

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF THE 45th MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY, 30 JUNE 2005 IN THE RAMADA HOTEL, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

- Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Chairman)
- Mr Denis Bradley (Vice-Chairman)
- (2) Mr Alex Attwood
- (3) Viscount Brookeborough
- Mr Joe Byrne
- (5) Mr Fred Cobain
- (1) Mr Brian Dougherty
- (11) Mr Sam Foster
- Mr Barry Gilligan
- Mr Willie Hay
- (4) Mr Tom Kelly
- (3) Mrs Pauline McCabe
- (13) Mr Alan McFarland
- (2) Mr Eddie McGrady
- (11) Mrs Rosaleen Moore
- (10) Mr Ian Paisley Jnr
- (13) Mr Suneil Sharma
- (6) Mr Sammy Wilson

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

- (7) Sir Hugh Orde (Chief Constable)
- (7) Mr Paul Leighton (Deputy Chief Constable)
- (7) Mr Duncan McCausland (ACC Urban Region)
- (8) Mr Peter Sheridan (ACC Rural Region)
- (7) Mr Roy Toner (ACC Corporate Development)
- (7) Mr Joe Stewart (Director of Human Resources)
- (9) Mr David Best (Director of Finance and Support Services)
- (8) Ms Sinead McSweeney (Head of Media)
- (9) Mr Ian Moore (Head of Estates Services)
- (7) D/C/Superintendent Norman Topping (Crime Operations)
- (7) Chief Inspector, Command Secretariat

**INDEPENDENT ASSESSORS
IN ATTENDANCE:** (14) Sir Keith Povey
(14) Mr Graham Gordon
(14) Ms Rotha Johnston
(14) Professor James Mackey

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Trevor Reaney (Chief Executive)
Mr Peter Holt (Director of
Communications)
Mr David Jackson (Director of
Community Affairs)
Mr Sam Hagen (Director of Corporate
Services)
Mr David Wilson (Director of Planning)
Mrs Sinead Simpson (Director of Policy)
Four Board Officials

- (1) Item 2.2 to close
- (2) Item 3.5 to 3.13 and item 11
- (3) Item 3.6 to close
- (4) Item 3.7 to close, except item 8.1
- (5) Item 3.11 to 3.13 and item 11
- (6) Items 4, 8 and 11
- (7) Item 11 only
- (8) Items 8.2 and 11 only
- (9) Item 8.2 only
- (10) Except Items 5,6,7,9,10, 12-14
- (11) Except Items 7,9,10,12-14
- (12) Except Item 8.1
- (13) Except Items 4-10, 12-14
- (14) Items 1-3.13 and item 11

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for non attendance were received from Lord Kilclooney. NOTED.

The Chairman welcomed 4 independent assessors to the meeting as observers – Sir Keith Povey, Mr Graham Gordon, Ms Rotha Johnston and Professor James Mackey. The 5th member of the assessment panel, Dr Maurice Manning was unable to attend the meeting and sent his apologies. NOTED.

The Chairman congratulated Mr Sharma on his award of the MBE in the Queen's birthday honours list.

2. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE POLICING BOARD

Minutes Of The 44th Meeting Of The Policing Board Held On 2 June 2005

It was:

RESOLVED

That the draft minutes of the 44th Board meeting held on 2 June 2005 be approved.

2.2 Minutes Of The Board Meeting In Public Held On 2 June 2005

The Chief Executive drew the attention of the Board to reference in the draft minutes to a number of interruptions by members of the public.

It was:

RESOLVED

- That the content of interruptions from members of the public during Board meetings in public should not be recorded in the minutes.
- That the draft minutes of the Board meeting in public held on 2 June 2005 be approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE POLICING BOARD MEETINGS

44th Meeting Of The Policing Board

3.1 Dealing With The Past (Item 3.1 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman reminded Members that the Board's Working Group had agreed not to develop a response to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee Interim Report. The consensus view was that issues concerning dealing with the past would be taken forward by government and the political parties, rather than the Board. NOTED.

3.2 Duty Payment For Part-Time Reserve Officers (Item 3.2 And 11 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman had written to the Chief Constable seeking his views on proposals for the payment of a gratuity to members and former members of the Part-Time Reserve. A reply is awaited and will be brought to the Corporate Policy Committee for consideration. NOTED.

3.3 Independent Assessment Of The Board's Performance (Item 3.5 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive informed Members that the Independent Assessment Panel had met with the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of each of the Committees and was in the process of consulting with key stakeholders. NOTED.

3.4 Presentations To The Board On Organised Crime (Item 3.6 Of Minutes Refers)

A workshop to consider organised crime was being arranged by PSNI for early Autumn, all Board Members would be invited to attend. NOTED.

Officials were in the process of agreeing dates for the Minister to brief the Board on the Organised Crime Task Force in September / October. NOTED.

A date was being finalised for the Board to receive a briefing from PSNI regarding the preparatory work being undertaken by PSNI for the transfer of national security primacy from PSNI to the Security Services in 2007. NOTED.

A Member requested that a copy of a briefing note provided for the recent launch of the Organised Crime Task Force initiative be circulated to all Board Members. Officials undertook to circulate the document as requested. NOTED.

3.5 Crime Prevention Briefing (Item 3.7 Of Minutes Refers)

Issues associated with the protection given by PSNI to vehicles taking high value supplies across the border will be included in the Autumn workshop on Organised Crime referred to at 3.4. NOTED.

3.6 Presentation On The Flying Of Flags (Item 3.8 Of Minutes Refers)

The Vice-Chairman summarised the presentation given by PSNI to the Community Involvement Committee on 27 June 2005 on the protocol for the flying of flags.

Members discussed the role and responsibilities of the police, the community and other agencies in tackling the display of flags that could be perceived to lead to a breach of the peace or be offensive or threatening.

It was:

AGREED

That a copy of the protocols for flying of flags be circulated to Board Members who are not on the Community Involvement Committee.

3.7 HMIC Baseline Assessment Of PSNI (Item 3.10 Of Minutes Refers)

A paper providing composite views of each of the Committees on the PSNI Baseline Assessment Refresh Report will be brought to the September Corporate Policy Committee meeting. NOTED.

3.8 Meeting With IMC (Item 4.2 Of Minutes Refer)

The Chief Executive advised Members that the Independent Monitoring Commission had accepted the invitation to meet with the Board and a suitable date was being considered. NOTED.

3.9 Part-Time Policing - Briefing (Item 4.5 Of Minutes Refers)

Representatives from West Yorkshire and Sussex police had briefed Board Members on their experience of part-time policing at a presentation on 15 June 2005. NOTED.

3.10 Defining The Role Of The Board Working Group (Item 4.9 Of Minute Refers)

The actions agreed at the last Board meeting were being taken forward by officials and the outcome will be reported to Corporate Policy Committee in due course.

3.11 Reports Relating To The Police College And Human Resources Department (Item 8.5 Of Minutes Refers)

The Committee considered a confidential paper for progressing issues raised in relation to the Police Training College and the Human Resources Department. A confidential minute of discussion on this matter is attached at Appendix 'A'.

3.12 Questions To The Chief Constable (Item 11 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman referred to information that had been given by the Chief Constable to the Board in confidence at the previous meeting, regarding internal management action taken by PSNI following an incident in Violet Street, Londonderry and in relation to the ongoing police investigation of the Claudy bombing. The Chairman expressed concern that it appeared that details of the briefing had been given to the media. He reminded Members of the need to respect the confidentiality of information given in confidence and the impact that such leaks would have on the provision of sensitive information to the Board in the future.

Policing Board Meeting In Public

3.13 Policing in Violet Street, Londonderry

The Chairman informed Members that he had viewed a DVD concerning policing of disorder in Violet Street given to him by Mr Eamon McCann at the meeting in public on 2 June 2005 and forwarded it to the Police Ombudsman. The film was available for Members to view after the Board meeting.

The Board:

AGREED

To write to Mr McCann to inform him that the DVD had been passed to the Ombudsman and that any further consideration of this matter should await the outcome of the Ombudsman's investigation.

4. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

4.1 Engagements

The Chairman advised Members that he had undertaken the following engagements on behalf of the Board:-

- Visit to Simulated Learning Unit – Steeple, Antrim – 21 June 2005. NOTED.
- John Harris Memorial Lecture – London – 21 June 2005. NOTED.
- Chief Constable's High Commendation Awards Ceremony – Hillsborough Castle – 22 June 2005. NOTED.
- Visit to Seapark / Lislea Drive – 23 June 2005. During discussion of this item, officials undertook to review papers associated with a proposed plan to transfer facilities at Lislea Drive and provide an update to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. NOTED.
- Lord Mayor's Installation Dinner – Belfast - 25 June 2005. NOTED.
- Meeting with Foreign Minister from Republic of Ireland – Belfast 29 June 2005. NOTED.
- IS Strategy Demonstration – Belfast – 29 June 2005. NOTED.

4.2 Publications

The following publications had been placed in the Library: -

- Criminal Justice System Northern Ireland – Annual Report – 2004 – 2005. NOTED
- The Spec – Newsletter of Criminal Justice Inspection – June 2005. NOTED
- Youth Justice Connections – The Youth Justice Agency – June 2005. NOTED

4.3 Correspondence

The Chairman informed Members that he had received the following correspondence:-

- Letter from the Secretary of State dated 22 June 2005 regarding the PSNI Annual Report. NOTED

4.4 News Releases

There were no matters arising.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

5.1 Northern Ireland Police Fund: Changes in Directorships

The Chief Executive advised the Board about recent changes in directorships at the Northern Ireland Police Fund. NOTED.

5.2 4th Annual ACPO Excellence In Policing Performance Conference

The 4th Annual ACPO Excellence in Policing Performance conference will be held in the University of Warwick on 12 and 13 September 2005. NOTED.

5.3 April 2005 Omnibus Survey

The Board considered a paper which provided a summary of the main findings from the April 2005 Omnibus Survey, published on 30 June 2005. NOTED.

5.4 Conference For Independent Custody Visitors

The Chief Executive reminded Members that the Board had previously given approval to hosting a conference for Independent Custody Visitors and that financial support should be sought from the NIO for the conference. The Chief Executive advised that NIO had now responded to the request and had declined to contribute to the funding of the conference. NOTED.

6. CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

6.1 Minutes Of The 45th Corporate Policy Committee Meeting Held On 16 June 2005

The Chairman drew the attention of Members to the recommendations made by the Committee.

6.1.1 Taser Trials – Item 5.2

The Committee had considered a letter which had been received from the Deputy Chief Constable regarding Headquarters Mobile Support Units carrying out trials on a Taser gun within the next 12 months.

The Committee agreed that PSNI should be asked to give a briefing to Members in relation to the Taser trials and consideration should be given to protocols being drawn up for dealing with such issues. The Chief Executive advised that the Chief Constable had subsequently confirmed that a presentation would be arranged for all Members in due course.

It was:

RESOLVED

To adopt the draft minutes of the 45th Corporate Policy Committee meeting held on 16 June 2005.

6.2 Report Of The Northern Ireland Affairs Committee Into The Functions Of The Policing Board

The Board considered a paper that addressed the 14 conclusions and recommendations which the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (NIAC) had made following its Inquiry into the functions of the Board.

Members considered a draft response to the NIAC.

It was:

RESOLVED

- Recommendation 3 – Frequency of Contact with the Office of the Police Ombudsman – this issue should receive further consideration by the Board before a substantive response is made to the NIAC.
- Recommendation 11 – Functions of CSPs and DPPs – the Board response should be strengthened.
- Subject to the above, the reply should be issued to the NIAC.

7. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

7.1 Minutes Of The 20th Meeting Of The Community Involvement Committee Held On 8 June 2005

It was:

RESOLVED

To adopt the draft minutes of the 20th meeting of the Community Involvement Committee held on 8 June 2005.

8. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETINGS

8.1 Minutes Of The 15th Finance And General Purposes Committee Held On 17 June 2005

It was:

RESOLVED

To adopt the draft minutes of the 15th meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 17 June 2005.

8.2 Station Review Frameworks

The Chairman welcomed ACC Rural Region, the PSNI Director of Finance and Support Services, Head of Estates Services and Head of Media to the meeting.

The Chairman referred Members to documentation received from PSNI consisting of station review frameworks recommending the closure of 17 police stations in Rural Region. He reminded Members that the documentation had been referred to the Board for consideration by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Members were also reminded that:

- the PSNI Estates Strategy was approved by the Board in May 2005

- that the role of the Board with regard to station reviews is to decide whether it wishes to endorse the recommendations contained within the templates for Reviewing the Requirements for Stations

The meeting discussed:

- The reviews within the overall context of the Estates Strategy.
- The PSNI public relations strategy to promote the Estates Strategy.
- The involvement of DPPs in the consultation process.
- The deployment and use of resources following the closure of stations.
- The information provided to the Board in respect of the closures and the provision of additional information by PSNI.

Following discussion, the Board considered each station review framework and voted by show of hands to indicate endorsement or opposition to the Chief Constable's recommendation that the station should close.

By a majority vote:

It was:

RESOLVED

To endorse the Chief Constable's recommendation to close stations in Castlerock, Moneymore, Ardglass, Castlewellan, Moy, Ballygawley, Caledon, Dromore (Co Tyrone) and Plumbridge.

Following further discussion, a motion was proposed and seconded that in respect of stations at Ballinamallard, Derrygonnelly, Irvinestown, Kinawley, Lisbellaw, Newtownbutler, Rosslea and Tempo:

- To arrange further consultation, if necessary.

- To provide the opportunity to further explain the Strategy to the Fermanagh District Policing Partnership and wider community; and fully outline the alternative policing arrangements to be put in place.
- To consider any impact from closure decisions taken in neighbouring District Command Units.
- that a decision should be deferred until the September Board meeting:

Following a show of hands, by a majority vote:

It was:

RESOLVED

That in respect of stations at Ballinamallard, Derrygonnelly, Irvinestown, Kinawley, Lisbellaw, Newtownbutler, Rosslea and Tempo that the Board should defer a decision until the September Board Meeting.

Following this discussion, the PSNI personnel left the meeting.

9. HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS

9.1 Minutes Of The 41st Meeting Of The Human Resources Committee Held On 27 May 2005

It was:

RESOLVED

To adopt the draft minutes of the 41st meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 27 May 2005.

9.2 Minutes Of The 42nd Meeting (Quorum) Of The Human Resources Committee Held On 27 May 2005

It was:

RESOLVED

To adopt the draft minutes of the 42nd (Quorum) meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 27 May 2005.

10. HUMAN RIGHTS AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING

10.1 Minutes Of The 13th Meeting Of The Human Rights And Professional Standards Committee Held On 10 June 2005

It was:

RESOLVED

To adopt the draft minutes of the 13th meeting of the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee held on 10 June 2005.

10.2 Register Of Notifiable Memberships

The Board considered a recommendation from the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee that the NIO should be urged to change the legislation that provides for the Register of Notifiable Memberships. The proposal was initiated following concern that the subjective test in the legislation could result in an inaccurate picture of notifiable memberships within PSNI.

It was:

RESOLVED

- That information on how the second process of registration of notifiable memberships is progressing should be requested from PSNI; and
- That the Board should write to the Secretary of State urging the necessary legislative change.

11. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

The meeting discussed the questions to be put to the Chief Constable and given the extensive number of questions submitted by Committees and Members:

It was:

AGREED

That 9 questions should be dealt with by way of written answer.

The Chairman welcomed the Chief Constable and other PSNI personnel to the meeting.

The Board received further information about:-

- The overall clearance rate for crimes and the clearance rate for violent crime, both of which were lower than the rates for the previous year.
- Procedures for monitoring the validity of officers firearms training and ongoing firearms training for PSNI officers.
- The role of the business community in preventing crime involving significant cash handling.
- Police investigations into a robbery at Boots, Royal Avenue.

- PSNI internal procedures for dealing with officers convicted of drink / driving offences.
- The PSNI strategy in tackling organised crime.
- The current position regarding the transfer of traffic wardens from PSNI to the Department of Regional Development.

Members moved to its meeting in public and following the completion of this session, the PSNI personnel left the meeting.

12. INFORMATION PAPERS

12.1 Freedom Of Information Act 2000

Members noted a leaflet published by the Board, giving information about how to make a Freedom of Information request to the Board. NOTED.

12.2 Annual Report 2005 Of The Organised Crime Task Force

The Board noted the 2005 Annual Report of the Organised Crime Task Force. NOTED.

12.3 Domestic Violence, Crime And Victims Act 2004: New Provision

The Board noted correspondence received from NIO Criminal Law Branch concerning changes to the law in Northern Ireland coming into force on 1 July 2005 as a result of the commencement of a provision from the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004. NOTED.

12.4 PB1 and PB2 Reports

The Board noted a paper that provided statistical information on Public Disorder incidents from April to June 2005. NOTED.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 Unified Criminal Justice Inspectorate – Consultation Exercise

The Board considered a paper which drew attention to recent correspondence from the NIO about a Home Office consultation exercise in relation to its plan to create a single, unified Inspectorate for Justice and Community Safety in England and Wales. The Board considered a response to the paper.

It was:

RESOLVED

To respond to the enquiry, highlighting that the Board has found that the working relationships and processes that have developed between HMIC (in relation to inspection of PSNI) and the Criminal Justice Inspectorate (CJI) in Northern Ireland to be productive. These have ensured that whilst CJI remains the central inspection body, PSNI continues to benefit from inspection by HMIC and benchmarking against other UK Services. The Board welcomes the inspection of Police Authorities and would hope that, as in relation to PSNI, a sensible approach to this would be adopted to ensure there is no duplication of effort between the many inspection bodies.

14. PRESS ISSUES

14.1 Communication Activity

The Board noted a paper containing an update on recent Board communication activity and forthcoming planned activities.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Board confirmed the date of the next meeting for 1 September 2005 in Ballymena.

(Meeting closed 4:00 pm).

Secretariat

July 2005

CHAIRMAN