

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF THE 35th CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 JUNE 2004 AT 10:00 AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

Professor Desmond Rea (Chairman)
Mr Denis Bradley (Vice-Chairman)
Mr Fred Cobain
(1) Mr Sam Foster
Mr Barry Gilligan
(1) Mr Sammy Wilson

PSNI OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

(1) Mr Paul Leighton (Deputy Chief
Constable)
(1) PSNI Officer

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

(2) Mr Trevor Reaney (Chief Executive)
(2) Director of Community Affairs
(2) Director of Corporate Services
(2) Director of Policy and Accountability
(2) Director of Service Delivery
(2) Three Board Officials

- (1) Item 16 only
- (2) Excluding Item 21

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Viscount Brookeborough, Mr Kelly, Mrs McCabe and Mr McGrady.

2. MINUTES OF THE 34TH CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 MAY 2004

The minutes of the Corporate Policy Committee held on 20 May 2004 were agreed.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 District Policing Partnerships (Item 3.1 Of Minutes Refers)

3.1.1 Dungannon And South Tyrone DPP

The Committee noted that Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council had agreed at a recent meeting to proceed with the establishment of a District Policing Partnership (DPP). It was also noted that Council and Board officials were taking the appropriate action to reactivate the appointment process.

3.1.2 Parliamentary Questions

The Committee noted that two parliamentary questions had been received by HM Government regarding the process to appoint independent DPP members, including those on the Dungannon and South Tyrone DPP. It was agreed that Board officials should relate closely to the Chief Executive of the Council concerning answers to the questions.

3.2 Appointment Of Senior Board Staff (Item 3.2 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee noted that an appointment panel for the post of Director of Communications had convened on 8 June 2004 and had unanimously agreed a new appointee. It was anticipated that the successful candidate would commence with the Board in early August.

3.3 Tackling Crime Against Older People (Item 3.3 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee noted that a response from the Minister of State had been received and circulated at the June Board meeting.

3.4 PSNI Review Of Appraisal, Performance Related Pay And Conditions For SMT And SCS (Item 3.9 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive updated Members on a number of developments relating to Review.

The Committee noted that:-

- Performance Related Pay in respect of the Chief Constable would commence during the 2004 / 05 financial year
- Performance Related Pay in respect of the Deputy Chief Constable and Assistant Chief Constables would commence during the 2005 / 06 financial year, in accordance with national policing agreements
- A decision regarding the implementation of Performance Relation Pay for Senior Civilian Staff (SCS) was under consideration
- The establishment of PSNI Assistant Chief Constables had been reduced from 6 officers to 5 with effect from 1 June 2004, with the secondment of an Assistant Chief Constable to Centrex.

The Committee noted that there was a facility for an observer to attend meetings of the Police Negotiating Board (PNB). It was agreed that further consideration should be given to a Member attending a PNB meeting as an observer, as part of the Board's review of its representation at PNB meetings.

3.5 Office Of The Police Ombudsman (OPONI) Survey (Item 3.11 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee noted that agreement had been reached concerning the publication of an OPONI survey of police officers' attitudes to police complaints. It was further noted that the survey report would be published following the finalisation of statistical information.

3.6 Seat On Northern Ireland Board Of Crimestoppers (Item 3.13 And 9 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee approved the nomination of Mr Brian Dougherty to sit on the Northern Ireland Board of Crimestoppers.

3.7 NIPB Annual Report (Item 3.15 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee noted that the Press and Public Relations Committee had considered a number of issues associated with the NIPB Annual Report at its June meeting. Members noted that it had been agreed:-

- To produce a summary newsletter for distribution through regional newspapers and a limited number of copies of a more comprehensive Annual Report
- The outline format for both publications had been approved
- The timing of the publication of the Annual Reports of the Chief Constable, NIPB and OPONI would be reviewed to improve sequencing.

3.8 Performance And Development Review And Performance Related Pay (Item 4.2 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with under item 6.

3.9 Spending Review 2004: Armed Civilian Guards (Item 4.6 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee noted that a response to the Chairman's letter, concerning a bid which had been made in the 2004 PSNI Spending Review for armed civilian guards would be included in the current review of the Human Resources Strategy.

3.10 Working Relationships – NIPB And OPONI (Item 3.11 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee noted that the Board had considered a paper at its June meeting concerning working relationships between the Board and OPONI and had agreed to continue with the current schedule of meetings. OPONI had been advised accordingly.

3.11 Association Of Police Authorities (Item 12 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee noted that a representative from the Association of Police Authorities (APA) had been invited to attend the September meeting of the Committee to discuss the work of the Association. It was agreed that all Members of the Board should be invited to attend the discussion.

3.12 Recruitment Policy (Item 13 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with under item 12.

4. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

4.1 Engagements

The Committee noted that the Chairman had undertaken the following engagements on behalf of the Board:-

- RUC George Cross Day Service in St Mark's Church, the Mall, Armagh on 6 June 2004
- Opening Service of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Church House, Belfast on 7 June 2004
- Reception and Dinner at the Wolfson Course, Cambridge on 10 June 2004
- Police Sports Day, Newforge on 16 June 2004

4.2 Notifiable Memberships

The Committee noted that, further to discussion at the June 2004 Board meeting, a letter had been received from the Assistant Chief Constable, Criminal Justice, concerning a request by the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee for further information in relation to the membership of organisations which had been notified by PSNI officers. The Assistant Chief Constable advised that the requested information should be available by the beginning of September 2004.

4.3 NIPB Annual Report – PSNI Performance Statistics

The Committee noted the content of a letter received from the Chief Constable, dated 8 June 2004, advising that the end year police performance figures in respect of 2003 / 04 had been released on 13 May 2004, 6 weeks earlier than previous practice. The change in release practice was compliant with the requirement of National Statistics and was designed to ensure that the statistics are accessible to the police and the general public at the same time. The Committee noted that the earlier release should assist the Board in finalisation of its Annual Report.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

5.1 Results Of April 2004 Omnibus Survey

The Committee noted a document, which had been tabled, containing the results of a Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) Omnibus Survey which had sought the views of the public on a range of issues, including policing. Interviews of 1,301 people had taken place between 22 March and 23 April 2004.

The Committee noted the main findings of the survey in relation to the performance of the police and that generally the results showed a broad level of confidence in, and support for, policing.

The Committee discussed a number of aspects of the survey, including the responses relating to the following:-

- The performance of the police
- District Policing Partnerships
- The Policing Board

Arising from the survey results, Members discussed the level of police resources in the North Belfast area, the use of the human resources model by senior command and the balance between response policing and community policing.

The Committee noted that the Deputy Chief Constable would join the meeting at a later stage and agreed to put a number of issues arising from the discussion to him.

5.2 Visits To DCUs

The Committee noted that the Chief Executive had visited a number of DCUs to meet commanders and their staff.

6. CHIEF CONSTABLE'S PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE RELATED PAY OBJECTIVES 2004 - 05

The Committee considered a paper in relation to proposed objectives for the Chief Constable's Performance and Development Review (PDR) and Performance Related Pay (PRP) in 2004 / 05. A confidential report on the matter is attached at Appendix 'A'.

**7. LEADERSHIP GRID PROGRAMME
TRAINING EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT OPEN HOUSE
PROGRAMME**

The Board noted details of 2 programmes currently being run by PSNI Training, Education and Development Branch – the Leadership Grid Programme and the TED Open House Programme. Any Member wishing to attend either programme was asked to notify the Secretariat.

8. CORPORATE PLANS – 2002 - 05 AND 2005 - 08

The Committee noted a paper detailing progress achieved on the first 2 years of the current 3 year Corporate Plan and outlining progress on the preparation of the Corporate Plan for 2005 / 08.

It was agreed that further consideration should be given to how the Board should monitor progress.

9. NIPB STAFFING SUMMARY AT 8 JUNE 2004

The Committee noted a schedule detailing the strength of Board staff at 8 June 2004.

The Committee noted that a paper would be brought to the July 2004 Committee meeting containing further information regarding the Chief Executive's review of vacant posts.

10. REVIEW OF APPOINTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISOR

The Committee noted that the appointment of Board's Human Rights Advisor was last reviewed at the October 2003 meeting when it had been agreed that the appointment should be reviewed in a further 6 months time.

The Committee noted the main activities on which the Advisor and his assistant had been engaged on during the review period and considered future needs for the next 6 months.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed that the appointment should continue and be reviewed again in another 6 months time. It was further agreed that the Advisor's assistant should be retained for a similar period.

11. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Committee noted a paper detailing a range of the ongoing work which is contributing the development of a Corporate Governance framework for the Board. The Committee also noted that papers would be presented to it and the Audit and Best Value Committee as work progresses.

12. RECRUITMENT POLICY – STAFF OFFICER

The Committee noted that at the May meeting it had agreed that a further paper should be brought to the June Committee meeting concerning the policy for recruiting Staff Officer grades to the Board.

The Committee noted that no change in policy was now being requested at this stage and that if in the future a policy change is considered appropriate, then the Committee would be consulted.

13. OMAGH SUB-GROUP

The Committee noted a paper concerning the outcome of recent discussions of the Omagh Sub-Group.

The Committee noted that the Sub-Group had concluded that, within the scope of the Board's powers, the matters referred to in paragraph 6 of the statement on Omagh, had been progressed as far as they could and that the work of the Sub-Group had now finished. The Committee agreed that the Sub-Group should be stood down.

During discussion of the findings, the Committee agreed that officials should clarify with the NIO and OPONI, the legislative position regarding statements made by Maurice Hayes in his 1997 report about the circumstances under which matters of process could be appealed to the Northern Ireland Ombudsman, and the statutory position concerning the OPONI and NIPB regarding such appeals, and if appropriate, raise such issues with the Secretary of State.

14. NIPB / PSNI JOINT STRATEGY EVENT

The Committee considered a paper containing a number of recommendations concerning action to progress issues considered at the NIPB /PSNI Joint Strategy Event.

The Committee agreed a proposed action plan.

It was further agreed, that recommendations concerning how the Board should question PSNI in a public forum, concerning successes and failures against planning targets and results, should be considered at a future Board meeting.

15. INFORMATION PAPERS

15.1 CS Spray And Water Cannon – Police Policy, Procedures And Guidance

The Committee noted that guidance documents had been received from PSNI on the use of CS spray and water cannon. Any Member wishing to receive a copy of the guidance was asked to contact Policy and Accountability Branch.

The Committee also noted that as part of the Board's Human Rights Monitoring Framework, the Board's Human Rights Advisor would be evaluating both documents.

16. PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2003 - 04 – QUARTERS 1 – 4 PERFORMANCE

The Committee agreed a number of questions to be put to the Deputy Chief Constable in relation to the 2003 / 04 Performance Monitoring Report.

The Chairman welcomed the PSNI representatives to the meeting.

The Deputy Chief Constable outlined the main findings in the Performance Monitoring Report for 2003 / 04.

The Committee noted that overall crime was down by 10.2% and that the clearance rate for record crime stood at 27.4%, an increase of 4.4% points on the 2002 / 03 year.

The Committee discussed a number of areas in more detail, including:-

- Racist and homophobic incidents

The Committee noted that the number of racial incidents reported during 2003 / 04 was double that reported in the previous year. The Deputy Chief Constable advised that it appeared there was increased confidence amongst communities in reporting such crimes and a growing confidence that action would be taken by the police following a report. The Committee noted that it would take some years for an accurate baseline figure to be established and discussed the factors in obtaining an accurate baseline.

- Detections for violent crimes

The Committee noted that the target detection rate for violent crimes had been set at 55% and that the percentage cleared in 2003 / 04 was 54.1%, an increase of 5.9% on the previous year. The Committee noted that Rural Region had achieved the target detection rate. The Deputy Chief Constable advised that one of the factors in improving performance had been the introduction of CCTV cameras.

- Custody / bail cases

The Committee noted that in bail cases a level of 64.6% was achieved against a target of processing 85% of cases within 110 days. This compared with 64.8% of cases in 2002 / 03. For custody cases, 55.7% was achieved against a target of processing 85% of cases within 90 days, which was lower than the figure of 60.12% achieved in 2002 / 03.

In response to a number of questions, the Deputy Chief Constable advised that senior command was concerned about the processing rates. It was widely known within the Service, that new technology would be introduced as part of the Causeway Project. Some DCUs appeared to be waiting for the introduction of the new system alone to improve processing timescales. Senior command had agreed that more immediate action needed to be taken in the short term. Consequently, a troubleshooting team had been established to identify if there were any specify the factors in delay where remedial action would improve turn around times. The Deputy Chief Constable described a number of factors that were likely to have contributed to delays.

- Confidence / satisfaction targets

The Committee noted that the Omnibus Survey results had indicated that 62% of people thought that the police were doing a good job, against a target of 70%. This compared with a 63% achievement in the previous survey. For satisfaction with patrolling, 36% was achieved against a target of greater than 45%. The results compared with 35% in the previous survey. The Deputy Chief Constable reminded Members of the timeframe of the survey and some of the events that had occurred during the timeframe which could have affected attitudes to police performance.

The meeting discussed how best to engender value in community policing and the competing demands between response policing and community policing.

The Deputy Police Constable responded to a number of questions concerning policing in the North Belfast area. Issues raised included the proportion of probationers in the DCU, the future of Greencastle station and restorative justice schemes.

The Chairman thanked the PSNI representatives for their contribution and they left the meeting.

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

There were no matters arising.

18. PRESS ISSUES

The Committee noted that a news release would be issued on the latest Omnibus Survey results at 12 noon.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

19.1 Meeting With The Lord Chief Justice

The Committee noted that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman had met the Lord Chief Justice and it had been suggested that the Lord Chief Justice meet with the Board and Chairpersons of DPPs.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was arranged for 15 July 2004.

21. CONFIDENTIAL STAFFING MATTER

All officials left the meeting and the Committee considered a confidential staffing matter.

(Meeting closed 12:30 pm).

Secretariat

June 2004

Chairman