

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF THE 49th CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2005 AT 10:00 AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

- Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Chairman)
- (1) Mr Fred Cobain
- (2) Mr Brian Dougherty
- (2) Mrs Pauline McCabe
- Mr Eddie McGrady
- Mrs Rosaleen Moore
- (3) Mr Ian Paisley Jnr
- Mr Sam Foster

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

- (4) Mr David Best – Director of Finance and Support Services
- (4) Head of Supplies

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE IN ATTENDANCE

- (4) Mr Paul Priestly
- (4) Head of Procurement

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

- (5) Mr Trevor Reaney (Chief Executive)
- (5) Mr Peter Holt (Director of Communications)
- (5) Mr David Jackson (Director of Community Affairs)
- (5) Mr Sam Hagen (Director of Corporate Services)
- (5) Mr David Wilson (Director of Planning)
- (5) Mrs Sinead Simpson (Director of Policy)
- (5) Three Board Officials
- (6) One Board Official

- (1) Item numbers 1 - 6
- (2) Part of item number 2 to close
- (3) Part of item number 2 – item number 10
- (4) Item numbers 1 and 2
- (5) Item numbers 1 - 14
- (6) Item numbers 15 - 17

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Mr Bradley and Mr Wilson.
NOTED.

Mr Wilson had nominated Mr Paisley Jnr as a substitute. NOTED.

2. PRESENTATION BY PSNI ON PROCUREMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Chairman welcomed representatives from the PSNI and the NIO to the meeting. He apologised to the representatives for having to defer the presentation from the Board meeting on 3 November 2005.

The Head of PSNI Supplies and the NIO Head of Procurement gave a presentation on procurement within the PSNI during which they highlighted the following:-

- The procurement policy statements within PSNI.
- Details of the guiding principles of PSNI's procurement policy.
- The aims and objectives of the PSNI's procurement policy.
- The implications of the procurement policy.
- PSNI's responsibilities in relation to procurement.
- The responsibilities of NIO Purchasing Unit.
- The tendering parameters for procurement within the PSNI.
- The tendering process for procurement within the PSNI.
- Progress regarding procurement within PSNI.
- The PSNI Procurement Strategy.

A copy of the slides used in the presentation is attached at Appendix 'A'.

During the discussion which followed Members raised a number of issues including:-

- Procedures and best practice for extending existing contracts.
- Supplier performance monitoring and contract reviews.
- Provision for retrospective risk analysis.
- Arrangements for giving feedback to bidders who are unsuccessful.
- The approach taken by PSNI and NIO to single tender actions.

Following the discussion, the Chairman thanked the representatives for their contribution and they left the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF THE 48th CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 OCTOBER 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 October 2005 should be agreed, subject to Mr Paisley being recorded as not attending the meeting for item number 6.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 48th MEETING

PSNI Senior Civilian Staff – Pay And Allowances (Item 3.1 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive informed the Committee that discussions were continuing with PSNI regarding assimilation into the new arrangements. NOTED

Independent Assessment Of Board Performance (Item 3.2 And 24 Of Minutes Refers)

Officials informed the Committee that:-

- The Independent Assessment Panel's final report would be issued to Members at the December Board meeting. NOTED.
- The Panel had accepted the majority of comments which had been made by Members and had reflected upon these in the final report. NOTED.
- A meeting would be arranged to consider the Board's response to the recommendations contained in the Panel's report. NOTED.

4.3 Strategic Issues – Top Ten Agenda (Item 3.8 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee considered the content of a paper which provided a basic statistical analysis of the Top Ten strategic issues for the Board to concentrate on over the next few years and the relative priority which had been placed on each by Members. The issues would be considered at the meeting which would be arranged to discuss the Independent Assessment Panel's report. NOTED.

A Member requested further information regarding additional comments which had been made by Board Members on the questionnaire in relation to the Top Ten issues.

4.4 Restorative Justice (Item 3.12 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee noted that the NIO had been requested to provide a copy of the draft guidelines for Restorative Justice Schemes. To date a copy of the guidelines had not been received by the Board.

During discussion Members expressed concern and frustration at the lack of response by NIO in providing the Board with a copy of the guidelines.

It was:

AGREED

That a breakdown of the various Community Restorative Groups already established should be provided to the Committee.

It was:

RECOMMENDED

That the Board should seek an urgent meeting with the Criminal Justice Minister to discuss Members concerns regarding the Guidelines for Restorative Justice Schemes.

The Chief Executive advised Members about a request which had been received from Northern Ireland Alternatives organisation for a meeting with the Board.

It was:

AGREED

To defer making a recommendation to the Board on whether to meet Northern Ireland Alternatives.

The Committee discussed the consultations which appeared to be ongoing between the NIO and restorative justice groups regarding the Community Restorative Justice guidelines. Members highlighted a number of news articles regarding the draft guidelines and the potential impact of the legislation on the Board's statutory role to hold the Chief Constable to account.

The Committee discussed funding provided to restorative justice groups by Government agencies and the involvement of former paramilitaries in such groups.

4.5 Policing With the Community In Belfast (Item 4.7 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee was updated about:-

- Details of a meeting which the Chairman had attended on 15 November 2005 with community representatives at the East Belfast Mission. NOTED.
- Arrangements for a briefing by the Deputy Chief Constable to Board Members on 7 December 2005 in relation to policing with the community in North and West Belfast. NOTED.
- Meetings being arranged between the PSNI and representatives of Churches to discuss policing issues in North and West Belfast. NOTED.

A Member advised the Committee about a meeting which she had attended on behalf of the Board on 12 November 2005, at Glenree Reconciliation Centre, Waterford and the views which had been expressed by women in relation to policing. NOTED.

4.6 Meeting With Parliamentary Under Secretary Of State (Item 4.8 Of Minutes Refers)

Officials confirmed that a letter had been sent to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Northern Ireland regarding DPP/CSPs structures. NOTED.

It was:

AGREED

That the paper which had been provided to a Government Minister regarding the dual role of DPPs/CSPs should be circulated to all Members.

4.7 Continuation Of Policing Board Membership (Item 4.9 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman advised the Committee that the recruitment process for Independent Members of the Board had been launched by NIO on 15 November 2005 and that NIO Officials would provide further information to eligible Members about the appointment process after the meeting. NOTED.

4.8 DPPs (Item 5.2 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee was advised of details of a recent incident involving a member of Strabane DPP and the support which had been given by the Board to the member concerned. NOTED

4.9 Gaining The Co-Operation Of The Public In The Support Of The Police In Reducing Crime (Item 11 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee was advised that the issue of gaining the co-operation of the public in support of the Police in reducing crime would be considered at the meeting which would be arranged to consider the Independent Assessment Panel's report and the Top Ten agenda items. NOTED.

4.10 Human Resources And Accountability Thematic Report From The Oversight Commissioner (Item 14 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee was advised that the issue of devolution of policing powers would be placed on the agenda for a future meeting between the Board and the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. NOTED.

5. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

5.1 Engagements

The Chairman had undertaken the following engagements:-

- BBC Politics Show concerning “On the Runs” – Belfast – 3 November 2005. NOTED.
- DPP Closing Reception – Belfast – 3 November 2005. NOTED.
- Independent Custody Visiting Association National Conference – Belfast – 5 November 2005. NOTED.
- Informal Meeting with the Police Ombudsman – Belfast – 8 November 2005. NOTED.
- Consultation/Meeting with the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) – Belfast – 8 November 2005. NOTED.
- Meeting with women raising unionist concerns – Belfast – 9 November 2005. NOTED.

The Chairman briefed the Committee on a meeting which he had held with the Police Ombudsman on 8 November 2005. NOTED.

The Chairman reminded Members that at the September 2005 Board meeting it had been agreed that the full Board should continue to meet on an annual basis with the Police Ombudsman’s Office. It had also been agreed that in addition to the regular meetings between the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee and representatives of the Police Ombudsman’s Office, all Board Members should be specifically invited to attend one of the two meetings each year between the Police Ombudsman and the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee and that a broader agenda of issues for discussion should be facilitated at the meeting. The Ombudsman had indicated that she was not content with this as an alternative to a second meeting with the Board.

The Committee discussed the issue and it was:

RECOMMENDED

That the arrangements which had been agreed by the Board in September for meetings with the Police Ombudsman’s Office should be retained.

It was also noted that OPONI were to put forward an additional suggestion and that this would be brought to the Board for consideration.

The Chairman briefed the Committee on a meeting which he had attended with the National Criminal Intelligence Service on 8 November 2005. Discussions had taken place on the preparations for transition to the new Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) on 1 April 2006. In this regard, it had been agreed that it would be useful for ACC Crime Operations and the new Head of SOCA to provide the Board with a briefing on the new Agency and how it would work with the PSNI. Arrangements would be made for a briefing to be given to the Committee in early 2006 and all Board Members would be invited to attend. NOTED.

5.2 Publications

The following publication had been placed in the library:-

- Police Performance Assessments – 2004/05 – Home Office – October 2005. NOTED.

5.3 Correspondence

The Chairman had received the following correspondence:-

- Letter of thanks from the Chairman of the Independent Custody Visiting Association regarding the Annual Conference of the Association. NOTED.
- Letter of thanks from the former NIO Permanent Under Secretary of State regarding a presentational memento given to him by the Board on 3 November 2005. NOTED.

5.4 News Releases

The Chairman highlighted the following news releases circulated to Board Members:-

- Tough New Measures To Combat Violent Gun and Knife Crime – NIO – 18 October 2005. NOTED.
- Publication of IMC's Latest Report on Paramilitary Activity – NIO – 19 October 2005. NOTED.
- Peter Hain Announces Interim Commissioner for Victims – NIO – 24 October 2005. NOTED.
- Suspected Distributor of Counterfeit Goods to pay £71,000 in tax to ARA – Assets Recovery Agency – 24 October 2005. NOTED.
- Hanson launches new service for victims of crime – NIO – 25 October 2005. NOTED.
- Extra Funding for victims announced by Hain – NIO – 27 October 2005. NOTED.
- Challenges for Hydebank Wood Young Offenders' Centre – Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland – 28 October 2005. NOTED.
- Report provides opportunity to drive up standards – Woodward – Northern Ireland Prison Service - 28 October 2005. NOTED.
- Smith: NI must continue to invest in skills – DETI – 31 October 2005. NOTED.
- Police Involvement in Restorative Justice Schemes is non negotiable – Hanson –NIO – 2 November 2005. NOTED.

5.5 Chief Constable's Performance And Development Review – 4 Month Review

The Committee was advised that the Chief Constable's 4 month review of Performance and Development Objectives for 2005/06 had taken place on 4 October 2005. NOTED.

The Chairman advised the Committee that he would consult with Chairpersons of Committees in advance of the Chief Constable's 8 month review. NOTED.

5.6 Meeting With The Chief Inspector Of Criminal Justice In Northern Ireland

The Chairman advised the Committee about a meeting which he had held with the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland on 8 November 2005.

NOTED.

It was:

RECOMMENDED

That the Board should approve the convening a meeting for representatives of each of the agencies responsible for carrying out inspections of the PSNI to consider how best to ensure that there was no unnecessary duplication of effort by PSNI in responding to the inspections by statutory and non-statutory agencies.

5.7 On the Run Legislation

A number of Members commented on Government proposals for legislation regarding persons 'on the run'. NOTED.

6 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

6.1 Review Of Public Administration - Update

The Chief Executive advised the Committee that the report on the Review of Public Administration would be published on 22 November 2005. NOTED.

6.2 Association of Police Authorities Annual Conference

The Chief Executive reminded the Committee that the Association of Police Authorities (APA) Annual Conference which would be held in Belfast on 23 and 24 November 2005. NOTED.

It was:

AGREED

That a copy of an APA circular in relation to a Code of Practice for Victims of Crime should be circulated to Members.

A Member suggested that the Board should consider arranging a meeting with the newly appointed Victims Commissioner. NOTED.

7. RECRUITMENT OF AN ASSISTANT CHIEF CONSTABLE

The Committee considered a paper which outlined various options in respect of the composition of the Selection Panel for an Assistant Chief Constable appointment.

It was:

RESOLVED

That the Selection Panel should comprise of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, a representative from each political party represented on the Board and two Independent Members from the Committee.

8. DRAFT PART 2 OF THE 2006/07 POLICING PLAN

The Committee considered a draft of Part 2 of the 2006/2007 Policing Plan which had been drawn up following the Joint Board/PSNI Strategy Day on 25 October 2005.

The Committee considered the policing objectives, performance indicators and targets in the draft plan.

Members suggested a number of amendments and it was:

AGREED

That subject to a number of amendments proposed by Committee Members, that a revised draft should be forwarded to PSNI for consultation.

9. HANDLING LEAKED DOCUMENTS

The Committee considered a draft policy which provided a framework for the handling of leaked information provided to Members/officials in relation to PSNI, to ensure that leaked information from whatever source is handled in an appropriate and consistent manner.

It was:

RECOMMENDED

That subject to a minor amendment being made, the draft policy for the handling of leaked documents be adopted by the Board.

10. POLICE AUTHORITY DEBTOR

The Committee considered a paper in respect of a request for funding for a project which had been put forward by the George Cross Foundation.

It was:

RECOMMENDED

That funding of £5,000 could be provided to the George Cross Foundation in respect of an oral history project.

11. DRAFT NIO DETERMINATIONS – SENIOR OFFICER APPOINTMENTS – CONSULTATION

The Committee considered a paper regarding draft determinations which had been received from NIO for formal consultation in respect of Senior Police Officer Appointments.

It was:

AGREED

- That Officials should consult the NIO regarding the commencement date for the draft determinations.
- That Officials should seek the views of HMIC, the Chief Constable and the Independent Observer regarding the draft determinations.

It was:

RECOMMENDED

That the draft determinations be considered by the Board.

12. INFORMATION PAPERS

12.1 Freedom Of Information Requests Received By The NIPB - Summary - 1 January To 31 October 2005

The Committee considered a paper containing details of requests which the Board had received under Freedom of Information legislation during the period 1 January to 31 October 2005. NOTED

12.2 Failure To Appear Warrants

The Committee considered the content of a paper regarding statistics on the number of defendants who had been disposed of in Northern Ireland in 2004 who had a warrant issued for failure to appear. NOTED.

12.3 Release Of Persons Detained On Licence

The Committee considered a paper regarding the process by which persons were released on licence and might subsequently have their licence revoked. NOTED.

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

It was noted that a question may be put to the Chief Constable at the next Board meeting regarding the submission of 11/1 forms to the Parades Commission. The matter was raised at the meeting which the Chairman had attended with community representatives at the East Belfast Mission on 15 November 2005 and the submission of a question from a member of the public was awaited.

14. COMMUNICATION ACTIVITY

The Committee considered a paper which provided an update on recent communication activity and an indication of forthcoming activity planned. NOTED.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

District Policing Partnerships

The Committee discussed the content of a letter which had been sent to members who had not been reappointed to District Policing Partnerships. NOTED.

16. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNUAL PAY REVIEW AND NICS BONUS SCHEME

The Committee agreed the Chief Executive's annual pay award and NICS bonus payment for 2004/05.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was arranged for 15 December 2005 at 10:00am.

(Meeting closed 1.30pm)

SECRETARIAT
November 2005

CHAIRMAN