Trevor Reaney (Chief Executive)
- (2) Dr Debbie Donnelly (Deputy Chief Executive)
- (2) 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) Except item numbers 1 – 3.3 and 11
- (2) Except item number 11
- (3) Except item number 14
- (4) Item number 14 only
- (5) Item numbers 11 and 14
- (6) Item number 11 only
- (7) Item number 3.6 only

1. APOLOGIES, ETC

Apologies were received on behalf of Mr Leslie Cree, Mrs Dolores Kelly and Mr Gearóid Ó hEára. NOTED.

2. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE POLICING BOARD

2.1 Minutes Of The Policing Board Meeting Held On 6 March 2008

The Board considered the draft minutes of the previous meeting.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That the draft minutes of the Policing Board meeting held on 6 March 2008 be approved.

2.2 Minutes Of The Policing Board Meeting In Public Held On 6 March 2008

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That the draft minutes of the Policing Board meeting in public held on 6 March 2008 be approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS

3.1 Members Training And Development (Item 3.1 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive informed Members that, as only 2 Members had been available to attend Part 2 of the Briefing Session on 1 April 2008, the final presentation, by the Employers' Forum on Disability, had been postponed. Future dates to deliver the presentation (subject to Members availability) will be considered. NOTED.

3.2 TASER (Items 3.2 Of Minutes Refers)

Officials informed Members that discussions were ongoing between the Board's Human Rights Advisor and the PSNI regarding concerns that remained to be resolved. The Human Rights Advisor would provide an update on the matter at the next meeting of the Board's Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee (HRPSC). NOTED.

It was:-

AGREED:

That should the Human Rights Advisor be unable to provide assurance to the HRPS Committee that outstanding concerns were being addressed by the PSNI, then the Chair of the HRPSC would write to the Chief Constable.

3.3 Northern Ireland Policing Board Languages Policy (Items 3.3 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with at item 10.

3.4 Covert Human Intelligence Sources / Update On Transfer Of National Security (Item 3.4 Of Minutes Refers)

A date had not yet been finalised for a meeting between the Board and ACC Crime Operations in relation to updating Members about Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS) and the transfer of responsibility for national security. Members were advised about a number of reviews that were ongoing in relation to these matters and that the most appropriate time to hold the meeting with ACC Crime Operations would be in the early autumn following the publication of these reviews. All Members will be invited to the meeting when it is arranged. NOTED.

3.5 Future Of District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) And Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) (Items 3.6 Of Minutes Refers)

The Board was advised that the NIO had again been reminded of the need to expedite a response to the Board's letter regarding the future of DPPs and CSPs. A response was awaited. NOTED.

3.6 Independent External Review – Omagh Bombing Investigations (Item 3.8 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman welcomed Sir Dan Crompton to the meeting and invited him to update Members on the progress made by the team carrying out the Independent External Review of the Omagh Bombing Investigations.

Sir Dan reminded the Board of the Terms of Reference for the review of the Omagh bombing investigations and gave a confidential briefing of the progress to date in respect of each recommendation.

Members discussed a variety of issues arising from the progress report.

Sir Dan Crompton confirmed that it was anticipated that the full report would be presented to the June 2008 Board meeting. The Chairman thanked Sir Dan for his contribution and he left the meeting. NOTED.

3.7 Board Representation at St Patrick's Day Celebrations – Washington 2008 (Item 3.9 Of Minutes Refers)

A written overview of the meetings held and summary of issues discussed during the Policing Board visit to Washington on 12/18 March 2008 had been circulated by officials. NOTED.

Each Member of the delegation commented on the visit. The consensus view was that it had been a successful visit and had achieved all of its key aims. Members paid tribute to the assistance that had been received from Chuck Wexler from the Police Executive Research Forum, Patrick Burke, Commander of Washington DC Metro Police Department and the officials that had accompanied Members on the visit. The Chairman confirmed that he had written to thank all those who had provided assistance during the visit and expressed thanks to staff who had assisted Members with the visit.

3.8 Questions At Board Meetings (Items 3.10 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive referred Members to legal advice tabled at the meeting, which had been received regarding the conduct of the Board meeting in public and to questions and answers which might give rise to a breach of due process or human rights.

It was:-

AGREED:

That the matter should be considered by the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee at its next meeting.

3.9 Visit To Police Property Storage (Item 5.1 Of Minutes Refers)

Officials advised that a date for a visit to the Police Property Store was being finalised and all Members would be contacted in due course.

3.10 Management Of Members' Time/Availability (Item 6.1.1 Of Minutes Refers)

The Vice Chairman advised that a date and venue was being finalised for a meeting to consider how best officials could assist Members in undertaking Board work. Two dates had been proposed – Friday, 11 April 2008 and Monday, 14 April 2008. The consensus view among Members was that the meeting should be held in the Assembly Buildings, Stormont. Officials undertook to confirm the date, time and venue as soon as possible. NOTED.

4. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

4.1 Engagements

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

- Dinner – Anglo Irish Secretariat – 2 April 2008.

4.2 Publications

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

- Review of Marches and Parades in Scotland – Sir John Orr;
- Review of Marches and Parades in Scotland – Guidance for Scottish Local Authorities – December 2006;
- Review of Marches and Parades in Scotland – Report of the Working Group on Marches and Parades – December 2006;

- Review of Marches and Parades in Scotland – A Survey of Views Across Scotland – December 2006;
- Devolving Policing and Justice in Northern Ireland – NIO – February 2008.

4.3 Correspondence

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

- letter from Ballymena Town Centre Partnership dated 25 February 2008 regarding Fixed Penalty Notices.

4.4 News Release

The Chairman highlighted the following news releases:-

- Over £9.5million investment for Community Safety Partnerships – NIO – 6 March 2008.

NOTED.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

5.1 Appointment Of Committees

5.1.1 New Member

The Board considered the vacancies on Committees which had ensued following the resignation of the Rt Hon Jeffrey Donaldson from the Board.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

- that Mr Ian Paisley Jnr should replace Rt Hon Jeffrey Donaldson as a member of the Community Engagement Committee;
- that Mr Ian Paisley Jnr should be appointed to the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee, as a floating Member.

It was noted that these appointments would be for the short period until the next annual re-appointment of Committees.

The Chief Executive advised that unless the Board agreed otherwise and suspended the relevant Standing Order, that the Vice Chairman of the Board would take up the position of Vice Chair of the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee in accordance with Standing Order 20(c).

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That the Vice Chairman of the Board should take up the position as Vice Chair of the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee, in accordance with Standing Order 20(c).

5.1.2 Annual Reappointment Procedure For Committee Members And Chairs/Vice Chairs – Advance Notice

The Chief Executive reminded Members that the annual reappointment of Committee Members and Chairs/Vice Chairs of Committees was due to take place in May 2008. However, there were 3 pieces of work ongoing which might influence the reappointment of Committees, i.e.

- the meetings on Members' time availability, being chaired by the Vice Chairman;
- an internal audit report which is nearing completion and scheduled to be considered by the Audit and Risk Management Committee at its next meeting; and
- the bi-annual review of standing orders.

It was:-

AGREED:

That in view of ongoing work that consideration of the reappointment of Committee Members, Chairs and Vice Chairs should take place at the June 2008 Board meeting.

5.2 Review Of Public Administration

The Chief Executive informed Members about an announcement made on the restructuring of councils under the Review of Public Administration. The announcement had been made by the Minister of the Environment on 13 March 2008. The Community Engagement Committee would be considering the implications of the announcement for District Policing Partnerships. The Corporate Policing, Planning and Performance Committee would consider the implications in respect of the CORE project. NOTED.

5.3 Review Of Standing Orders

The Chief Executive advised Members that the bi-annual review of the Board's Standing Orders had begun and that a paper would be presented in due course to the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee. He advised that the review would seek to take account of any issues arising from experience of operating the Standing Orders since the last review in 2006. In addition, account would also be taken of any ideas emerging from the meetings to be held on Members' time/ availability and the ongoing Internal Audit review of Committee structures. The Chief Executive asked

that any Members or Committees who wished to make any recommendations regarding Standing Orders to contact him. NOTED.

5.4 Members' Attendances At Meetings And Events – 30 May 2007 – 31 March 2008

The Chief Executive referred to a paper detailing the attendance of Members at meetings and events during the period 30 May 2007 – 31 March 2008. He asked Members to advise Secretariat by 10 April 2008 of any inaccuracy or omission, prior to publication of the schedule on the Board's website. NOTED.

5.5 Conferences

The Chief Executive advised the Board about 3 conferences:-

- Queen's University Belfast School of Law Annual Conference 2008 – "Exploring the Limits of a Judge's Power" – 4 and 5 April 2008;
- "How the Northern Ireland Assembly Works" – Organised by agendaNI – 24 April 2008;
- The Mitchell Conference at QUB – "Moving on from Conflict – Lessons from Northern Ireland" – 22 and 23 May 2008.

6. HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

6.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Human Resources Committee Held On 13 March 2008

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

6.1.1 HMIC/PSNI Human Resources Inspection Report (Item 4.2 Of Minutes Refers)

6.1.2 PSNI Corporate Health And Safety Policy (Item 7 Of Minutes Refers)

6.1.3 PSNI Staff On Secondment Through NI-CO (Item 10 Of Minutes Refers)

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 13 March 2008.

7. NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD CORPORATE BUSINESS PLAN 2008/09

The Board considered a paper seeking approval of the proposed Corporate Business Plan for the Board for 2008/09. The Business Plan had been developed in line with the new Corporate Plan 2008/11.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To approve the Corporate Business Plan for the Policing Board for 2008/09.

Members were advised that the Corporate Business Plan 2008/09 would be published as an insert to the published Corporate Plan 2008/11 document. NOTED.

8. DEVOLUTION OF POLICING AND JUSTICE

The Board considered a paper regarding the report of the Assembly and Executive Review Committee on the Devolution of Policing and Justice.

The paper provided detail regarding:-

- the Board's agreed position on the devolution of policing and justice;
- the recommendations of the Assembly and Executive Review Committee;
and
- draft legislation being prepared to facilitate the devolution of policing and justice.

Any Member who considered any further action or preparatory work would be required on behalf of the Board was asked to contact the the Chairman or Chief Executive.

NOTED.

9. THE BILLY WRIGHT INQUIRY

The Board considered a paper which provided feedback following the Chairman's meeting with Mr David Wright and subsequent correspondence with the Chief Constable. NOTED.

During discussion of the paper, officials advised that ACC Crime Support was scheduled to attend the June 2008 meeting of the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee, to update Members on the Part 3 Policing Plan Target on Public Inquiries – "To ensure the police as far as possible meets the demands of and facilitate Public Inquiries and legacy requests". All Members would be invited to attend this part of the Committee meeting. NOTED.

It was:-

AGREED:

That a copy of the paper by the Inquiry Chairman, Lord Maclean – “Position Paper on the PSNI’s response to requests for information” should be circulated to all Board Members.

10. NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD LANGUAGES POLICY

The Chairman reminded Members that Mr Gearóid Ó hEára had submitted a number of additional points regarding the Board’s languages policy and that in view of his absence, he proposed that the consideration of the paper be deferred.

It was:-

AGREED:

To defer consideration of the paper on the Board’s languages policy until the next meeting.

11. STATION REVIEW – WHITEHEAD POLICE STATION

The Chairman referred Members to a station closure template received from the PSNI in respect of Whitehead station.

The Chairman welcomed ACC Rural Region (in the absence of ACC Urban Region), the District Commander ‘D’ District and the Area Commander, Carrickfergus to the meeting. The Area Commander gave a presentation, outlining the PSNI proposal to close and dispose of Whitehead police station. A copy of the slides used during the presentation is attached at Annex ‘A’. Members noted a number of issues contained in the station closure template including:-

- the review of Whitehead police station had been included in the Estate Strategy that was approved by the Board in May 2005;
- there should be no adverse operational impact because of the closure, as the station had been closed to the public since June 2004;
- the area was currently being policed from Carrickfergus by a neighbourhood policing team;
- a community safety point had been established at Whitehead railway station in June 2007; and
- projected financial savings from closure were estimated at £9,299 per annum.

Members also noted details of the consultation and surveys that had been carried out in 2005.

The Board was also advised of the consultation and discussion that had taken place with Carrickfergus DPP and Whitehead CPLC.

Members questioned the PSNI representatives about the policing structures and initiatives that had taken place in Whitehead since the closure of the station to the public in June 2004. In addition, Members discussed the police service being provided to Ballycarry and Islandmagee; the number of police officers living in the immediate area; and the current use of the station as a storage facility.

Members also discussed the need for a clear implementation strategy, to be set out in the Estate Strategy refresh; opportunities for community involvement in the use of former police station sites; community perceptions of police engagement; and National Audit Office recommendations regarding the timely disposal of property and land.

Following further discussion, it was proposed that the Board should endorse the Chief Constable's proposal to close and dispose of the PSNI station in Whitehead.

Following a show of hands, the majority of Members:-

RESOLVED:

To endorse the Chief Constable's proposal to close and dispose of the PSNI station at Whitehead.

The Chairman thanked ACC Rural Region and her colleagues for their contribution and they left the meeting.

12. INFORMATION PAPERS

12.1 Reconstitution Of DPPs April 2008 – Appointment Of Independent Members

The Deputy Chief Executive drew the attention of Members to an information paper which provided summary details of offers of appointment made for independent membership to the District Policing Partnerships.

Members sought and received further information about the total number of requests made by unsuccessful candidates for feedback.

It was:-

AGREED:

That the Board should consider the information paper again at its next meeting.

13. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

It was:-

AGREED:

That news releases should be issued in respect of:-

- the Northern Ireland Policing Board Corporate Plan 2008/11;
- the disposal of Whitehead police station.

14. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

A Member referred to the revised format for meetings in public and to the arrangement whereby the Board was to receive an advance copy of the Chief Constable's opening remarks. The Member referred to this document being tabled at short notice and requested that a copy of the Chief Constable's report and the presentation by PSNI at the Board meeting in public be given to Members in advance of the start of the meeting.

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

The Board received further information in relation to:-

- the current cost of injury on duty awards and the impact of these costs on the delivery of policing;
- the current position regarding the disposal of the police site at Rosemount;
- an assault in King Street, Belfast on 29 March 2008.

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

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

15.1 Appointment Of New Independent Assessor Of PSNI Recruitment Vetting

The Deputy Chief Executive referred the Board to a paper tabled at the meeting relating to the appointment of a new Independent Assessor of PSNI Recruitment Vetting.

The Board had received a letter from the NIO on 1 April 2008, seeking its view on the appointment of the Rt Hon Sir Anthony Campbell as the new Independent Assessor.

It was proposed that the new appointment would take effect from 1 May 2008.

Members noted that the Secretary of State was obliged to consult with the Board prior to his decision on the appointment of the Independent Assessor, and expressed disappointment at the short period of time given to consider the matter and the Board's lack of real knowledge of the proposed appointee.

It was:-

AGREED:

To inform the Secretary of State that the Board had no objections to the appointment of the Right Honourable Sir Anthony Campbell as the new Independent Assessor of PSNI Recruitment.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was arranged for 1 May 2008 at Waterside Tower, Belfast.

(Meeting closed 3:00pm).

Secretariat

April 2008

Chairman