

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF THE 41st CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 2005 AT 10:00 AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER,
BELFAST**

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

(1) Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Chairman)
Mr Denis Bradley (Vice-Chairman)
Mr Fred Cobain
Mr Brian Dougherty
Mrs Pauline McCabe
Mr Sammy Wilson

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Trevor Reaney (Chief Executive)
Mr David Jackson (Director of Community
Affairs)
Mr Sam Hagen (Director of Corporate
Services)
Mr David Wilson (Director of Planning)
Three Board Officials

(1) Item number 3.3 to close

1. APOLOGIES, ETC

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Mrs Moore, Mr McGrady and Mr Sharma. NOTED.

Mr Tom Kelly had written to the Chairman advising of his resignation from the Chairmanship of the Press and Public Relations Committee with effect from 8 February 2005. NOTED.

2. MINUTES OF THE 40TH CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 JANUARY 2005

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the previous meeting.

It was:-

AGREED

That the minutes of the Corporate Policy Committee meeting held on 20 January 2005 be agreed and the recommendations be adopted by the Board.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 40TH MEETING

District Policing Partnerships (Item 3.1 Of Minutes Refers)

There were no significant new developments.

Review Of Police Fund (Item 3.3 Of Minutes Refers)

Mr John Steele had agreed to discuss his review of the Police Fund with Members during lunch, immediately after the conclusion of the meeting.

NOTED.

Informal Meetings With Student Officers (Item 3.5 Of Minutes Refers)

Officials were continuing to liaise with PSNI regarding revisions to the arrangements for Members to meet with student officers. The issue had been discussed with senior PSNI personnel on 10 February 2005. NOTED.

The meeting on 10 February 2005 had also discussed feedback from student officers relating to the availability of specific trainers at classes and the course content of diversity training. The views expressed by student officers to Board Members during recent meetings were reflected to the senior PSNI officers who had undertaken to review the issues raised and to respond further in due course. The outcome will be reported to the Human Resources Committee. NOTED.

Security Vetting Policy (Item 3.6 Of Minutes Refers)

Arrangements have been made for a representative from NIO to give a presentation in relation to security vetting policy to the Committee at its next meeting. All Members of the Board will be invited to attend the presentation. NOTED.

Conference On Night-Time Economy And Licensing Act (Item 3.7 Of Minutes Refers)

A suitable date was being arranged for a meeting between the Vice Chairman, Mrs Moore, Mr Wilson, Professor Anthony Clare and representatives from the PSNI and Home Office regarding the Board hosting a conference to discuss the problems of Night-Time Economy in Northern Ireland. NOTED.

Defining The Role Of The Board (Item 3.8 Of Minutes Refers)

The first meeting of the Sub-Group had been held on 20 January 2005. Discussion was wide-ranging and a paper was being prepared by Mr Peter Smyth QC for the Sub-Group to consider. Once the paper was finalised, a second meeting will be arranged, following which an update will be provided to the Committee. NOTED.

Business And Decision Making Processes (Item 3.9 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with under item 9.

Association Of Police Authorities Policy Groups And Networks (Item 3.10 Of Minutes Refers)

Arrangements were still to be finalised. NOTED.

Medal And Duty Payment For Part-Time Reserve Officers (Item 3.13 and 9 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with under item 6.

Draft Annual Policing Plan For 2005 – 2006 (Items 3.14 And 6 Of Minutes Refers)

The recommendations made by Members at the previous meeting had been agreed by PSNI and included in the Annual Policing Plan for 2005 – 2006. Arrangements for the printing and publication of the Plan were on schedule. NOTED.

Members paid tribute to the work of the Director of Planning and his staff in producing the document.

Full-Time Reserve Retraining Scheme (Item 8 Of Minutes Refers)

As reported at the February 2005 Board meeting, progress had been made and agreement reached, between the NIO and the Police Federation on the conversion of 6 months of the 9 months retraining period to a cash lump sum. NOTED.

It was:

AGREED

That further information should be sought from the PSNI about:-

- Communication within PSNI of the terms of the retraining scheme to members of the Full-Time Reserve
- The number of officers that are not eligible for a lump sum payment

Members discussed the Board's role in dealing with enquiries concerning the retraining scheme and negotiations in general between the NIO and Police Staff Associations.

3.12 HMIC Baseline Assessment Of PSNI (Item 3.16 Of Minutes Refers)

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC) had carried out a refresh inspection of PSNI. A draft report on the inspection will be forwarded to the Chairman and Vice Chairman for comment on factual accuracy. The final report will be forwarded to the Board in due course. NOTED.

A number of Members emphasised the need for the Board to receive advance copies of the final publication before it is published.

4. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

Engagements

The Chairman advised the Committee that he had attended the following engagements:

- The Harry McKillop Irish Spirit Award at Queen's University, Belfast on 10 February 2005
- Meeting with delegation of Canadian visitors delivering a Problem Solving Workshop to DPPs and DCU representatives on 14 February 2005. NOTED.

4.2 Publications

The Chairman drew the attention of the Committee to the National Audit Office report on the Northern Ireland Policing Board Best Value Performance Plan for 2004 – 05 which was published on 20 January 2005.

The Chairman of the Audit and Best Value Committee informed Members that it had already been briefed on the main findings and was in the process of addressing the issues and recommendations highlighted in the report. NOTED.

4.3 Correspondence

4.3.1 Meeting With Police Ombudsman - Searches

The Chairman reminded Members that the Police Ombudsman had met with the Board in October 2004 and discussed a range of issues including the OPONI investigation into the searches carried out on the homes of Mr Liam Clarke and Ms Kathryn Johnston. Following the meeting, the Board had written to the Chief Constable concerning a number of relevant issues. The Chairman read a letter that he had received from the Deputy Chief Constable concerning the action taken by PSNI on the basis of the Police Ombudsman's recommendations. The Chairman advised that the correspondence had been passed to the Chairman of the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee for consideration. NOTED.

It was:-

AGREED

That the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee should be asked to consider obtaining further information from PSNI concerning: -

- Whether any disciplinary action was being considered against senior staff
- Writing to Mr Clarke / Ms Johnston advising of the Board's response to previous correspondence

4.3.2 Appointment Of New HMIC

The Chairman referred Members to a recent announcement by the Home Secretary appointing Sir Ronnie Flanagan as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, to succeed Sir Keith Povey. NOTED.

4.3.3 Chief Constable – Performance And Development Review (PDR) And Performance Related Pay (PRP)

The Chairman advised the Committee that he had conducted the 8 month review of the Chief Constable's performance under his Performance and Development Review and Performance Related Pay. The Chief Constable was asked to provide further information against some objectives. The 12 month review will be completed after the end of the financial year and the Chairman indicated that he would report more fully after that review. NOTED.

4.3.4 Temporary Acting-Up To ACC

The Chairman advised the Committee that he had agreed to the temporary acting-up of Chief Superintendent Irwin Turbitt to Assistant Chief Constable in the Home Office Police Standards Unit. The temporary acting-up is for a period of up to 3 months while a substantive Assistant Chief Constable is recruited. Chief Superintendent Turbitt is currently on secondment to the Police Standards Unit. NOTED.

4.3.5 Independent Monitoring Commission – 4th Report

The Chairman drew the attention of Members to the publication of the 4th report of the Independent Monitoring Commission. NOTED.

4.3.6 Freedom Of Information Act 2000

The Chairman drew the attention of the Committee to a letter issued to all Members by the Chief Executive regarding guidance on Freedom of Information legislation as it relates to their role as a Member of the Board. The Chief Executive advised Members that should any further information or clarification be required that Members should contact either the Board's Compliance Manager or himself. NOTED.

5 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

5.1 PSNI Senior Civilian Staff – Pay And Allowances

The Chief Executive informed Members that consideration was being given to formalising the arrangements for the pay and allowances for PSNI senior civilian staff. He advised that he would update the Committee further when proposals were developed including issues of assimilation and retrospection. NOTED.

5.2 Association Of Police Authorities Reception

The Chief Executive reminded the Committee that at its February 2005 meeting, the Board had agreed to host a reception for the Annual Conference of Police Authorities in November 2005. He advised that the estimated cost of the reception for 300 people would be £10,000. The Chief Executive informed Members that there would be sufficient funds within the Board's budget to host the reception.

It was:-

AGREED

That enquiries should be made with the Northern Ireland Office to seek a contribution to the funding for the APA reception.

5.3 Arrangements For Board Members To Visit Boston / Chicago / Washington In March 2005

The Chief Executive outlined forthcoming visits to Boston, Chicago and Washington by Board Members, officials, DPP members and PSNI officers during March 2005. NOTED.

5.4 Critical Incident Training Event

The Chief Executive advised the Committee that a representative from the Board has been invited to attend a Critical Incident Training Event for PSNI officers during 11 to 13 March 2005 in England. NOTED.

It was:

AGREED

That further information should be sought from PSNI as to the reason for the training event being held in England.

5.5 Policing Board Minutes - 1 December 2004 - Paragraph 3.4

The Chief Executive referred Members to discussion at the February 2005 Board meeting concerning the wording of paragraph 3.4 of the Board minutes of 1 December 2004. He referred the Committee to a paper containing a revised draft.

It was:

RECOMMENDED

That the revised draft wording in respect of paragraph 3.4 be adopted by the Board.

The Chairman referred the Committee to a letter he had issued to all Members regarding the Board debate on homophobic comments at its meeting held on 3 February 2005. He advised that further to this debate, he wished to review that the Board Members Code of Conduct and would come back to the Committee in due course. NOTED.

A Member referred to discussion at the February 2005 Board meeting regarding a letter issued by a Member to the Board's Human Rights Advisors and sought confirmation that the letter had been received and the date of issue. The Chairman undertook to provide the information requested.

5.6 Conference – Anti-Social Behaviour

The Chief Executive gave details of a conference entitled “Anti-Social Behaviour – Locally Led Solutions”, to be held on 15 March 2005 in London. He advised that the details would be circulated to all Members and that any Member interested in attending should contact the Secretariat. NOTED.

6 MEDAL AND DUTY PAYMENT FOR PART-TIME RESERVE OFFICERS

The Committee considered a paper detailing the existing arrangements for the award of police medals and duty payments. The Chief Executive undertook to arrange for Mr Ian Paisley Jnr, who had raised the issue, to be briefed about the content of the paper.

It was:

AGREED

That further information should be sought regarding:-

- Whether Part-Time Reserve officers are included in the RUC George Cross citation
- Clarification on whether medals have been issued to members of the Part-Time Reserve in accordance with the relevant legislation.

7 APA SELF-ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

The Committee considered a paper which provided a first draft of a self assessment of the Board's performance judged against the APA Self-Assessment Framework for Police Authorities. The paper also asked the Committee to consider inviting an external body to undertake an independent assessment of Board performance against the framework.

It was:

RECOMMENDED

That the Self-Assessment Framework should be considered by the Board at its next meeting.

The Committee considered the issue of inviting external assessment of Board performance. After lengthy consideration

It was:

AGREED

- That officials should liaise with the Oversight Commissioner regarding the scope of his accountability review
- That the issues raised by Members during discussion of the need for independent assessment should be included in a paper for a future Board meeting

8. GERSHON EFFICIENCIES – NIPB PLAN

The Committee considered a paper detailing plans for the Board to achieve the 7.5% Gershon Efficiency savings. Members questioned officials about the impact that the savings would have the work of District Policing Partnerships, salary savings in respect of vacant posts and funding for recruitment of new DPP members.

It was:

AGREED

The issues raised by Members should be further explored by officials.

9. STANDING ORDERS – QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

Further to discussion at the February Board meeting, the Committee considered a paper proposing arrangements for putting questions to the Chief Constable at Board meetings and recommendations to the Board in respect of amendments to Standing Orders.

With regard to questions from Board Members to the Chief Constable,

It was:

RECOMMENDED

- The 7-day deadline for receipt of questions be enforced, except for urgent matters.

- That supplementary questions be permitted as a matter of course, with one supplementary question being taken after each notified question.
- That the Board adopt a procedure whereby when a question is received from a member of the public that it be addressed to the Chief Constable by a Board Member. The same conditions will apply to such questions as apply to questions from Members.

It was:

RECOMMENDED

- That Standing Order 9(d) be amended as follows:

"Questions arising from or outside the content of the Chief Constable's monthly report shall be submitted by Members to the Chief Executive at least 7 days in advance of the meeting. Questions may also be received from members of the public which shall be submitted 7 days in advance of the meeting and then be allocated to a Member to ask on their behalf."
- That Standing Order 14(c) be amended as follows:

"A member of the public or other person permitted to be present at a meeting of the Board may not address the Board or ask questions at that meeting."

The Chief Executive informed the Committee that he had been advised by the Chairman of the Human Resources Committee that it might helpful in carrying out the business of the Committee for a change in structure to be considered. He also referred to the resignation of the Chairman of the Press and Public Relations Committee and indicated that the Vice-Chairman of the Committee felt that the future role of the Committee should be fundamentally reviewed. The Chief Executive undertook to come back to the next Committee meeting with proposals. NOTED.

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

There were no matters arising.

11. PRESS ISSUES

Officials drew attention to the following events:-

- Launch of Annual Policing Plan to be held on 1 March 2005
- Launch of Human Rights Advisors Report – 7 March 2005 at 10:30am in the Stormont Hotel, Belfast
- DPP seminar on Hate Crime on 10 March 2005 in the Hilton Hotel at 6:45pm. NOTED

12. INFORMATION PAPER

12.1 Home Office Briefing Paper Implementing Bichard – January 2005

NOTED.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 Appeals Tribunal

Mr Dougherty, who represented the Board on a Police Appeals Tribunal on 10 February 2005 outlined the process that the Appeal Tribunal had followed. He advised that the decision of the Tribunal, together with a report would be forwarded to the Board in due course. NOTED

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was arranged for 24 March 2005 at 10:00am.

(Meeting closed 12:15pm).

Secretariat

February 2005

CHAIRMAN