

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF THE 11TH MEETING OF FINANCE AND GENERAL
PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2004 AT 9:30 AM IN
WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST**

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

- Mr Sammy Wilson (Chairman)
- Mr Barry Gilligan (Vice-Chairman)
- (6) Professor Desmond Rea
(Chairman)
- Mr Alex Attwood
- (5) Mr Fred Cobain
- Mr Alan McFarland
- (4) Mrs Rosaleen Moore

**PSNI REPRESENTATIVES IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- (3) Mr Roy Toner, ACC, Corporate
Development
- (3) Mr Bill Thompson, Head of
Information Management
- (2) Mr David Best, Director of Finance
and Support Services
- (2) Mr Michael Burton, Acting Head of
Management Accounting
- (1) ACC Gillespie, ACC, Criminal
Justice Unit

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

- (7) Mr Trevor Reaney (Chief
Executive)
Director of Corporate Services
Director of Planning
Three Board Officials

- (1) Item number 8 only
- (2) Items number 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14
- (3) Item number 7 only
- (4) Item number 3 (part) to the end
- (5) Item number 4, 9, 10, 11 and 12
- (6) Item number 3 (part) to item 14
- (7) Item number 5 – 8,10 (part)

1. APOLOGIES

All Committee Members attended the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 OCTOBER 2004

The minutes of the meeting were agreed and signed.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 OCTOBER 2004

3.1 PSNI Information And Communications Strategy –Draft Document (Item 6 Of Minutes Refers)

Members noted that the clarification they sought concerning the report by HMIC on the PSNI IS Strategy would be dealt with at agenda item 5.

Members were advised that the ‘open day’ opportunity for Members to see the progress made to date in the PSNI Information and Communications area had been deferred until the New Year.

Members noted that the validation process for the PSNI IS Strategy is ongoing and will be brought back to Committee in February 2005.

3.2 PSNI –Integrated Planning Process (Item 13 Of Minutes Refers)

Members noted that the NIO had given no indication of the baseline budget for 07/08 and discussed the implications of that.

3.3 Acquisition Of Additional Land By PSNI (Item 15 Of Minutes Refers)

Members noted that appropriate action had been taken.

3.4 Amendment To A Grant Of Easement (Item 16 Of Minutes Refers)

Members noted that appropriate action had been taken.

**3.5 SPED Move To Police Leased Accommodation – R/Constable
ADM1 (Item 18 Of Minutes Refers)**

This matter was dealt with at agenda item 17.

**3.6 Claim For Dental Expense – Constable ADM3 (Item 19 Of Minutes
Refers)**

Members noted that appropriate action had been taken in relation to the additional expenses incurred by Constable ADM3. They also noted the schedule of charges attached for information.

**3.7 Application For Payment Of An Early Redemption Fee And
Expenses As a Consequence Of An Officer’s Transfer From a GB
Force to PSNI – D/Constable ADM2 (Item 21 Of Minutes Refers)**

Members noted that appropriate action had been taken.

**3.8 Application For Removal Expenses As a Consequence Of An Ex
Officer Having To Move House Under The SPED Scheme –
D/Constable ADM5 (Item 22 Of Minutes Refers)**

Members noted that appropriate action had been taken.

3.9 Compensation Claims – Summary August And September 2004 (Item 23 Of Minutes Refers)

Members noted that the presentation to the Audit and Best Value Committee had been opened to all Members.

Members noted a paper on the Vehicle Recovery Scheme.

It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Chief Constable in relation to this matter, attaching a letter, which had been received from the member of the public, and asking for a response to the issues raised.

It was agreed to ask the Chief Constable to have the PSNI representative responsible for the policy on removing vehicles from the road, to attend the next Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting in February 2005, to give a presentation on all aspects of the policy and any contracts related to it, including details of consultation with interested parties.

It was also agreed to ask the Chief Constable what the PSNI system is for dealing rapidly with clearing accidents on roads and who is involved in the consultation at all levels.

It was agreed that officials should write to the Deputy Chief Constable, on behalf of the Committee, to advise him that Members have concerns about the level of compensation claims which are not decreasing and to inform him that the Committee has concerns about the number of settlements agreed out of court.

Members discussed the benefits of the appointment by PSNI of a full-time Barrister.

It was also agreed that PSNI should be further challenged on the payment of £9,000.00 compensation awarded in respect of a loss of overtime and that more details should be requested.

Members noted the information provided in relation to multiple claims and the remedial action taken following an accident where claims have been lodged.

3.10 Proposed Dates For Committee Meetings And Presentations For 2005 (Item 24 Of Minutes Refers)

Members noted and agreed the dates for meetings in 2005, and the occasions when the Committee would have presentations from PITO.

3.11 Any Other Business (Item 27 Of Minutes Refers)

3.11.1 Sale Of Land By PSNI

Members noted that appropriate action had been taken.

4. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

4.1 Compensation Claims

The Chairman of the Committee advised Members of the letter, which he had received from the Chairman of the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee, regarding compensation claims paid out by PSNI.

It was agreed that the letter should be acknowledged and the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee advised of what action had been taken by at the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

5. PSNI IS STRATEGY 2004 – 2008 – FINAL UPDATE REPORT FROM MIKE HORNE (HMIC)

Members noted a final update report from Mike Horne (HMIC) on progress towards implementing the PSNI IS Strategy, in advance of PITO assuming the role of Independent Assessor in January 2005.

6. INDEPENDENT VALIDATION OF THE PSNI INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Members noted a paper detailing the arrangements that are to be put in place for independent validation of the PSNI IS Strategy.

The Board and PSNI have appointed the Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO) to carry out this role, for an initial period of 2 years.

Members noted and agreed the dates for inspection and those for reporting to the Committee.

7. PRESENTATION – PSNI INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The Chairman welcomed ACC Toner, (Corporate Development) and Mr Bill Thompson, the recently appointed Head of Information Management, to the meeting and congratulated Mr Thompson on his appointment.

ACC Toner endorsed the update Report provided by HMIC.

The Committee noted the content of several letters which ACC Toner put before the Committee, regarding the funding of the IS Strategy and his concern that the failure to secure adequate funding could be a major risk factor in the delivery of the programme.

ACC Toner welcomed the support offered by the Committee in his endeavours to acquire adequate funding in line with the requirements under Patten Recommendation 93.

In particular, discussion took place around the fact that the NIO had suggested that the total cost of the IS Strategy work might not be available from the Patten Non Severance budget where, in some cases, they considered a contribution to the cost should be made from the main PSNI grant. Members also discussed the fact that the NIO had suggested that consideration might be given to extending the planned timescale for implementation from four to six years.

It was agreed that the Chief Executive would arrange a meeting with the Minister to discuss PSNI funding in general and funding for the IS Strategy in particular.

ACC Toner confirmed that he would provide figures for the capital expenditure which had been used from PSNI Main Grant to fund IS Patten Non Severance work in the previous four years, as well as an updated status report on where the Business cases for existing IS Strategy projects stood at present.

The Chairman thanked ACC Toner for his contribution and he left the meeting.

8. PRESENTATION – IMPACT OF THE CAUSEWAY PROJECT ON THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE UNIT

The Chairman welcomed ACC Gillespie, (Criminal Justice Department), to the meeting.

ACC Gillespie advised Members that Causeway was a joint enterprise by the criminal justice organisations, which aims to improve their performance by sharing information electronically.

Organisations involved include PSNI, the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Prison Service, The Northern Ireland Court Service, Forensic Science Northern Ireland and the Department of Public Prosecutions.

It is hoped that by the end of 2006 all information shared within the criminal justice system will be up-to-date, accurate and accessible electronically by anyone who needs to use it.

ACC Gillespie advised Members of the project goals which would bring about the development of the programme, describing the benefits to users as accessibility, transparency, reduction in delay, improved quantity and quality and uniformity of approach.

Following the presentation Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and / or clarify any queries they had.

The Chairman thanked ACC Gillespie for attending and she left the meeting.

9. PSNI – CHIEF CONSTABLE’S QUARTERLY REPORT ON EXPENDTURE 2004 / 05 – 1 APRIL – 30 SEPTEMBER 2004

Members noted an updated paper, which was circulated to the Committee, detailing information on PSNI expenditure for the period to October 2004.

10. PSNI FUNDING

10.1 Supplementary Bid For December 2004 Monitoring Round

Members noted a paper detailing the PSNI bid for additional funding relating to the 2004 / 2005 Main Police Grant and Patten Non-Severance.

10.2 PSNI Management Accounts To October 2004.

Members noted the information provided in the PSNI report on expenditure for the period to October 2004.

11. PSNI – ANNUAL ESTIMATES FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2006.

Members noted a paper detailing information relating to Annual Estimates for the year ending 31 March 2006.

It was agreed that ACCs Rural and Urban would be invite to a future meeting to give a presentation on overtime.

The Director of Finance and Support Services agreed to provide to the Committee, a comparative cost analysis for PSNI as against other UK Forces and a breakdown for Crime Operations spend on overtime for each Department.

12. FARM PROJECT – PROGRESS REPORT - DECEMBER 2004

Members noted a report setting out progress in the period October 2004 - November 2004.

During this reporting period significant time had been devoted to:-

- Utilising the information from the integrated planning process to projected baseline budgets for 2005 / 06
- Identification of potential pressures highlighted in the integrated planning process
- Working with management Accounting to produce a balanced budget for 2005 / 06

The Financial outputs from the costing model have been identified, and a preliminary draft report has been forwarded to the Regions for comment and review.

Over the next few months the following key developments are planned:-

Local Financial Management (LFM)

- The transfer of LFM to mainstream Management Accounting, and the withdrawal of FARM resources from this area.

Costing

- Review and quality assurance of the data contained within the financial outputs report
- Roll-out of ABC reporting module and financial output reports to DCUs

Key issues to be tackled during the coming months are:-

- Withdrawal of FARM from the LFM process ensuring the necessary handover arrangements are in place
- Roll-out of on line access to the BPlan model across PSNI

It is anticipated that the FARM Project will be completed early in the new calendar year, when a post implementation review will be carried out.

13. PSNI OVERTIME MONITORING

Members noted a paper summarising the PSNI overtime figures to October 2004.

14. SR 2004 – ALLOCATIONS FOR PSNI

Members considered a paper concerning allocations for PSNI for the period 2005 / 06 and 2006 / 07 and raised concerns on the funding deficit being shown for 2005 / 2006, particularly the large deficit in 2006 / 07.

Committee noted that the third year baseline figure in the SR2004 review (2007 / 08) has not yet been revealed but were advised that it was expected in the near future.

It was agreed to seek an early meeting with the Minister to discuss future funding for policing. (See item 7 above).

15. NIPB FUNDING

15.1 Supplementary Financial Bid For December Monitoring Round

Members noted a paper detailing the NIPB bid for additional funding relating to the 2004 / 2005 Grant.

15.2 NIPB Management Accounts To October 2004

Members noted the information provided in the NIPB report on expenditure for the period to October 2004.

16. APPLICATION FOR REMOVAL EXPENSES AS A CONSEQUENCE OF AN OFFICER HAVING TO MOVE HOME UNDER THE SPED SCHEME – SERGEANT (ADM1)

The Committee considered an application by Sergeant ADM1 for payment of removal expenses in excess of the agreed limit, in relation to moving house under the SPED Scheme.

Members agreed that the officer should be reimbursed.

17. SPED MOVE TO POLICE LEASED ACCOMMODATION – R/CONSTABLE (ADM2)

The Committee noted a paper requesting a review of a previous decision taken in relation to Reserve Constable ADM2, concerning reinstatement of housing allowance at the end of a three-month period in police leased accommodation.

Since PSNI had not implemented the policy on the 'three month rule' and no information was made available to R/Constable ADM2 that he would be required to pay for the leased accommodation after three months, Members agreed that he should not be charged for it.

It was agreed that a paper detailing how long police officers have resided in police leased accommodation should be brought back to the next Committee meeting.

18. APPLICATION FOR EXPENSES INCURRED RE: SPED MOVE – EX SERGEANT (ADM3)

Members considered an application by Ex Sergeant ADM3 for payment of expenses incurred as a consequence of moving house under SPED.

The Committee refused the payment of these expenses, since the ex officer had exercised personal choice in deciding the location of his new home.

19. RATIFICATION OF APPLICATIONS FOR OCCASIONAL AUTHORISATIONS FOR THE SALE OR CONSUMPTION OF INTOXICATING LIQUOR IN POLICE PREMISES

Members ratified recent decisions taken by officials of the Board in accordance with delegated authority.

20. GENERAL AUTHORISATION FOR THE SALE OR CONSUMPTION OF INTOXICATING LIQUOR

Members noted a paper seeking a decision in respect of applications from three police social and recreation clubs for exemptions under the licensing laws.

Members agreed that exemptions under Article 84 of the Licensing (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 and Article 51 of the Registrations of Clubs (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 for the twelve-month period beginning 1 January 2005 for the three clubs specified.

21. COMPENSATION CLAIMS SUMMARY – OCTOBER 2004

The Committee noted the information provided to them in relation to the financial settlements made during October 2004.

22. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

Two questions for the Chief Constable arose out of this meeting, concerning the PSNI IS funding and Compensation Claims.

23. PRESS ISSUES

It was agreed to consider the issues of funding and the validation of the PSNI IS Strategy as possible topics for press releases.

24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to discuss.

25. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was arranged for Friday, 21 January 2005 at 9:30 am.

(Meeting closed 1:10 pm).

Secretariat

December 2004

CHAIRMAN