

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 2008 AT 9:30AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Chairman)

Mr Barry Gilligan (Vice Chairman)

(1) Ms Martina Anderson

Mr Leslie Cree

(1) Mrs Dolores Kelly

Mr Alex Maskey

Mr Basil McCrea

(1) Mr Daithí McKay

Ms Mary McKee

(1) Mrs Rosaleen Moore

(1) Mr Gearóid Ó hEára

(2) Mr Ian Paisley Jnr

Mr Brian Rea

(3) Mr Trevor Ringland

Mr David Rose

Mr Jimmy Spratt

(4) Mr Peter Weir

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

(5) Sir Hugh Orde (Chief Constable)

(5) Mr Paul Leighton (Deputy Chief Constable)

(5) Mr Alistair Finlay (ACC Urban Region)

(5) Mrs Judith Gillespie (ACC Rural Region)

(5) Mr Drew Harris (ACC Crime Operations)

(5) Mr David Jones (ACC Crime Support)

(5) Mr Duncan McCausland (ACC Criminal
Justice)

(5) Mr David Best (Director of Finance and
Support Services)

(5) Mr Joe Stewart (Director of Human
Resources)

(5) Ms Liz Young (Head of Media & Public
Relations)

(5) A/Head, Command Secretariat

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

Dr Debbie Donnelly (A/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) Part item number 4.3 to close**
- (2) Item number 4 to close**
- (3) Item number 3.2 to close**
- (4) Part item number 12 only**
- (5) Item number 12 only**

1. APOLOGIES, ETC

Apologies were received on behalf of Mr Tom Buchanan and Mr Suneil Sharma.
NOTED.

2. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE POLICING BOARD

2.1 Minutes Of The Policing Board Meeting Held On 2 October 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 2 October 2008 be approved.

2.2 Minutes Of The Policing Board Meeting In Public Held On 2 October 2008

The Board considered the draft minutes of the previous meeting.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That the draft minutes of the Policing Board meeting in public held on 2 October 2008 be approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS

3.1 Community Based Restorative Justice (Item 4.4 Of Minutes Refers)

The Director of Community Engagement informed Members that he had written to the NIO concerning the matter and when a substantive reply was received it would be brought to the Board. NOTED.

3.2 Shortfall Of Detectives In Crime Operations (Item 6.1.1 Of Minutes Refers)

The Acting Chief Executive informed Members that ACC Crime Operations would be invited to a meeting of the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee in early 2009 to report on the overarching work of Crime Operations Branch, particularly as it relates to the Blakey, Crompton and Stevens reports. NOTED.

3.3 Members' Time/Availability (Item 6.2 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman advised Members that the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee had resolved at its October 2008 meeting that 10 Board meetings should be arranged for 2009. In addition, 2 Public Engagement meetings should also be held. A paper setting out the proposed dates for Board and Committee meetings in 2009 was further considered at item 5.2.

The Chair of the Community Engagement Committee advised Members that the Committee had agreed to hold the next Board Public Engagement meeting on 18 February 2009 in Derry/Londonderry. NOTED.

3.4 TASER (Item 14 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman reminded Members that correspondence in relation to the Chief Constable's decision to issue TASER on a permanent basis to PSNI officers from Special Operations Branch and those attached to Armed Response Vehicle Units had been issued to all Members on 23 October 2008. NOTED.

Members were also advised that an application for interim relief prohibiting use of TASER pending judicial review in January 2009 was dismissed by Mr Justice Morgan on 31 October 2008. Counsel for the applicant indicated that consideration was being given to joining the Policing Board as a respondent in the case. A decision in this respect was anticipated by 17 November 2008. Officials drew the attention of Members to correspondence, tabled at the meeting, from solicitors who had submitted a request for information following the Board decision on TASER on 2 October 2008.

It was:-

AGREED:

That officials should respond to the letter from the solicitors and to other correspondence received from the Children's Law Centre concerning issues arising from the Board decision on 2 October 2008.

4. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

4.1 Engagements

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

- Breakfast Seminar – High Potentials In Organisations – Belfast – 15 October 2008;
- Meeting with the Irish Society – Coleraine – 20 October 2008;

- Launch of the Board's Human Rights Annual Report – Belfast – 21 October 2008;
- Meeting with Chair of Human Rights Inquiry – London – 24 October 2008.

NOTED.

4.2 Publications

There were no matters arising.

NOTED.

4.3 Correspondence

The Chairman highlighted the following correspondence that had been received/issued:-

- correspondence from NIO dated 19 September and 8 October 2008 regarding compensation for miscarriage of justice case;
- letter from Minister of State – Government response to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee's report into policing and criminal justice in Northern Ireland: the cost of policing the past – 26 October 2008;
- letter from Mr Peter Smith QC – proposition paper on CSPPs – 30 October 2008;
- letter from NIO dated 23 October 2008 regarding new significant financial pressures 2008/09 and future years.

Members discussed the content of the letter and a statement made by the Minister of State concerning the need for the Board to live within its existing budget. The Chairman updated Members on a recent meeting between senior NIO officials, senior PSNI personnel, the Vice Chairman and himself concerning the budget for PSNI.

Members discussed:-

- the position taken by NIO prior to the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR);
- the detrimental effect on policing in future years by cutting PSNI budgets on IT and other projects;
- the financial impact of the threat from dissident republicans;
- the areas for potential savings;
- the cost to the current PSNI budget of “dealing with the past”;
- the need to raise public awareness of the type of policing services that may have to be withdrawn.

It was:-

AGREED:

That a special meeting of the Resources and Improvement Committee should be held to further consider the significant financial pressures on the 2008/09 and future year budgets of the PSNI and that all Board Members should be invited to attend.

NOTED.

4.4 News Releases

The Chairman highlighted the following news releases:-

- Northern Ireland Road Safety Monitor 2008 – Department of the Environment – 30 October 2008;
- Northern Ireland Policing Board News Release – Chairman calls for peaceful event – 31 October 2008.

NOTED.

4.5 Policing Board Christmas Reception

The Chairman informed Members that the Board's Christmas Reception had been arranged for 4 December 2008 at the Ramada Hotel, Belfast from 4pm to 6pm.

NOTED.

4.6 Board/PSNI Strategy Event

The Chairman referred Members to a letter issued by the Director of Planning on 28 October 2008 regarding the Board/PSNI Strategy Event arranged for 6 November 2008 at 2pm. NOTED.

4.7 Public Services Training College, Desertcreat

The Vice Chairman updated Members on progress following a meeting of the Public Services Training College Steering Group held on 22 October 2008. NOTED.

4.8 Omagh Bomb Investigation – Independent Review

The Chairman reminded Members that the Board had written to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) in August 2008 seeking further information on timescales for publication of the PPS investigation and report into the conduct of 2 PSNI officers whose evidence was adversely commented upon by Mr Justice Weir in the case of R v Sean Hoey. The PPS advised that once counsel's advices had been received, the Board would be provided with an estimated timescale for a decision as to prosecution. The Chairman advised that to date a response had not been received. NOTED.

4.9 Appointment Of Chief Executive

The Chairman updated Members on current progress in the process to appoint a new Chief Executive for the Board. NOTED.

4.10 Role Of The Policing Board

The Chairman referred Members to a private and confidential paper issued separately by e-mail on 4 November 2008. The paper related to the current and possible future role and responsibilities of the Board and ongoing negotiations around the devolution of policing and justice powers. A confidential note on discussion of this item is attached at Appendix 'A'.

4.11 Comments Made By Board Member

The Chairman referred the Board to comments made by one of its Members at a recent political party conference. The Member concerned gave further details of the context in which the remarks had been made and stated that there had been no intention to cause offence. The Member apologised for any offence that had been caused. The Member about whom the remarks were made acknowledged the apology.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

5.1 Members' Attendances At Meetings And Events During The Period 31 May 2007 – 30 September 2008 And Members' Expenses 1 April 2008 – 30 September 2008

The A/Chief Executive referred Members to a paper detailing Members' attendances and advised, that subject to any changes notified by Members by 14 November 2008, the schedule would be published on the Board's website. NOTED.

The A/Chief Executive referred Members to a schedule detailing expenses claimed by Members during the period 1 April to 30 September 2008 which would also be added to the website. NOTED.

5.2 Programme Of Board And Committee Meetings – 2009

The A/Chief Executive referred Members to a draft programme of Board and Committee meetings for 2009.

At its October 2008 meeting, the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee had resolved that 10 Board meetings should be arranged for 2009 and that in addition, 2 Board Public Engagement meetings should also be held.

It was:-

AGREED:

To approve the programme of Board and Committee meetings for 2009.

The A/Chief Executive reminded Members that while the programme provided the overall pattern for meetings, Committees could agree to change specific dates/times as circumstances required. NOTED.

5.3 Conferences

The A/Chief Executive advised the Board about the following:-

- Community Safety and Policing in Partnership National Conference 2008 – London – 9 December 2008;
- Implementing the Taylor Reforms Conference – Central London – 22 January 2009;
- Road Safety Conference – London – 29 January 2009.

Any Member requiring further details was asked to contact Secretariat. NOTED.

- Trans-national Policing Programme – Boston/Arizona – January 2009.

Any Member interested in attending the programme was asked to inform the A/Chief Executive. A nominee would be considered by the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee at its meeting on 20 November 2008. NOTED.

5.4 Victim Support

The A/Chief Executive referred Members to correspondence received from Victim Support seeking applicants for voluntary trustees for the Victim Support Board. Any Member interested was asked to contact the Secretariat for further details. NOTED.

6. CORPORATE POLICY, PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

6.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Corporate Policy, Planning And Performance Committee Held On 16 October 2008

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

6.1.1 PSNI Personnel Issue (Item 6.2 Of Minutes Refers)

6.1.2 Appointment Of Senior Officers To The PSNI (Item 9 Of Minutes Refers)

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee held on 16 October 2008.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

7.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Community Engagement Committee Meeting Held On 25 September 2008

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Community Engagement Committee held on 25 September 2008.

7.2 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Community Engagement Committee Meeting Held On 23 October 2008

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

7.2.1 District Policing Partnership Conference – 18 November 2008 (Item 10 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman of the Committee drew attention to the District Policing Partnership Conference being hosted by the Board on 18 November 2008 in the City Hotel, Armagh and invited all Board Members to attend the event.

7.2.2 District Policing Partnership Effectiveness In Year Monitoring Report (Item 12 Of Minutes Refers)

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Community Engagement Committee held on 23 October 2008.

8. HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

8.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Human Resources Committee Held On 9 October 2008

The Chairman of the Committee highlighted the following matter considered by the Committee and outlined Committee discussions/recommendations:-

8.1.1 PSNI Special Priority Payments Scheme – PSNI Proposals For The 2008 And 2009 Schemes (Item 5 Of Minutes Refers)

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 9 October 2008.

9. RESOURCES AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

9.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Resources And Improvement Committee Meeting Held On 17 October 2008

The Chairman of the Committee referred to discussion earlier in the meeting concerning the PSNI budget and the pressures on PSNI finances in current and future years. The Chairman advised that all Board Members were invited to attend the next Resources and Improvement Committee meeting on 21 November 2008 to further consider PSNI budget matters.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Resources and Improvement Committee held on 17 October 2008.

10. INFORMATION PAPERS

There were no matters arising.

11. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

There were no matters arising.

12. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

The Chairman welcomed the Chief Constable and other PSNI representatives to the meeting. The Board received further information in relation to:-

- the award of contracts by the PSNI to Jameson Building Services and John Sinton Limited and concerns raised with the Chief Constable by Mr Paul McIlwaine;
- the Inquiry by Sir Peter Gibson in relation to the Omagh bombing;
- an update on the process relating to the decision to retry a recent court case;
- the financial pressures currently faced by the PSNI and the options being considered by PSNI to ensure that there was a balanced budget.

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

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was arranged for 4 December 2008 at Waterside Tower, Belfast.

(Meeting closed 12.15pm).

Secretariat
November 2008

Chairman