

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING OF PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 16 March 2023 AT 2PM AT WATERSIDE TOWER AND VIA ZOOM

PRESENT:

Mr John Blair MLA (Chair)
Mr Michael Atkinson (Vice Chair)
(1) Mrs Linda Dillon MLA
Mr Maurice Bradley MLA (Zoom)
Dr Kate Lavery
Mrs Joanne Bunting MLA
Mr Mark H Durkan MLA (Zoom)
Mr Les Allamby
Ms Carmel McKinney (Zoom)
Mr Peter Osborne
Ms Janet Gray

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

(2) Ms Deirdre Toner (Board Chair)
(3) Mr Edgar Jardine (Board Vice Chair) (Zoom)

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

(4) ACC Bobby Singleton
(4) Superintendent Michael O'Loan
(4) Chief Inspector Joanne Gibson
(4) Inspector Roisin Brown
(5) Temporary Inspector Chris Tate
(5) Constable Paul Savage
(4) Three PSNI Officials

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms Jenny Passmore, Director of Partnership
Six Board Officials

- (1) Left at 15.54pm
- (2) Left at 16.05pm
- (3) Left at 15.25pm
- (4) Items 6.1 to 6.2 only
- (5) Item 6.2 only

*Attended meeting by video conference facility

The Partnership Committee Chair welcomed all Members to the last Partnership Committee meeting in Waterside Tower before the move to the new premises at James House at the end of this month.

The Chair noted that this meeting was the last Committee meeting for two Independent Members Michael Atkinson and Carmel McKinney before their term ends on 31 March 2023 and took the opportunity to thank both members for their contribution to the work of the Committee and to wish them well in the future.

The Chair welcomed the Chair of the Board, Deirdre Toner and the Board Vice Chair Edgar Jardine. He also welcomed Janet Gray back to the Committee.

Chair also wished Liz Kimmins MLA well with the impending arrival of her new baby and asked that a letter of congratulations be send to her in due course.

(AP1)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Ms Liz Kimmins 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 Chairperson asked Members to declare any conflicts of interests arising from the agenda. No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2023

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the Committee meeting held on 16th February 2023.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 16th February 2023 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 Director of Partnership.

In respect of Action Point 7 from the meeting November 2021 Officials will arrange two Committee meetings in the police estate over the period of the current Programme of Work. This will provide Members with the opportunity to learn more about various elements of PSNI business relevant to the work of the Committee.

In respect of Action Point 6 from the meeting in September 2022, the Engagement Manager has met with most Board Members to ascertain their views on engagement, and this will inform the engagement Programme of Work going forward. A Workshop to discuss and agree the key areas for engagement opportunities that will inform the Programme of Work is scheduled for 20 April 2023. All Board Members have been invited.

In respect of Action Point 4 from the meeting in December 2022, an update on suggested actions from PCSP/PSNI Regional Events is tabled at agenda

item 6.3.

In respect of Action Point 1 from the meeting in January 2023, a letter was issued on 20 February 2023 to the Department of Justice (DOJ) and a response was received on 3 March 2023. Both items of correspondence were available for Members' consideration.

4.1 Letter from DOJ re Amendments to the Code of Practice for Appointment of Independent Members to PCSPs and DPCSPs

The Director of Partnership updated the Committee to DOJ's response to the Chairs letter asking that a final code of practice be provided as soon as possible whilst understanding that there are different legal opinions on use of community background in the appointment process. DOJ advised that given the divergence of legal opinion that have now instructed Counsel on the matter and are seeking a further legal opinion. They have also noted the Committee's intention to use the current Code of Practice and have encouraged engagement with under-represented groups as part of the outreach for the appointment process.

Members **NOTED** the update provided.

5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

No Chairperson's business for this meeting

6. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1 Policing Plan Measures 2.1.1 and 2.2.1

6.1.1 Confidence (2.1.1)

A Board Official provided an analysis of the work relating to PSNI's performance against the Performance Plan 2022/23 Measure specific to the level of Public Confidence in Policing. The paper included PSNI Report Card Measure 2.1.1 - Confidence in Policing.

Members were advised that in relation to confidence, no new data has been provided as the two surveys cited in the paper will not be available until May 2023. The results of the surveys will therefore be analysed in the next reporting year at Partnership Committee.

The PSNI had however included data on emergency and priority call response rates. Whilst PSNI's monthly target rate for emergency and priority calls was not provided, it should be noted that the Policing Plan Review Working Group recommended that this was added as new Measure (2.1.3) to the Annual Performance Plan for 2023/24 and the Board approved the recommendation. This new Measure will be reported on through Partnership Committee.

ACC Singleton provided Members with a broad observation on his findings on 2.2.1 Confidence which included:

- The data from PSNI's own survey last May will be integrated into their benchmarks going forward,
- That confidence in policing appears to reduce in high areas of deprivation,

ACC Singleton noted that confidence in policing could be improved and enhanced by making officers visible, reliable, and having community policing presence.

ACC Singleton advised on the following ongoing work that is taking place:

- Establishment of a Strategic Community Engagement Team,
- Listening events with a number of groups across the community,
- Problem Solving events and Champions.

Members discussed a number of issues with PSNI including:

- The Service Level Agreement (SLA) on emergency and priority calls and how useful it in terms of measuring performance,
- The need to ascertain the impact of the 8 Hallmarks of Neighbourhood Policing and gain further information on examples and effectiveness of this work,
- The need for material to be filtered down to ensure good practice,
- How Spit and Bite Guards will be monitored,
- The need for the right questions to be asked on surveys to ensure that the correct information is being gathered,
- If the 86% figure is correct would there be a need for Engagement Events,
- The sizable difference between working class and rural areas in confidence in policing,
- The effectiveness of Operation Daybreak as, whilst drugs are being seized, is there an actual impact on the street and is there evidence of this.

PSNI addressed Members issues outlining the following:

- That PSNI have moved away from using the SLA and the response times is now a new Measure in the 2023/24 Performance Plan,
- PSNI intend to introduce a median measure in the Performance Plan for 2023/34,
- The upcoming inspection of the 8 hallmarks by The Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland,

- The implementation of the Service Accountability Panel,
- Daily and Monthly trends identified by force reporting,
- The need to link to external groups including PCSP's to improve confidence,
- The need to make meetings more themed as this will attract greater interest from the public,
- Acknowledgement that the headline figures are not necessarily reflected by all communities,
- While the figure of 86% is pleasing the focus remains on the 14% who do not have confidence in policing,
- The need to not become complacent and focus on the barriers with PSNI and engage where necessary,
- That geographical data is a concern on trends and acknowledge that rural needs differ from urban needs,
- A more details response on Operation Daybreak figures will be provided at a later date. ACC Singleton acknowledged the negative impact dugs have on communities and the need to provide assurances that action will be taken against gangs and the need for more work to be undertaken in this area,
- The ongoing work which feeds into the Service Management Statement and the type of information, which includes shift patterns, allocation of resources and budget spend.

6.1.2 Satisfaction (2.2.1)

A Board Official provided an analysis of work relating to PSNI against Performance Plan 2022/23 Measure specific to Victim and Service User Satisfaction. The paper included the PSNI report card.

Members were advised that this is the first opportunity this year the Partnership Committee has had to consider victim satisfaction. In terms of

overall satisfaction, this has decreased from 67.9% in 2022 to 66.5%, a decrease of 1.4%. However, the overall 5-year trend is an average yearly figure is of 66.9%. While this is not a particularly remarkable decrease it will be monitored to establish if the downward trend continues.

Attention was drawn to the change in methodology that has occurred with this year's victim survey. 12,128 victims were invited to participate in the Victim Satisfaction Survey compared to 27,674 victims in the 2021/22 financial year which was reported in the previous report card in May 2022. Despite the significantly reduced sample size, the response rate actually increased by 1.1%. This change in approach would warrant further follow up with PSNI representatives. A number of other issues have been identified for Members in the paper provided.

ACC Singleton advised Members that he was very satisfied with the survey and that figures and that any further data that will be provided from the Policing Board survey will hopefully enhance the satisfaction figures.

ACC Singleton also noted:

- The importance of the free text element in the report,
- That compliance rates are in the high 90s,
- The need for the Victims Charter to be meaningful and have substance,
- An Update to the Programme of Work to include change in systems and training to reenforce Victims Charter,
- That the student officer programme has been redefined,
- Police Ombudsman complaints data has decreased in the 11 districts with 5 also having a decrease in allegations made,
- Ongoing District and Area Commander meetings.

Members discussed a number of issues with PSNI including:

- The low figure of 57% of victims and witnesses satisfied on being kept informed of their cases,
- The worrying increase in sextortion cases,
- What victim expectation is perceived to be and how this will help PSNI to meet them,
- If there were any thoughts on how the survey could further probe those that are not satisfied or not reporting.
- The need for a clearer picture as to whether the unsatisfactory figures relate to the service provided by to PSNI or the service provided by the other parties in the criminal justice system.

In addressing Members comments PSNI noted the following:

- That there is an issue with PSNI providing both victims and witnesses timely updates,
- The need to manage expectations of the victim on when information can be provided,
- The need for officers to provide updates as victims feel vulnerable,
- The varying reasons as to why there are delays in updates,
- The media representation on Policing and what is expected,
- The need to provide reason of delay to victim,
- That certain groups are not contacted due to the nature of the offence,
- The fact that the survey is anonymous which would be compromised if more detail was required,
- The need for detailed examination of data with availability and resources to see what is possible for the future,
- The need for officer training and to have all Districts using the same models.

6.2 Problem Solving Awards Winners Presentation

The Partnership Committee Chair provided Members with an update on the 'Gym Justice' initiative which was the winning project in the 'Neighbourhood Policing' category in the 2022 PSNI Problem Solving Awards. A Presentation from PSNI was included for the information of Members.

PSNI representatives provided Members with an update on their winning project 'Gym Justice'.

Members expressed their support for the Problem-Solving initiative and the positive results it provided.

Several Members indicated that they have knowledge of funding and could provide contacts for the PSNI Problem Solving initiatives to utilise in the future. **(AP2)**

PSNI agreed to forward the 'Gym Justice' presentation YouTube link to the Board so that it can be shared with Members. **(AP3)**

Members **NOTED** the update and thanked PSNI for their attendance.

6.3 Update on Suggested Actions from PCSP/PSNI Regional Events

The Director of Partnership provided Members with an update on the suggested actions from the PSNI/PCSP Engagement workshops, following members' feedback. Members were asked to note the updated actions provided in relation to the events and approve the distribution of the suggested actions.

Following the update Members discussed:

- The importance of the work of the PCSP's,
- The requirement for PCSP Members to also attend public events organised by the PCSP,
- The importance of change and the need to discuss alternative themes so as not to become stagnant,
- The suggestion that some newly appointed Independent Members may not have the confidence to challenge their political members and training could address this issue.

Members **NOTED** the updated actions.

6.4 Independent Custody Visitors (ICV's) Annual Conference

The Engagement Manager provided Members with an update in relation to the upcoming Annual Volunteer Conference for 2023.

This year the event will be held on 1 - 2 June 2023 in the Manor House Hotel in Enniskillen.

Members **NOTED** the update and were advised to inform the Engagement Manager if they wish to attend the event.

7. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

No questions were raised.

8. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES / OPPORTUNITIES

The Committee was informed that details of the Committee meeting had been posted on social media and Members were encouraged to share the post.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was conducted.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 25th May 2023 in James House.

The meeting ended at 16.30pm

CHAIR



**PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORATE
MARCH 2023**