

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF THE 8TH MEETING OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES
COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 JUNE 2004 AT 9:30 AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER,
BELFAST**

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

- Mr Sammy Wilson (Chairman)
- Mr Barry Gilligan (Vice-Chairman)
- (1) Professor Desmond Rea (Chairman)
- Mr Alan McFarland
- (3) Mr Fred Cobain
- Mrs Rosaleen Moore

**PSNI REPRESENTATIVES IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- (4) Mr Roy Toner, ACC Corporate Management
- (5) Mr David Best, Director of Finance and Support Services
- (5) Mr Michael Burton, Consultant FARM Project
- (5) One official, Estate Services

**HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE
OF CONSTABULARY IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- (1) Mr Mike Horne

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

- (2) Mr Trevor Reaney (Chief Executive) Corporate Services Director
- (2) Director of Service Delivery
- (4) Audit Manager
- Two Board Officials

- (1) Item number 7 only
- (2) Item number 7, 8, 14 - 19
- (3) Item number 1 - 8, 14 - 24
- (4) Item number 8 only
- (5) Item number 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13

1. APOLOGIES

An apology for non-attendance was received from Mr Alex Attwood.

2. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 APRIL 2004

The minutes of the meeting were agreed and signed.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 APRIL 2004

3.1 Application For Payment Of Tax Liability – D/Chief Inspector ADM1

Members were advised that the issues surrounding the payment of the tax liability arising from an officer having to move house under the SPED scheme were still being examined by PSNI and an independent tax consultant.

It was agreed this matter would be brought back to Committee when a response had been received.

3.2 Correspondence From The Vice-Chairman Re: Vehicle Recovery Services

Committee Members noted the response received from PSNI in relation to the specific queries. They also noted the subsequent response, which had been sent giving an update on the current situation in respect of the recovery of broken-down vehicles on behalf of PSNI.

3.3 PSNI Information And Communications Strategy

This matter was considered at agenda item 8.

3.4 Budget Statement For 2004 / 2005 – “Sell Off” Of Properties

This matter was considered at agenda item 13.

3.5 Sale Of Property At 32 Springfield Road, Belfast

Members noted that appropriate action had been taken.

3.6 Application For Removal Expenses Under The SPED Scheme – Removal Companies

The information in respect of the tendering for additional removal companies was still being finalised.

It was agreed that the Committee would be updated at the next meeting.

3.7 Press Issues

It was noted by Members that appropriate action had been taken.

4. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

There was no business for the Chairman to report.

5. PSNI INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS STRATEGY – INDEPENDENT VALIDATOR – RE: JANUARY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Members noted a letter received from the legal representatives of the company with whom the Independent Validator of the PSNI IS Strategy is employed.

In light of advice received from Crown Solicitor's Office, it was agreed that:-

- The offending paragraph would be deleted from the Finance and General Purposes minutes for January 2004 and be replaced with alternative wording agreeable to all parties.

The legal representatives would be advised that minutes are not being distributed in hard copy to anyone outside of Committee Members.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR POLICE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION (PITO) – INDEPENDENT VALIDATION OF PSNI INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Members noted a paper advising of the draft Terms of Reference for PITO independent validation of PSNI IS Strategy.

It was agreed that the terms were accepted provided that:-

- A timeframe is built in to enable validation to be undertaken initially by PITO for a period of 2 years with an option for a further period if all parties are in agreement
- Staffing issues are addressed so that expertise cuts across all of the user and business areas, as this is crucial to the delivery of the IS Strategy

Members discussed the cost involved and agreed to address their questions to ACC Toner following his presentation.

7. HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY (HMIC) STATUS REPORT ON PSNI INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The Chairman welcomed Mr Mike Horne (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary) to the meeting.

Mr Horne advised Members that his report on the status of the IS Strategy Implementation was based on 14 hours of interviews with PSNI and represented a reasonable snapshot of what the current position was.

He also agreed to send a copy of the final working document back to Committee when he had had the opportunity of checking for errors etc.

Mr Horne's verbal report concentrated on what progress had been made, areas for improvement and recommendations for continued improvement regarded as critically essential to achieving Recommendation 93 of the Patten report.

- It is recommended that a verification process is carried out in September to ensure that the draft IS Strategy, which is in final preparation for hopeful sign-off by the end of June 2004, has been carried out
- It is recommended that the Board take steps to revisit the Strategy to ensure that PSNI have made the required progress in relation to specific and detailed project plans with timescales and milestones incorporated by September 2004
- It is recommended that the Board take steps to re-visit the Strategy to ensure that PSNI have made the required progress in relation to the submission of business cases in line with the timetable agreed with NIO, by September 2004
- It is recommended that the Board take steps to revisit the Strategy to ensure that PSNI have made the required progress in relation to the appointment of staff, both as direct recruits and outsourced contract staff into senior programme and project positions, by September 2004
- It is recommended that the PSNI resolves, at the earliest opportunity, the appointment of a new Head of their ICS Unit in order to provide a stable platform to advance the Strategy
- The new Technical Architecture has been given verbal approval by PITO and the Metropolitan Police. It is recommended that a verification process is carried out in September to ensure that formal written validation has been given
- It is recommendation that the PSNI develops a communications and marketing strategy which will help to comply with that part of Recommendation 93 which relates to the user input to the process

- It is recommended that the PSNI takes active steps to develop a User Group Strategy or Strategies with technical and user input for each of the projects or as part of a group initiative
- It is recommended that the PSNI embark on an exercise to identify, optimise and track the expected benefits of change from all aspects of the Strategy to ensure that they are realised and that value for money is being achieved for the investment made
- It is recommended that the PSNI should consider the setting up of a Programme Board to oversee the massive programme of work which will gel the work of the five inter-dependent programmes
- It is recommended that the PSNI requires to improve the service and support currently being provided by the service / help desk. Users should be offered a one stop shop service with both technical and user advice provided at the first point of call. Secondary service needs to be firmed up with SLAs and contract management tightened up.
- It is recommended that the PSNI consider an approach to a new call handling service which is dictated by Chief Officers making an early decision on their proposed model which would negate the need for costly and time consuming pilots
- The PSNI needs to develop a comprehensive Training Strategy to complement the implementation of the IS Strategy
- It is recommended that a new Independent Validator is recruited as soon as possible in order to meet the requirement of Recommendation 93
- It is recommended that the PSNI considers a strategy for life after implementation and as part of this should continue with the benchmarking exercise to compare progress with other forces and businesses
- It is recommended that measures are put in place to ensure that funding for future IS provision is protected in a manner which was not evident in the past which resulted in PSNI lacking proper technology to assist in its policing business

- It is recommended that PSNI provide members of the Board with another demonstration of current systems to show the very good progress being made

The Chairman thanked Mr Horne for his report and comments, recognising that there had been tight time constraints involved and adding that Members appreciated the clarity of the language used.

Mr Horne participated in a question and answer session with Members addressing any particular concerns they had.

Mr Horne confirmed, before leaving the meeting, that he would carry out a follow up review in September and be available to give the committee a further progress report in October.

8. PRESENTATION – PSNI INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Chairman welcomed ACC Toner to the meeting.

Although a formal response to the report had not been received from PSNI because of time constraints, ACC Toner advised Members that he had received a copy of the report from Mr Horne and was content with the recommendations it contained. He described it as balanced, focused on key issues and a useful steer in the right direction. He was optimistic that recommendations 1-6 were “do-able” however, agreed that delivering key personnel might be problematic.

ACC Toner dealt with the queries arising out of the previous meeting.

It was agreed that the following issues would be addressed before the next meeting:-

- PSNI would provide their formal response to the HMIC report on the status of the IS Strategy implementation, including a chart detailing the recommendations and dates of target for completion
- Validation of IS Strategy by PITO after Committee Members had opportunity to comment
- ID3 posts should be filled by mid / late September 2004. ACC Toner would update Members at the next meeting
- PSNI would provide a document similar to that provided to Committee in May 2002 to include key stages in the development of each of the projects as milestones for monitoring progress, for the next 3-5 years
- PSNI would provide details of the likely cost for the services of PITO and additional terms relating to timescale and staffing would be added into the Terms of Reference document
- PSNI would provide a copy of the draft IS Strategy document to Members prior to the next meeting for feedback before the validation process takes place
- A paper would be prepared for Human Resources Committee on the staffing concerns associated with the implementation of the IS Strategy to feed into the reviewed Human Resources Strategy.

It was agreed that the Chief Executive and ACC Toner would action the agreed changes to the Terms of Reference regarding the Independent Validator (PITO) on behalf of Members and sign it off.

ACC Toner advised Members that he would not be available for the next meeting scheduled for 20 August 2004.

It was agreed that officials would look at the feasibility of changing the date of the next meeting to early September.

Before leaving, ACC Toner was appraised by Mrs Rosaleen Moore of the recent Microsoft IT Seminar she had attended, with senior PSNI officers, in Seattle.

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

9. FINANCIAL OUT-TURN REPORT YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2004

The Chairman welcomed the Director of Finance and Support Services, the consultant with responsibility for FARM and an official from Estate Services to the meeting.

Topics covered under the report on estimates and actual outturn for the financial year ended 31 March 2004 were:-

- Annual Financial Statements
- Estimates 2003 / 04
- In-year monitoring – Main Grant
- Main Police Grant Commentary – outturn
- Patten Non-Severance

Members were also similarly advised on expenditure for April 2004.

10. PSNI / NIPB MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO MARCH 2004

The Director of Finance and Support Services provided information on the various management accounts, including an analysis of expenditure to March 2004 for NIPB.

11. PSNI OVERTIME MONITORING

Members considered a report on PSNI police overtime monitoring, for April 2004.

Cumulative average daily hours (ADH) to April 2004 were 8550 against a cumulative budget of 8452 ADH.

12. FARM PROJECT

The FARM consultant presented his report, advising Members of the progress made in the period April to May 2004.

Local Financial Management

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

- Provision of training on month-end procedures
- Dealing with Business Manager queries
- Maintenance of the budget management systems
- Production of the 2004 / 05 budgets

An external recruitment process for Business Managers has reached the final stage with 5 posts remaining vacant (1 Executive Officer grade and 4 Staff Officer grade). A review of the current grading structures has commenced to ensure consistency of duties across the posts. On completion of the review process, Staff Officers posts will be trawled internally.

The selection process for the appointment of the 2 Regional Accountants has reached the final stages and interviews were held on 26 and 27 May 2004. This will further facilitate the development of Local Financial Management at DCU level.

Costing

Activity analysis data capture for 29 DCUs is to be completed by the end of June 2004. This will provide detailed activity data for each DCU for a single representative week. It is expected, that in accordance with ACPO and HMIC guidance, that subsequent years data sampling should record activities for two separate representative weeks each year.

It was agreed that PSNI would provide information on the outcome of the activity based costing exercise within DCUs to the October meeting.

The Way Forward

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

Local Financial Management

- Training and support for the Business Managers
- Appointment of 2 Regional Accountants to provide direct support to local commanders and region
- Review of the 2004 / 05 budget base for potential virement

Costing

- To agree the basis for allocating costs to policing activities for input to the B-Plan Activity Based Costing System
- Collation of data to allow for bottom up costing on the "Cost of Training" module within B-Plan
- Upload of the Activity Analysis data to the B-Plan system

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

- Agreeing police pay budgets with devolved budget holders, based upon agreed establishment figures following the restructuring of Crime Department
- The need to progress with Activity Based Costing on the B-Plan system to provide relevant costing information to assist in the management process
- The need for the remaining Business Managers to be in place and adequately training with HQ branches to drive the business benefits from LFM

13. “SELL OFF” OF POLICE ESTATE PROPERTIES

Members were updated on the planned disposal of properties in 2004 / 05 and 2005 / 06.

It was agreed that the issue of using a 3-month deadline for public sector consultation on land sales should be investigated and Members informed of the outcome at the next meeting.

It was also agreed that additional information on future plans for Ladas Drive should be available to Members at the next meeting.

14. COMPENSATION CLAIMS SUMMARY – APRIL AND MAY 2004

The Committee noted the information in relation to settlement of compensation claims agreed by the Chief Constable during April and May 2004.

15. TELECOMMUNICATIONS MAST LEASE

Members noted the contents of a paper informing of a proposed lease for the provision of a telecommunications mast and equipment.

Members agreed to the terms of the lease and 2 Members signed the appropriate documentation on behalf of the Board.

16. FUTURE OF GREENCASTLE POLICE STATION

Members noted the contents of a paper outlining future plans for Greencastle police station.

17. MONITORING OF POLICE OVERTIME

Members noted the contents of a paper detailing overtime figures for 2003 / 04 which had been supplied to Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) following a request relating to PNB Agreement 03 / 14.

PSNI had achieved its target percentage, reduction of 10% which equated to a saving of £1,789,000 when comparing actual to budget.

18. APPLICATION FOR PAYMENT OF ADDITIONAL INCIDENTAL EXPENSES – D/CONSTABLE ADM1

Members considered the information provided in relation to an application for payment of additional incidental expenses in relation to D/Constable ADM1 and agreed that these expenses should not be paid.

19. RECONSIDERATION OF AN APPLICATION FOR THE PAYMENT OF AN EARLY REDEMPTION FEE – D/INSPECTOR ADM2

Members reconsidered an application by D/Inspector ADM2 for the payment of an early redemption fee following the dismissal of an application for Judicial Review.

It was agreed that information on the “betterment” resulting from the change of mortgage lender would be brought back to the next meeting.

20. REPAYMENT OF INTEREST FREE LOAN – D/CONSTABLE ADM3

Members agreed that D/Constable ADM3 could pay back the outstanding loan amount in full, however, deductions from his salary would continue until the outstanding amount was paid in full. No interest would be charged on the final payment.

21. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

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

22. PRESS ISSUES

There were no press issues arising out of the meeting.

23. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business arising out of the meeting.

24. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that officials would examine the feasibility of changing the next meeting for a date in early September, in agreement with Committee Members.

(Meeting closed 1:10 pm).

Secretariat

June 2004

CHAIRMAN