

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF THE 10TH MEETING OF FINANCE AND GENERAL
PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 OCTOBER 2004 AT 9:30 AM IN
WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST**

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

- Mr Sammy Wilson (Chairman)
- Mr Barry Gilligan (Vice-Chairman)
- (1) Mr Alex Attwood
- Mr Alan McFarland
- Mrs Rosaleen Moore

**PSNI REPRESENTATIVES IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- (2) Mr Paul Leighton, Deputy Chief Constable
- (3) Mr Roy Toner, ACC, Corporate Development
- (4) Mr David Best, Director of Finance and Support Services
- (4) Mr Michael Burton, Acting Head of Management Accounting

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

- Director of Corporate Services
- Director of Planning
- (5) Director of Communications
- Two Board Officials

- (1) Items number 7, 9 – 28
- (2) Items number 6, 7, 9 - 14
- (3) Item number 6 only
- (4) Item number 7, 9 – 14
- (5) Item number 1 - 6

1. APOLOGIES

An apology for non-attendance was received from Mr Fred Cobain.

**2. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES
COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 AUGUST 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 20 AUGUST 2004**

**3.1 Application For Payment Of Tax Liability – D/Chief Inspector
ADM1 (Item 3.1 Of Minutes Refers)**

This matter was dealt with at agenda item 20.

**3.2 Application For Removal Expenses Under The SPED Scheme –
Removal Companies (Item 3.2 Of Minutes Refers)**

This matter was dealt with at agenda item 17.

3.3 PSNI Overtime Monitoring (Item 3.6 of Minutes Refers)

Members noted the response received from the Head of Estates Services in relation to their previous query.

**3.4 Reconsideration Of An Application For The Payment Of An Early
Redemption Fee – D/Inspector ADM2 (Item 3.7 Of Minutes Refers)**

Members noted that appropriate action had been taken.

3.5 Annual Financial Statements Year Ended 31 March 2004 (Item 7 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee were advised verbally by the Director of Finance and Support Services that the relatively low figure shown in the Police Fund Account under proceeds from sale of seized and lost property was due to the fact that most of the property involved was low value, low use items.

3.6 PSNI Information And Communications Strategy –Draft Document (Item 9.3 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with at agenda items 5 and 6.

3.7 Application For Reimbursement Of Early Redemption Fee Due To An Officer Having To Move House Under The SPED Scheme – Chief Superintendent ADM2 (Item 11 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 – Ex Sergeant ADM5 (Item 12 Of Minutes Refers)

Members noted that appropriate action had been taken.

3.9 Application For Payment Of Early Redemption Fee – D/Constable ADM3 (Item 13 Of Minutes Refers)

Members noted that appropriate action had been taken.

**3.10 Application For Payment Of Additional Incidental Expenses –
D/Constable ADM1 (Item 14 Of Minutes Refers)**

Members noted that appropriate action had been taken.

4. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

There was no business for the Chairman to report.

**5. HMIC – PROGRESS REPORT ON PSNI INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

The Director of Planning advised Members that the HMIC representative, Mr Mike Horne, who had been invited to present his update on the PSNI IS Strategy after carrying out an interim assessment of progress on the initial 17 recommendations, had sent his apologies for non-attendance, the reason being a bereavement.

Members were advised that the documentation in their papers was the agreed final document.

Members noted the Report and discussed various aspects of it.

The Director of Planning advised that Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO) would, in the future provide an independent quarterly report on progress to the Committee, every four months.

6. PRESENTATION – PSNI INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The Chairman welcomed the Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton, and ACC Corporate Development, ACC Toner to the meeting.

Members had noted the correspondence received previously from ACC Toner in respect of suggestions they had made on amendments to the draft PSNI IS Strategy and the additional information, which they had requested.

ACC Toner responded to each of the 17 recommendations commented on by Mr Horne in his update.

Members were updated on the current status of Business cases across the IS delivery programme and were provided with a copy of the business case approval process, which had been agreed with the Director of Finance and Support Services and the Northern Ireland Office.

ACC Toner advised Members on the progress of the staff recruitment exercise which was ongoing and informed the Committee that a new Head of Information Management had now been appointed.

The revised IS Strategy was in the process of being reviewed by the Chief Executive of PITO for validation and ACC Toner advised Members that he was confident confirmation would be available for the next meeting.

ACC Toner advised the Committee that he anticipates having an ‘open day’ possibly in November, attended by Members and officials of the Board. This will give an opportunity to see at first hand, the progress achieved to date within the area of ICS.

It was agreed that the Director of Planning would action the following points:

- Clarify with HMIC, the information provided under Recommendation 4 of his Report
- Organise with PSNI a mutually agreeable date for the 'open day'
- Confirm with ACC Toner that PITO validation of the IS Strategy would be in place for the next Committee meeting on 10 December 2004."

7. PSNI – SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL BID FOR SEPTEMBER 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.

8. NIPB – SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL BID FOR SEPTEMBER 2004 MONITORING ROUND

Members noted the information provided in relation to the NIPB in year submission for funding relating to the 2004 / 05 Grant.

9. PSNI – REPORT ON EXPENDITURE FOR THE PERIOD TO AUGUST 2004

Members noted the information provided by the Director of Finance and Support Services in relation to expenditure for the period to August 2004.

10. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

10.1 PSNI Management Accounts To August 2004

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

10.2 NIPB Management Accounts To August 2004

Members noted the information provided relating to NIPB Management Accounts to August 2004.

11. PSNI – POLICE PENSION SCHEME YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2004

Members noted the paper entitled Police Pension Scheme year ended 31 March 2004.

The Director of Finance and Support Services advised Members that this was the first standalone Pension Scheme Statement for the Police Pension Scheme. The rationale of preparing pension scheme accounts is to avoid the detail required by FRS 17 (Retirement Benefits) from overshadowing and drawing attention away from the record of the police's core financial performance. Prior to these Scheme Statements, Revenue Account and FRS 17 information was disclosed as part of the PSNI Annual Financial Statements.

12. OVERTIME

PSNI Overtime Monitoring

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

12.2 Managing Overtime – Quarterly Progress Report

The Committee noted the paper provided to HM Inspectorate of Constabulary entitled Managing Overtime – Quarterly Progress Report.

13. PSNI – INTEGRATED PLANNING PROCESS

As part of the PSNI ongoing programme of financial management reform, budgets have been devolved to Regions, DCU Commanders and Departments. A key element of this financial reform process is the implementation of a system of integrated strategic/operational and financial planning at Departmental, Regional and DCU level. This is the second year that this approach has been adopted across the PSNI.

The overall objective of the “integrated” process is to allocate budgets to DCUs, Regions and HQ Departments that reflect organisational objectives and procedures. This planning exercise will support the annual planning cycle and as such will form the basis of the 2005 / 06 budget allocations. Furthermore, this will form the basis of the submission to the Annual Estimates process. The process will encompass the following years – 2004 / 05, 2005 / 06, 2006 / 07, 2007 / 08 and 2008 / 09.

It is noted that funding for 2004 / 05 and 2005 / 06 has already been fixed following the previous SR2002 settlement.

Key messages indicated by NIO relating to the Spending Review (SR 2004), (the outcome to be announced by the end of October 2004), are:

- Funding for 2006/07 and 2007/08 will be presumed “flat” i.e. no uplift for pay or inflation. All increases have to be justified.
- A demonstrable efficiency plan will be a key element in the funding process and there is likely to be ongoing downward pressure on budgets. Treasury/NIO have indicated that it is committed to delivery of efficiency savings of 2.5% each year over the SR 2004 period, at least half of which will be cash releasing. The application of an efficiency plan for PSNI will be developed before December 2004.

The key elements of the Integrated Planning Process are as follows:

- Explicit linkage between operational and financial planning
- Participation by budget-holders, including DCU Commanders Regional Commanders and Headquarters budget-holders
- Plans to cover a 4-5 year period.

DCU Commanders and Branch Heads will review the policing objectives, indicators and targets for 2004 / 2005 and the draft objectives for 2005 / 06 and make the assumption that the objectives and targets for future years will not vary significantly. They should consider whether resources available are sufficient to meet these targets. If they are not adequate, DCUs and Branches will be required to consider what their priorities should be. Budget holders are required to indicate what efficiency measures will be taken if no inflationary increases (3% of the 2004 / 05 total budget baseline) are funded.

In agreeing budgets for 2005 / 06, the final resource allocation decisions will be made by the Resource Allocation Group (RAG), chaired by the Deputy

Chief Constable, to be endorsed by the Chief Constable's Forum. If total bids submitted exceed available funding for 2005 / 06, the RAG group will set efficiency targets across all Regions and Departments in order to strike a balanced budget for the organisation. The outcome is likely to be announced in January 2005 following final approval at Chief Constable's Forum.

It was agreed that when the SR 2004 funding levels are known for year 2006 / 07 and 2007 / 08, the implications for the Human Resources Strategy and the efficiency reviews would have to be considered.

14. FARM PROJECT

Members noted a report setting out progress in the period August 2004-September 2004.

During this reporting period significant time had been devoted to:

- Commencement of the Integrated Planning process for 2005/06 budgets;
- Dealing with Business Manager queries;
- Maintenance of the budget management systems.

Regional Accountants took up employment on 1 September 2004 after an induction course on Local Financial Management. They are being given support as they consolidate their new roles.

Financial Data has been successfully uploaded onto the costing database, and training has taken place to facilitate the production of comparative reports for internal benchmarking and costed outputs.

Within the next few months the following key developments are planned:

- On going training and support for the 2 Regional Accountants to provide direct support to Local Commanders and Region.
- Review and quality assurance of the data contained within the costing model.
- Production of reports detailing costed activities and outputs.
- Piloting the access to the reporting module of the BPlan software at DCU/Branch level.

Key issues to be tackled during the coming months are:

- Benchmarking reports to be made available to DCU Commanders and Heads of Branches
- Roll out of on line access to the BPlan model across PSNI

Having concluded their presentations, the Chairman thanked both presenters for their contribution and they left the meeting.

15. ACQUISITION OF ADDITIONAL LAND BY PSNI

The Committee considered a paper detailing the requirement by PSNI to buy additional land to reinstate a boundary at a station.

Members approved the acquisition of the land, however, agreed that the additional cost should be met out from existing budgets.

16. AMENDMENT TO A GRANT OF EASEMENT

The Committee noted a paper advising of changes to an agreed Grant of Easement for access to business premises at Stanley Street/ Grosvenor Road.

Members approved the amendment and signed the appropriate legal documents on behalf of the Board.

17. REMOVAL COMPANIES – SPED SCHEME

Members noted an information paper entitled Removal Companies – SPED Scheme, giving an update on the present position regarding the tendering for removal companies to assist officers who have to move home under the SPED Scheme.

18. SPED MOVE TO POLICE LEASED ACCOMMODATION – RESERVE CONSTABLE ADM1

Members considered the information provided in relation to Reserve Constable ADM1.

It was agreed that:

- Clarification would be sought on the term 'overnight' contained within the policy
- Clarification would be sought on how long an officer can remain in police leased accommodation as a result of an 'overnight' move and under other circumstances
- The outstanding monies owed for the period 13 February 2004(date responsibility for former home ceased) to 8 April 2004

(end of free 3 month period in police leased accommodation)
should be recovered

- Housing allowance should be reinstated from 9 April 2004 and a charge should be made for the accommodation occupied from this date.

19. CLAIM FOR DENTAL EXPENSES – CONSTABLE ADM3

The Committee considered an application by Constable ADM3 for payment of dental expenses in excess of the limit as prescribed under Regulation 56 of the RUC Regulations 1996.

It was agreed that the officer should be reimbursed the outstanding balance.

It was also agreed that officials should ascertain if the list of standard charges referred to at Appendix 19B of the Finance Code are updated and reviewed regularly.

20. APPLICATION FOR PAYMENT OF TAX LIABILITY – D/INSPECTOR ADM4

The Committee noted a paper detailing progress to date regarding an application for payment of the tax liability arising from an officer having to move home under the SPED Scheme.

A response from PSNI Finance Department who now have responsibility for pursuing tax liability issues is anticipated shortly.

The Committee will be updated in due course.

21. APPLICATION FOR PAYMENT OF AN EARLY REDEMPTION FEE AND EXPENSES INCURRED AS A CONSEQUENCE OF AN

**OFFICER'S TRANSFER FROM A GB FORCE TO PSNI –
D/CONSTABLE ADM2**

Members considered an application by D/Constable ADM2 for payment of an early redemption fee and expenses incurred as a consequence of an officer's transfer from a GB Force to PSNI.

The Committee approved the payment of these expenses.

It was agreed that in future, only extra ordinary applications should be brought to Committee. Officials, under delegated authority, should agree those applications, which are within the limits that Committee have used in the past to decide on similar cases. Committee should be informed of decisions taken.

**22. APPLICATION FOR PAYMENT OF AN EARLY REDEMPTION FEE
AS A CONSEQUENCE OF AN OFFICER'S TRANSFER FROM A GB
FORCE TO PSNI – D/CONSTABLE ADM5**

Members considered an application by D/Constable ADM5 for payment of an early redemption fee incurred as a consequence of an officer's transfer from a GB Force to PSNI.

The Committee approved the payment of these expenses.

**23. COMPENSATION CLAIMS SUMMARY – AUGUST AND
SEPTEMBER 2004**

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

It was agreed that:

- The presentation on Tendering Procedures / Procurement by the Director of Finance and Support Services, which is due to be given to the next Audit and Best Value Committee, should be opened to all Members
- An initial report on how the PSNI Vehicle Recovery Scheme is working since its introduction on 1 October, should be sought
- Clarification should be sought on the settlement paid to claimant PI 1172 with reference to how the element for loss of overtime in the settlement figure was arrived at
- In accidents involving more than one officer, where all lodge claims for compensation, officials, on behalf of the Board, should look at the implications of an independent assessment of injuries sustained, being carried out by SMP
- A review of remedial action taken, in cases where compensation was paid for trips, falls etc for example, due to 'poor housekeeping' should be sought to ensure that action has been taken to rectify the problem and that it does not re-occur.

24. PROPOSED DATES FOR COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN 2005

The Committee considered a paper proposing dates and presentations for meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee in 2005.

Members agreed the dates for meetings in 2005 and suggested an amendment to the schedule of presentations.

25. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

There were no questions for the Chief Constable arising out of this meeting.

26. PRESS ISSUES

There were no press issues arising out of this meeting.

27. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

27.1 Disposal Of Land By PSNI

Members considered a paper seeking approval to sell to the MOD the remaining part of a site belonging to a former police station.

The Committee approved the sale of this land.

28. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was arranged for Friday, 10 December 2004 at 9:30 am.

(Meeting closed 1:10 pm).

DRAFT

Item No: 2

**Secretariat
October 2004**

CHAIRMAN