

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF THE 45th CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2005 AT 10:00 AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

- Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Chairman)
- Mr Denis Bradley (Vice-Chairman)
- (1) Mr Fred Cobain
- (2) Mr Brian Dougherty
- Mrs Pauline McCabe
- (3) Mr Eddie McGrady
- (4) Mrs Rosaleen Moore

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

- 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) Mrs Sinead Simpson (Director of Policy)
- (5) Three Board Officials

- (1) Item numbers 1 – 9 and item numbers 12 and 16
- (2) From part of item number 3.1 to close
- (3) From part of item number 3.11 to close
- (4) Item numbers 1 – 12 and item number 16
- (5) Item numbers 1 – 15 and 17 to 18

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Mr Sammy Wilson.

NOTED.

2. MINUTES OF THE 44th CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 MAY 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 12 May 2005 should be agreed.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 44th MEETING

Conference On Night-Time Economy And Licensing Act (Item 3.1 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee noted details of a report regarding a conference which had been held in the City Hotel, Derry / Londonderry on 7 June 2005 on the problems of Night Time Economy in Northern Ireland. NOTED.

Duty Payment For Part-Time Reserve Officers (Item 3.2 and 7 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee noted that the Chairman had written to the Chief Constable seeking his views on proposals regarding the payment of a gratuity for members and former members of the Part-Time Reserve. A response is awaited. NOTED.

Meeting With Police Ombudsman – Searches (Item 3.5 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee noted the content of:-

- A paper which outlined details of the recommendations which had been made by the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee at its June meeting regarding the Chief Constable's letter and a response to Ms Johnston and Mr Clarke. NOTED
- A letter which had been received from the Deputy Chief Constable regarding advice and guidance which would be given to senior officers as a result of the recommendations which had been made by the Police Ombudsman. NOTED

3.4 PSNI Senior Civilian Staff – Pay And Allowances (Item 3.6 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive advised the Committee that a response was awaited from the Secretary of State to the proposals regarding the terms and conditions for the PSNI senior civilian staff posts. NOTED.

3.5 Independent Assessment Of Board Performance (Item 3.7 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive updated the Committee on progress which had been made regarding the establishment of an Independent Panel appointed to assess the Board's performance. NOTED.

It was:

AGREED

That a fifth assessor, from an academic background, Professor James Mackay, should be invited to join the Group.

3.6 Chief Constable – Performance Development Review And Performance Related Pay (Items 3.8 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with under item 16.

3.7 Report Of The Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (NIAC) Into The Functions Of The NIPB (Items 3.10 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with under item 11.

3.8 Communications Strategy (Item 3.11 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with under item 12.

3.9 NIAC Report – Ways Of Dealing With The Past (Item 3.12 Of Minutes Refers)

The Board Group which was considering the future role of the Board, had considered the NIAC report on ways of dealing with Northern Ireland's past and had agreed that no further action should be taken by the Board at present. NOTED.

The Chairman gave a brief report on a conference which he had attended in Dublin on 10 June 2005 regarding 'Dealing with the Past'. NOTED.

3.10 Meeting With Independent Monitoring Commission (Item 3.13 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive advised the Committee that the organisation of a workshop to discuss issues around organised crime would be discussed with PSNI. NOTED.

A paper regarding the findings and conclusions of the 5th Report of the Independent Monitoring Commission was dealt with under item 9.

3.11 Review Of Board Organisation Structures (Item 3.14 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was considered under item 17 and deferred to a future meeting. NOTED.

3.12 Freedom Of Information Requests (Item 3.15 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with under item 6.

3.13 Review Of Committee Structures (Item 3.16 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee noted that the review of Committee Structures had been dealt with at the June 2005 Board meeting when it had been agreed that the proposals should be adopted, subject to any recommendations which might emerge in the report from the Independent Assessment Panel. NOTED.

3.14 Parades Commission (Item 4 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive updated the Committee on progress which had been made regarding arrangements for a meeting with the Parades Commission. NOTED.

3.15 ILEF Conference (Item 5.5 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive advised the Committee that:

- Mr Byrne and the Director of Policy would be attending an International Law Enforcement conference in Ottawa, Canada on 21 – 23 June 2005. NOTED
- The NIO had considered the Committee's suggestion but in view of the content of the programme considered, it was not appropriate for NGOs to attend the Conference on this occasion. NOTED

3.16 Chief Officers Allowances (Item 11 Of Minutes Refers)

Officials advised that further information was awaited from CPOSA regarding the use of Broadband. The current policy and practice on air travel for PSNI Chief Officers was noted. NOTED.

The Committee discussed the appointment of Chief Police Officers.

It was:

AGREED

- That research should be carried out concerning remuneration packages which were being offered in Great Britain in order to attract applicants for Chief Officer positions.
- That a paper should be brought to a future Committee meeting regarding succession planning in the PSNI.

3.17 Report From McConville Family And Relatives For Justice (Item 12 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with under item 8.

4. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

4.1 Engagements

The Chairman had undertaken the following engagements:-

- RUC George Cross Day Service – Coleraine – 5 June 2005.
NOTED
- The Presbyterian Church in Ireland – Opening of the General Assembly – Belfast, 6 June 2005. NOTED
- Discussion with students from the University of Limerick, Centre for Peace and Development Studies – 8 June 2005. NOTED.
- Launch of the Public Prosecution Service – Belfast – 13 June 2005. NOTED
- Ballymena DCU Accountability Meeting – 14 June 2005. NOTED
- Official opening of Magherafelt police station – 15 June 2005.
NOTED

4.2 Publications

The following publication had been placed in the library:-

- Public Prosecution Service – Information Pack

4.3 Correspondence

The Chairman had received the following correspondence:-

- Letter from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State regarding the pension position of officers who transfer into or out of the PSNI when the new pension schemes come into operation in April 2006. NOTED.
- Letter from NIO to Chief Executive regarding PSNI officers honoured in Queen's Birthday 2005 Honours List. NOTED.
- Letter from Assistant Commissioner An Garda Siochana regarding senior officer vacancies in the Garda. NOTED.

4.4 News Releases

The Chairman advised Members about the following news release:-

- Meeting between Police Oversight Commissioner, the Secretary of State and Security Minister – Northern Ireland Office – 6 June 2005.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

5.1 DPP Interactive Sessions

The Committee considered the current format for Board meetings outside Waterside Tower and whether the Board wished to continue with the interactive sessions with DPPs at such meetings, as each DPP had now been invited to at least one interactive session with Board Members and the PSNI senior command team.

It was:

AGREED

- That interactive sessions should continue to be held with Members of DPPs at Board meetings held outside Waterside Tower.
- That feedback should be obtained from DPP members on the interactive sessions which had already taken place with the Board and PSNI senior command team.

5.2 Taser Trials

The Chief Executive drew the attention of Members to a letter which had been received from the Deputy Chief Constable regarding Headquarters Mobile Support Units carrying out trials on a Taser gun within the next 12 months. NOTED.

It was:

AGREED

- That PSNI should be asked to give a briefing to Members in relation to the Taser trials.
- Consideration should be given to protocols being drawn up for dealing with such issues.

The Committee was circulated with a copy of an article which had recently been published in the press regarding the use of Taser guns by police in Pittsburgh. NOTED.

5.3 Correspondence

The Committee considered the content of a draft response to a letter which had been received in relation to a confidential matter.

It was:

AGREED

That the draft response should be issued to the individual concerned.

5.4 Criminal Justice Inspectorate

The Chief Executive advised the Committee that the Criminal Justice Inspectorate would be undertaking a thematic review of target-setting and performance management in the 6 main agencies of the Criminal Justice System in Northern Ireland. NOTED.

5.5 13th Report Of The Oversight Commissioner

The Chief Executive advised the Committee about the report of the Oversight Commissioner which had been published recently.

It was:

AGREED

That a paper should be provided for consideration at a future meeting of the Committee on the main issues in the Oversight Commissioner's Report and other reports which had been issued recently in relation to PSNI performance in order to create an agenda for the Board's work.

5.6 Request For Information Under Freedom Of Information Legislation

The Chief Executive advised the Committee of a request which had been received under Freedom of Information legislation regarding the Board's consideration of the Chief Constable's request to provide officers with the Attenuating Energy Projectile weapon.

5.7 Human Rights Commission

The Chief Executive outlined details of the new membership of the Human Rights Commission.

6. GUIDANCE ON INTERNAL REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The Committee considered a paper containing draft protocols for dealing with requests for information which is not normally or regularly supplied to Members or staff. The paper asked the Committee to note information which was contained in the draft policy document and to recommend it to the Board for approval.

The Committee considered the paper.

It was:

RECOMMENDED

That the policy and protocols regarding internal requests for information should be approved by the Board.

7. 2006 – 2007 ANNUAL POLICING PLAN TIMETABLE

The Committee noted the content of a paper which outlined details of the proposed timetable for the completion of the Policing Plan process for 2006-2007. NOTED.

8. REPORT ON THE PSNI KILLING OF NEILL McCONVILLE

The Committee considered the content of a paper regarding a report from the McConville family on the PSNI killing of Neil McConville on 29 April 2003.

The Committee noted details of an informal meeting which the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board had held with the Police Ombudsman regarding the report.

The paper asked the Committee to consider a draft response to the McConville family.

It was:

AGREED

That the draft response to the McConville family be approved and issued by the Board.

9. 5TH REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING COMMISSION

The Committee considered the content of a paper which outlined the findings and conclusions which were contained in the 5th report of the Independent Monitoring Commission.

The Committee discussed the content of the report and paramilitary involvement in serious and other crime.

It was:

AGREED

That information should be sought from the PSNI regarding the number of clubs in Northern Ireland and details of their turnover.

10. NORTHERN IRELAND AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT “THE CHALLENGE OF DIVERSITY: HATE CRIME IN NORTHERN IRELAND”

The Committee considered the content of a paper concerning recommendations which were contained in the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee Report entitled “The Challenge of Diversity: Hate Crime in Northern Ireland”.

The Committee discussed the content of the report.

It was:

AGREED

- That information should be sought from the PSNI regarding the number of ethnic minority community officers.
- That the recommendations in the NIAC report should be reviewed in 6 months time to check on the progress made by PSNI in taking them forward.

11. BOARD RESPONSE TO NIAC INQUIRY INTO THE FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD

The Committee considered a paper which addressed the conclusions and recommendations that the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (NIAC) had made following its inquiry into the functions of the Northern Ireland Policing Board. The Committee considered each of the conclusions and recommendations and a draft response by the Board.

It was:

AGREED

That a comprehensive paper, taking account of points raised during the discussion, should be prepared for consideration by the Board.

12. BOARD COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The Committee considered the content of a paper which updated Members on development and implementation of the Board's Communication Strategy.

Discussion centred around raising the Board's profile while balancing competing priorities, reflecting the corporate view of the Board when Members hold differing views, and the role of the Committees in projecting the day to day work of the Board.

Following discussion:

It was:

RECOMMENDED

- That the Board seek to extend the boundaries of risk-taking in public relations activities in order to further raise the Board's profile
- That the Board progress more public relations initiatives including:
 - Ongoing public education activities
 - Engaging the relevant public and representative groups in discussion over important policing issues
 - Undertaking initiatives on issues which may have majority rather than unanimous support from a Committee or the Board
- That Committees take responsibility for proactively progressing media initiatives arising from the work of their Committee
- That press releases and other media activity seek to be more creative, so as to provide a greater media profile for the Board.

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

It was:

AGREED

- That a question should be drafted to ask the Chief Constable at the next Board meeting regarding police action to combat organised crime in Northern Ireland.

- That a Member would draft a further question to ask the Chief Constable regarding investigations into an incident in Violet Street, Derry / Londonderry.

14. PRESS ISSUES

It was:-

AGREED

That there were no issues arising from the meeting that should be included in a news release.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

15.1 Review Of Appointment Of Human Rights Advisors

The Committee considered the content of a paper regarding a review of the appointment of the Board's Human Rights Advisors and the resource implications of the Board's Human Rights activity. The Committee discussed the paper.

It was:

RECOMMENDED

- That the Human Rights Advisors appointments should continue, with appropriate changes being made to both contracts to reflect the issues outlined in the paper, and be reviewed in 12 months time. A new contract should be drawn up for the Assistant Human Rights Advisor which would extend her appointment to April 2006, when the Human Rights Advisor's contract expires. An overall review of resourcing the human rights work would take place at this stage.
- That a suitably qualified person should be recruited, possibly on a part-time basis, to take forward the recommendations contained in the Annual Human Rights Report.

15.2 Meeting – Part-Time Reserve

The Chairman referred to a very useful meeting which had been held on 15 June 2005 regarding Police Community Support Officers. NOTED.

16. CHIEF CONSTABLE – PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE RELATED PAY 2004 / 05

Discussion on a tabled paper was deferred until the next meeting.

17. BOARD ORGANISATION STRUCTURES

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was arranged for 21 July 2005 at 10:00am.

(Meeting closed 1:15 pm).

Secretariat

June 2005

CHAIRMAN