

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 26
JANUARY 2023 AT 9.30AM AT WATERSIDE TOWER AND VIA ZOOM**

PRESENT:

- Ms Carmel McKinney (Vice Chair)
(1) Mr Gerry Kelly MLA
Mr Frank McManus
Mrs Linda Dillon MLA
Mr Maurice Bradley MLA*
Mr Michael Atkinson
Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA
Mr John Blair MLA
Dr Kate Lavery
Ms Nuala McAllister MLA

**EX OFFICIO MEMBERS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- (2) Ms Deirdre Toner*

**POLICE SERVICE
OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- (3) Mr Mark Hamilton, Deputy Chief Constable
(4) Ms Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating Officer
(5) Mr Mark McNaughten, Assistant Chief Officer,
Corporate Services
(6) Ms Clare Duffield, Assistant Chief Officer,
People and Organisational Development
(7) Ms Aldrina Magwood, Assistant Chief Officer,
Strategic Planning and Transformation
Three PSNI Officials

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

Mrs Sinead Simpson, Chief Executive
Ten Board Officials

- (1) Left at 12.25pm
(2) Left at 11.45am
(3) Item 6.2 only
(4) Items 6.2 to 6.5 only
(5) Item 6.3 (A) only
(6) Item 6.4 only
(7) Item 6.5 only

*Attended meeting by video conference facility

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Trevor Clarke MLA.

The Committee agreed the agenda for the meeting and no one raised any business that they wished to discuss under 'Any Other Business'.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Vice-Chair declared an interest but not a conflict of interest in matters discussed at the meeting relating to Health and the Fire & Rescue service.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 DECEMBER 2022

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the Committee meeting held on 15 December 2022.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 15 December 2022 be approved.

4. UPDATE ON ACTION LOG

The Committee **NOTED** the updates and correspondence detailed within the Action Log and the related verbal overview provided by the Chief Executive.

In respect of Action Point 2 from the meeting in December 2022 the refreshed PSNI Equality Scheme 2023-28 is not yet available online as work is still underway developing action plans. Officials will continue to liaise with PSNI to establish when this will be available.

In respect of Action Point 5 from the meeting in November 2022 a response has been received, at item 7.1, following the submission of a written question to the Chief Constable regarding engagement between PSNI and the Health and Social Care system to address the issues that can result in additional pressures on police time.

In respect of Action Point 2 from the meeting in September 2022 a meeting will be arranged with Staff Associations in the first half of this year.

The Chief Executive also provided an update on correspondence issued and received for agenda items 4.1 to 4.4.

4.1 Correspondence regarding Absence Management

In respect of Action Point 4 from the meeting in November 2022 Members considered a response from PSNI following a request to provide further information on several matters including average working days lost in the last 5 years and current year projection, an explanatory narrative to explain “in progress” updates, and an update on work to support Officers and Staff given the ongoing cost of living challenges.

Members requested further clarification on the absence percentage calculation and how this ‘target’ impacts on available Officer and Staff numbers and operational resilience. The Chief Executive advised that discussions later in the meeting at agenda item 6.2 may address some of these issues and it was also agreed to write to PSNI on these matters. **(AP1)**

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

4.2 Correspondence regarding Temporary Promotions within PSNI

In respect of Action Point 2 from the meeting in November 2022, Members considered the response from PSNI and raised ongoing concerns regarding the duration of temporary promotions, the perception that it is an issue at more senior ranks, work underway to reduce the number of temporary promotions, and whether the process is fair, and provides equal opportunity. The Chief Executive agreed to write to PSNI to request that details regarding temporary promotions are provided to Members as part of the HR Dashboard.

(AP2)

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

4.3 Correspondence regarding PSNI Above Delegated Authority request

In respect of Action Point 3 from the meeting in December 2022, Members considered the response from PSNI in respect of concerns raised regarding duration of the case and lessons learned.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

4.4 Correspondence regarding PSNI Tattoo Policy

In respect of Action Point 1 from the meeting in November 2022, Members considered the response from PSNI following a request for additional information regarding the assessment of tattoo's for Student Officer applicants.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

5.1 Police Federation of Northern Ireland – Special Edition Magazine on Cost of Living

The Vice-Chair referred Members to the special edition of the Police Federation 'Police Beat' magazine which focuses on the cost of living crisis resulting in Officers taking second jobs and the wider effect on morale. The magazine also discusses the number of Officers leaving the service and the subsequent impact on policing.

Members **NOTED** the update provided.

6. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1 Police Remuneration Review Body – January 2023 Correspondence to Department of Justice

The People and Organisational Development Manager presented a paper advising Members that the Board has been asked to put forward matters they wish to be considered for inclusion in the Department of Justice (DoJ) annual letter to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) to initiate the 2023/24 review of pay and conditions for Officers in PSNI.

In order to facilitate a timely reply to DoJ, Members had been asked, via correspondence to put forward measures to be considered for inclusion in the Department's remit letter to PRRB. Members were advised of the details of the response to DoJ noting that consideration of the below matters within the 2023/24 pay review process would be welcomed by the Board:

- Consideration of a salary increase broadly in line with England &

Wales, and

- Consideration given to implementing allowances available to Officers in England & Wales, but not currently available to Officers in Northern Ireland, and noting that this is made only in the context where the outcome of the current review of allowances achieves parity.

Members were also advised that prior to the formal submission of evidence to PRRB from the Board, the Committee has previously nominated Members to a Sub-Group to meet with the other stakeholders to discuss their positions in order to provide context to the detail of the Board's submission. As such Members were asked to agree a Sub-Group of Resources Committee to progress the Board's Annual Submission to PRRB 2023/24.

Members were also advised of the time critical nature of the response to PRRB and Officials were in the process of developing a timeline to ensure compliance.

Following discussion it was **AGREED**:

- To include the matters referenced above in the Board's response regarding the Department's remit letter to PRRB, and
- Membership of a Sub-Group to be made up of Mr Gerry Kelly MLA, Ms Nuala McAllister MLA, and Mr Frank McManus.

Before PSNI joined the meeting Officials provided Members with a brief overview of items 6.3 to 6.5 including suggested discussion points.

In respect of the PSNI Finance Report at agenda item 6.3 (A) Members highlighted a recent media report outlining the increasing costs of legal representation for PSNI disciplinary hearings, plans in place to reduce NI

Protocol expenditure, and whether PSNI pay awards have been included in the figures presented.

6.2 PSNI Resource Allocation Model Update

The Chair welcomed the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) and Chief Operating Officer (COO) to the meeting.

The COO presented Members with an update on the PSNI Resource Allocation Model (RAM), focusing on the processes undertaken to implement the Model, and covered the following key areas:

- Budget context and actions taken to resolve an £80m budgetary pressure for 2022/23 through Department of Justice funding, non-pay savings & easements, and reductions in headcount.
- In current financial year and for the next 2 years there is a combined operating shortfall of £226m, and this is likely to increase with additional financial pressures.
- Rationale for actions taken including delivering the outcomes set in the Policing Plan, building a modern policing service, and recognising the Chief Constable's responsibility as Accounting Officer to achieve a balanced budget.
- Decision taken to maintain a level of recruitment rather than a complete 'freeze' – this will give an establishment figure of 6,699 Police Officers and 2,588 Police Staff as at end of March 2023.
- Overview of the structure of the RAM Board as well as key responsibilities. It was noted that the workforce plan does not include any voluntary or compulsory redundancies, financial savings have been made by not replacing leavers and through a reallocation of people to ensure key services continue to be delivered in line with the Policing Plan. These decisions have been made to ensure service delivery resilience and optimal risk management.

- Managing Risk and Governance by utilising an action and decision log to record risk assessment and impact by department on Public and Communities, Operational effectiveness and Police Officers/Staff.
- Outline of RAM Methodology and principles including ring-fenced funding streams and protected groups including Emergency Response.
- Overview of the 2-phase approach to implement the outworkings of RAM. Phase 1 was classified as vacancy control in June 2022. Phase 2 identified additional posts to be removed from the Officer/Staff population and the requirement to reallocate resources to ensure key operational positions within departments were maintained. These were risk assessed by department to understand impact on service areas and graded as low, low/medium or medium.
- Rank ratio approach was explained and how this impacted across all ranks. Rank ratio calculations were provided alongside a benchmark calculation to allow comparisons to be made against most similar forces as identified by HMICFR. The goal was to maintain the rank ratios throughout the process and this has broadly been achieved.

The DCC presented Members with an update on the service impact of RAM, and covered the following key areas:

- By way of operational context, recorded crime and 999 Emergency calls have been increasing and PSNI headcount is expected to fall over the next three years.
- Impact on the Service was assessed as low/medium for 2022/23 and the focus will remain on protecting neighbourhood policing, core service delivery and core crime fighting/public protection capabilities.
- Estimated that for each year of reduced recruitment at the current rate it will take 3 years to re-grow numbers to the previous headcount level.
- Skills and resource gaps are likely to emerge across technical & industrial grades, operational support, and in the crime department.
- Police Officers and Police Staff will be moved within their functional

areas to maximise service delivery in key areas.

- Capability and capacity will be maintained at a high level to respond to 999 calls, emergency incident response, and statutory functions.
- Likely impact on Officers and Staff sickness/absence due to additional demands contributing to stress and mental health issues. Other internal issues highlighted include fewer promotion opportunities and loss of experience and skills.

Members raised the following points with the DCC and COO:

- Rank ratio approach - disproportional impact at different ranks and whether there should be a closer alignment with the benchmarking figures provided.
- Impact of long term sickness and ill health retirement on resource allocation and need to protect Neighbourhood Policing going forward. Members noted that management of police officer and staff absence will be included in further discussions at the February Resources Committee.
- To provide reduction in Officer and Staff numbers as a percentage of total headcount for each department, and PSNI agreed to provide this information. **(AP1)**
- Concerns regarding impact of reduced Officer and Staff numbers on service delivery and on Northern Ireland's status as safest region in the UK.
- Need for key stakeholders including the Board to provide support by engaging and advocating on this matter.
- Long term impact of decisions on service delivery and public confidence in policing.
- Importance of maintaining numbers and operational effectiveness in local and Neighbourhood policing.
- Impact of future skills gap in respect of Information Technology and future innovation projects.

Members **NOTED** the update provided and thanked the DCC for his contribution and he left the meeting.

6.3 PSNI Finance Report – December 2022 (A)

The Committee **NOTED** the PSNI Management Accounts and Financial information to the end of December 2022 and the summary 2023-24 budget submission.

The Vice-Chair welcomed the Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) Corporate Services to the meeting and he presented an overview of the monthly Finance Report for December 2022 and provided further details in respect of actions taken to address in-year financial pressures:

- There is a projected full year pressure of £2.4m up from £1.2m last month, due to ongoing pressures in Depreciation, following the recent Fixed Asset Verification exercise, increased legal fees, and Injury on Duty claims, offset by some easements in non-pay. The expectation is to manage this pressure effectively by closely monitoring any pressures through the implementation of cost savings previously agreed and report a breakeven budget position for the full year.
- There is a capital year-to-date pressure of £6.5m due to a number of projects working ahead of schedule and plans are in place to resolve a breakeven position for the full year.
- In respect of future planning, a budget planning exercise has been completed for 2023-24 and the initial gap is estimated at £106m. This can be offset by previously planned reductions of £56m (including reduced recruitment), leaving a residual gap of £50m still to be addressed.

Following the update Members raised questions in respect of previous and future pay awards and an update on litigation in respect of PSNI holiday pay claims.

The Committee thanked the ACO Corporate Services for his contribution and he left the meeting.

6.3 (B) NIPB Future Years Budget 2023-24 Information Gathering Exercise

Members **NOTED** the paper outlining the Northern Ireland Policing Board draft budget for 2023-24.

6.4 PSNI Cultural Audit Update

The Vice-Chair welcomed the Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) People and Organisational Development (People & OD) to the meeting and she presented Members with an update on the project plan and timeline for the Cultural Audit.

By way of overview, the ACO People and OD outlined the commitment to deliver a Cultural Audit in line with the People Strategy and how it is intrinsically linked to PSNI vision and values, Code of Ethics and workforce development. An overview was provided on the process to deliver the Cultural Audit including a programme of work over 3-5 years, made up of specific component parts and phases with milestones and measurements to gauge progress.

It was confirmed that 'Inspiring Change' has been appointed as the independent provider who will partner with the PSNI project team and work with culture service leads as part of a 3-phase process to deliver a Cultural Audit, as follows:

Phase 1 – Co-Design Cultural Audit Approach,
Phase 2 – Cultural Audit Research, and
Phase 3 – Analysis and Report.

The timescale for completion of the 3 phases is Spring 2023 and this work will provide a refreshed baseline, actionable outcomes, and the evidence to develop a route map to achieve the ambition to have a highly engaged workforce.

Following the presentation Members sought clarification in respect of the process followed to select an independent provider, whether the process will consider systemic behavioural issues to create an 'acceptable behaviours' policy, expected outcomes from root cause analysis workshops, more consideration given to an external focus, and the work taking place to positively engage the workforce to achieve desirable outcomes.

Members **NOTED** the update and thanked the ACO People and OD for the briefing provided and she left the meeting.

6.5 PSNI Estates Strategy Update

The Vice-Chair welcomed the Assistant Chief Officer (ACO), Strategic Planning & Transformation (SP&T) to the meeting and she presented a paper to Members which provided a progress update on the PSNI Estate Strategy 2021 & Beyond.

This included an overview in respect of progress made across a number of capital development priorities, as follows:

- Police College – improvement works are ongoing and this includes scoping potential for reconfiguration and phasing to enable new college facilities to be provided on the existing site at Garnerville.

- Police Museum – concept design and a proposal of application notice has been submitted and further work is ongoing to develop the service operating model.
- Strategic asset management plans – to help inform prioritisation of development and future investment, ensuring an efficient and fit for purpose infrastructure for the future.
- Police Station of the Future – work continues into researching the design for future stations to ensure sustainability and embrace modern technological features.
- Completion of Waterside custody suite is scheduled for April 2023 to create a modern, fit for purpose facility.
- Sustainability strategy and carbon reduction plan was recently published and the Northern Ireland Business in the Community Silver Status for sustainability was retained.
- Station façade improvements are planned to commence later in 2023 subject to funding and planning approvals.
- Ongoing estate optimisation and disposals including an update on the Desertcreat, Warrenpoint and York Road sites.

Members raised several points in respect of future plans for PSNI Headquarters, the type of exhibits for the proposed Police Museum, long term plans to maximise revenue through disposals, and an asset management plan timescale.

Members **NOTED** the update and thanked the COO and ACO SP&T for the briefing provided and they left the meeting.

6.6 Police Pensions and Injury Benefits Cases for Committee Decision

Board Officials from Police Pensions and Injury Benefits (PPIB) presented a

paper requesting Members review and make decisions on the eligibility of awards under Injury on Duty and Police Pensions Regulations further to assessments undertaken by Selected Medical Practitioners (SMPs) and Independent Medical Referees (IMRs).

Board Officials advised Members that between 5 December 2022 and 13 January 2023, SMPs had considered 7 cases referred to them under the relevant regulations.

Board Officials advised Members that between 5 December 2022 and 13 January 2023, IMRs had considered 1 case referred to them under the relevant regulations.

Members also considered 2 submissions where the applicant has requested their case be reconsidered by the IMR.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that:

- The medical recommendations of the Selected Medical Practitioners in 7 cases assessed between 5 December 2022 and 13 January 2023 be approved.
- The medical recommendations of the Independent Medical Referees in the 1 case assessed between 5 December 2022 and 13 January 2023 be approved
- The 2 anonymised cases (**RECON IMR 1-23.24 and RECON IMR 2-23.24**) progress to reconsideration by Independent Medical Referees.

Members also discussed the delegated responsibility of the Committee to provide a final decision on applications received under the Regulations as laid out in the Committee's Terms of Reference.

7. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

No questions were raised.

7.1 Response to Written Question

The Committee **NOTED** the response provided by PSNI to a written question submitted.

8. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES / OPPORTUNITIES

Following the PSNI press release on the Resource Allocation Model, this is likely to be raised at the next Board meeting. A statement from the Board has been issued in response to the announcement.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was conducted.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 23 February 2023** in Waterside Tower.

The meeting ended at 1.10pm

CHAIR

**RESOURCES DIRECTORATE
JANUARY 2023**