

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE POLICY, PLANNING & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 19 OCTOBER 2006 AT 10:00AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Chairman)
Mr Barry Gilligan (Vice Chairman)
(1) Mr Alex Attwood
(3) Mr Joe Byrne
(2) Mr Fred Cobain
(1) Mr Willie Hay
Mrs Pauline McCabe
Mrs Rosaleen Moore
(5) Mr Brian Rea
(1) Mr Trevor Ringland

SOCA IN ATTENDANCE:

(4) Mr Bob Lauder
(4) Mr Mike Little

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Trevor Reaney (Chief Executive)
Dr Debbie Donnelly (Deputy Chief Executive)
Mr David Jackson (Director of Community Affairs)
Mr Sam Hagen (Director of Corporate Services)
(5) Mr David Wilson (Director of Planning)
(5) Mrs Sinead Simpson (Director of Policy)
3 Officials

- (1) Part item number 3.5 to close
- (2) Except part item number 3.5 and item 15
- (3) Item number 9 to close
- (4) Item number 15 only
- (5) Except item 15

1. APOLOGIES, ETC

There were no apologies received. NOTED.

2. MINUTES OF A CORPORATE POLICY, PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2006

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the previous meeting.

It was:

AGREED:

That the draft minutes of the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee meeting held on 14 September 2006 should be agreed.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING

3.1 Community Based Restorative Justice (CBRJ) (Item 3.1 Of Minutes Refers)

The Director of Community Affairs reminded Members that the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (NIAC) is conducting an inquiry into Community Based Restorative Justice and the Committee was advised that the NIAC submission was required by 1 December 2006. It was proposed, that in order to meet the deadline, that the CBRH Working Group should progress the matter. In view of the tight deadline for receipt of submissions, it was:

RECOMMENDED:

That the Board should give delegated authority to the CBRJ Working Group to finalise and forward the submission on behalf of the Board.

3.2 New Police College Funding (Item 3.2 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee discussed the Secretary of State's statement confirming that the site for the new Police College would be Desertcreat. The Board awaits a formal response from Government on the provision of additional funding above the £90m already provided. NOTED.

3.3 PSNI Human Resources Project Team (Item 3.3 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive informed Members that options were continuing to be explored regarding the Board's participation in a Human Resources Project Team for the Police Civilian Staff Reorientation Programme. NOTED.

3.4 Allocation Of Special Responsibility Allowance (Items 3.4 & 10 Of Minutes Refers)

The remuneration package available to independent Members of the Board will be included on the agenda for discussion at a meeting with the Minister of State on 7 November 2006. NOTED.

3.5 Omagh District Policing Partnership (DPP) (Item 3.5 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman updated Members on a meeting which they had held in Omagh on 17 October 2006 with the Omagh Support and Self Help Group. The Chairman identified each of the issues raised by the Group. Members discussed the Board's response to the issues raised at the meeting.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was:

AGREED:

- That the Chairman should convene an early meeting with the Chief Constable on the issues raised by the Omagh Group.
- That an interim reply should be issued to Omagh Support and Self Help Group.

It was:

RECOMMENDED:

- That consideration should be given to asking the Chief Constable a question at the next Board meeting regarding the progress of the criminal investigation into the Omagh bombing.
- That the Board should discuss with PSNI a “stocktake” of all of the reports associated with the Omagh bombing, including progress or any recommendations made.

3.6 Developing Strategic Priorities – Initial Consideration Of Workshop Discussions (Item 5.1 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with at item 7.

3.7 Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) Report “Connecting Criminal Justice” (Item 9 Of Minutes Refers)

The Director of Planning advised that a reply was awaited from PSNI on how it planned to progress the recommendations contained in the CJINI report. NOTED.

A Member enquired about progress on the CJINI Report entitled ‘Avoiding Delay’ and officials undertook to check the current position and inform the Member accordingly.

3.8 Handling Strategy For Publication Of Police Ombudsman Report (Item 10 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with at item 11.

4. CHAIRMAN’S BUSINESS

4.1 Engagements

There were no matters arising.

4.2 Publications

There were no matters arising.

4.3 Correspondence

There were no matters arising.

4.4 News Releases

The Chairman highlighted the following news releases that had been issued:-

- Partners come together to tackle Organised Crime – Organised Crime Task Force – 2 October 2006.
- £18.5m to be recovered from Assets linked to VAT “Carousel” Fraud – Assets Recovery Agency – 3 October 2006.
- Government response to publication of IMC Report – NIO – 4 October 2006
- Consultation on the supervised use of licensed firearms by young people – NIO – 5 October 2006.
- Invite to launch of the Joint Cross Border Assessment on Organised Crime 2006 – NIO – 6 October 2006.
- Local Initiatives Address Local Problems – Hanson – NIO – 6 October 2006.
- Border offers no protection to Organised Criminals – NIO – 9 October 2006.

4.5 St Andrew’s Agreement

A copy of the St Andrew’s Agreement was tabled for the information of Members. The Chairman and Chief Executive identified a number of possible implications of the Agreement for the future of the Board and DPPs. NOTED.

It was:

RECOMMENDED:

That the Board should consider implementing the following actions:-

- Progressing arrangements for meetings with key influencers in London and Dublin, including respective government negotiators.
- Arranging meetings with political parties during the course of negotiations, over the coming weeks to set out the Board's position on issues relating to the rule of law, policing, DPPs, the Board, CBRJ, National Security Intelligence and other relevant issues.
- Arranging to meet with the Northern Ireland Grand Committee when it visits Northern Ireland in the Autumn.
- Offering briefings to Sinn Fein on the work of the Board and DPPs.
- Developing a preferred model of accountability around national security intelligence and enter into discussions with PSNI / NIO / Security Service.
- To submit, in conjunction with the PSNI, a bid for additional funding for the new Police College in the context of the proposed financial package.
- Undertaking preparatory work for the potential reconstitution of the Board.
- Discussing with the Chief Constable, the PSNI preparations for implementation of the Agreement and in particular, its impact on the Policing with the Community Strategy.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

5.1 "CORE Project" – Steering Group

The Vice Chairman has been invited to join the PSNI CORE Project Steering Group in the role of a 'critical friend'. The Chief Constable will chair the Steering Group.

NOTED.

5.2 Future Presentation

The Chief Executive advised that the following presentations would be made to future meetings of the Committee:

- CORE Project progress report – 22 November 2006.

- Administrative Review of Procurement within PSNI – 22 November 2006 (Provisional date).
- Value for Money Review of Police Numbers – a special meeting of the Committee in late November / early December 2006 would be arranged to consider the Review, with all Members invited to attend.

Arising from discussion of the planned presentations, a Member sought an update on the criminal investigation into the Northern Ireland Sheet Metal Works case. Officials undertook to advise the Member when additional new information becomes available.

5.3 5 Sided Project Board

The Chief Executive updated Members about his attendance at a recent 5 Sided Project Board meeting.

5.4 Visit To Northern Ireland By Senior Police Officers And Government Officials From Pakistan

The Chief Executive informed the Committee that the Pakistan National Community Safety Committee (Police Authority) plus a number of senior police officers and government officials from Pakistan would be visiting Northern Ireland on 1 November 2006. A request had been received for the visitors to observe the private Board meeting and Board meeting in public on 1 November 2006 in Newcastle. The Chief Executive sought the Committee's views on the proposal.

Following discussion, it was:

RESOLVED:

That on the basis that this was a visit from a Police Authority, an invitation should be extended to the delegation from Pakistan to join the Board Members to observe the meeting on 1 November 2006.

6. NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD BUSINESS PLAN 2006/07 – INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered an interim progress report regarding the Northern Ireland Policing Board Business Plan for 2006/07. NOTED.

It was:

AGREED:

- That the sections of the Business Plan relevant to each Committee should be considered by that Committee in advance of the overall updates being provided to the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee.

7. NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD STRATEGIC PRIORITIES – PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

The Committee considered a paper which proposed a number of actions to address strategic priorities identified following the Members “Away Day” in Cookstown on 31 August 2006. An appendix setting out a list of actions in progress and proposed further actions with timescales was considered in detail. Members suggested a number of minor amendments to the document and it was,

RECOMMENDED:

That the paper be put to the next Board meeting for consideration as to how to proceed.

8. POLICING BOARD MEETINGS IN PUBLIC

The Chief Executive reminded Members that at its June 2006 meeting, the Board had agreed to change the starting time of the Board meeting in public from 12:00 noon to 1:30pm and to review the decision after a couple of meetings at the new starting time.

The Committee considered a paper which gave options concerning the timing of the Board meetings in public, and the structure of the public session.

The Committee considered the paper and it was,

RECOMMENDED:

- That the Board meeting should start at 9:30am, followed by a private session at 11:00am and a public session at 11:30am. If necessary, a further session to complete Board business should take place at 2:30pm.
- That the Board should give further consideration to the structure of the public session, including the Board's approach to handling questions from members of the public.

9. CONTEXT FOR FUTURE POLICING ARRANGEMENTS

The Committee considered a paper that highlighted recent political activity relating to the context for future policing arrangements in Northern Ireland. NOTED.

10. BOARD OVERSIGHT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRANSFER OF LEAD RESPONSIBILITY FOR NATIONAL SECURITY INTELLIGENCE

The Committee considered a confidential discussion paper regarding Board oversight arrangements for the transfer of lead responsibility for national security intelligence.

The Chief Executive informed Members that the paper had been developed in advance of the talks at St Andrew's and that given the developments at the talks, further consultation would be needed with PSNI, the Security Service and NIO to update the paper. The Chief Executive asked that any Members who had comments regarding the matter contact him and a revised paper would be brought to a future Committee meeting. NOTED.

11. HANDLING STRATEGY FOR THE PUBLICATION OF POLICE OMBUDSMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reminded Members that at the October 2006 Board meeting, Members had approved a handling strategy for the publication of a Police Ombudsman's report into the murder of Mr Raymond McCord Jnr. A number of issues around implementation of the strategy were referred to the Committee for finalisation.

Following discussion:

It was:

RECOMMENDED:

That the Board be given a further opportunity to resolve the one outstanding issue around implementation of the strategy.

The Chairman informed Members about the content of a reply from the Police Ombudsman in relation to an advance briefing and our offer of help around "factual accuracy checks" regarding issues in the report that related to the Policing Board's responsibilities.

12. FINDINGS FROM THE 2005/2006 PSNI QUALITY OF SERVICE SURVEY

The Committee considered a paper regarding findings from the 2005/06 PSNI / NIPB Quality of Service Survey. The Committee noted the key findings from the survey and it was,

RESOLVED:

- That the report on the 2005/06 Quality of Service Survey be published on the Board's website.
- That a press release be issued highlighting the survey results.
- That detailed results to question 22 be provided.

13. QUESTIONS TO THE CHIEF CONSTABLE AT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING

It was:

AGREED:

That the following issues should be raised with the Chief Constable:-

- The sharing of information between PSNI and An Garda Siochana concerning sex offenders.
- The PSNI provision for follow-up action following the conclusion of the criminal trial into the Omagh bombing.
- The PSNI response to the Thematic Report on Devolution from the Oversight Commissioner.
- The recommendations contained in the HMIC Review of Firearms.

14. INFORMATION PAPERS

The Committee noted the following information papers.

14.1 Modifications To The Key Persons Protection Scheme (KPPS)

14.2 Thematic Report On Devolution From The Oversight Commissioner

14.3 Northern Ireland Policing Board Security Policy Statement

14.4 Northern Ireland Policing Board Hospitality And Gifts Policy

14.5 APA News Release – Police And Justice Bill

14.6 Role Of The Criminal Justice Board

14.7 Dealing With The Past Issues

15. PRESENTATION ON THE WORK OF THE SERIOUS ORGANISED CRIME AGENCY

The Chairman welcomed Mr Bob Lauder and Mr Mike Little from the Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) to the meeting. The representatives gave a presentation on the background to the formation of SOCA, its role, structures and priorities. A copy of the slides used in the presentation is attached at Appendix 'A'.

During subsequent discussion, Members sought further information concerning:-

- Joint PSNI / SOCA investigative capacity.
- Accountability arrangements for SOCA officers working in Northern Ireland.
- SOCA resources in Northern Ireland.
- Working relationships with An Garda Siochana.

Following the discussion, the Chairman thanked the SOCA representatives for their contribution and they left the meeting.

16. PRESS ISSUES

It was:

AGREED:

That it would be appropriate to issue news releases in respect of:-

- The presentation received by the Board from SOCA.
- The Board visit to the Historic Enquiries Team at Sprucefield during the afternoon of 19 October 2006.
- The Quality of Service Victims Survey.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17.1 Chief Constable – Performance And Development Review 2006/07

The Chairman informed Members that the first in-year review with the Chief Constable in respect of Performance and Development would take place on 31 October 2006. He requested that any Committee Chairs who had comments relating to their Committee's remit should speak to him in advance of the in-year review meeting. NOTED.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee agreed the date of the next meeting for 22 November 2006 at 10:00am.

(Meeting closed 12:50pm)

Secretariat

October 2006

Chairman