

## **NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

### **PRESS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

#### **MINUTES OF THE 6TH MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2004 AT 2.00PM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST**

##### **PRESENT:**

##### **MEMBERS:**

- Mr Tom Kelly (Chairman)
- Mr Brian Dougherty
- (1) Mr Ian Paisley Jnr
- Professor Desmond Rea (Chairman of the Board)

##### **OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:**

- (2) Mr Trevor Reaney (Chief Executive)  
Director of Communications  
Communications Manager  
Four Board Officials

##### **POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND (PSNI) IN ATTENDANCE**

- (3) Director of Media and Public Relations
- (3) Deputy Director of Media and Public Relations

- (1) Part of item number 2 onwards
- (2) Item numbers 1-7
- (3) Item numbers 1-2

## **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Mr Alex Attwood.

## **2. DISCUSSION WITH PSNI HEAD AND DEPUTY HEAD OF MEDIA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS ON PSNI ACTIVITY AND STRATEGY**

The Chairman welcomed the Head and Deputy Head of the PSNI's Media and Public Relations Department to the meeting and invited the Head of Media and PR to address the Committee on developments regarding PSNI communications, activity and strategy.

She addressed the Committee and covered the following issues:-

- The good working relationships which had been developed between the PSNI Media Department and the Board's Media and Public Relations Department.
- The major projects which the PSNI Media Department had been involved in during the past few months.
- The challenges which the PSNI Media Department would have to deal with in the future.

During a subsequent discussion the following issues were covered:-

- The publication of the Board's Human Rights Advisor's Report on the Ardoyne Parade on 12 July 2004
- The publication of the Independent Monitoring Commission report on 4 November 2004. As this report had been published on the same date as the Board's report on the Ardoyne parade, the Chairman of the Board suggested that there should be better co-ordination between Government Agencies regarding dates for publication of reports
- The protocols for giving interviews to the media following the Board meeting each month in public. The Director of Communications undertook to discuss the issue with the Head of the PSNI's Media and Public Relations Department
- The subject of addressing the fear of crime in the community
- Working relationships between the PSNI's Media and Public Relations Department and District Command Units
- The PSNI's Media and Public Relations Department liaison with the Regional Media
- The media coverage following the withdrawal of the Judicial Review of the Notifiable Membership process

At this point, the Chairman thanked the Head of Media and Public Relations and the Deputy Head of Media and Public Relations for attending the meeting. The representatives from PSNI then left the meeting.

### **3. MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2004**

The minutes of the Press and Public Relations Committee meeting held on 16 June 2004 were agreed and signed.

### **4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

#### **4.1 Press and Public Relations Resources – Business Development Services Review (Item 5.1 of Minutes Refers)**

This matter was dealt with under item number 6.

#### **4.2 Review of Policing Board Meetings in Public (Item 5.2 of Minutes Refers)**

This matter was dealt with under item number 14.1.

#### **4.3 Advertising, Design and Print and Public Relations Contracts (Item 8 of Minutes Refers)**

This matter was dealt with under item number 8.

### **5. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

The Chairman had no business to report to the Committee.

### **6. UPDATE ON PRESS OFFICE STAFFING**

The Committee noted the content of a paper which outlined details of staffing levels and recruitment processes in the Board's Press Office.

The Director of Communications advised Members that 48 applications had been received for the posts of Information Officer in the Press Office and interviews for the positions would take place in early December 2004. It was hoped that the officers would take up their appointments with the Board early in the New Year.

## **7. FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

The Director of Communications presented a paper which outlined a proposed framework for development of a communications strategy for the Board.

During presentation of the paper the Director outlined details of the timetable and process for strategy development, the key strategic aims to be delivered, the range of audiences with whom a dialogue needed to be put in place, the variety of core issues to be communicated, the different media and channels available and the resources available to be deployed.

During discussion the following issues were covered:-

- The Board holding a Press Conference each month immediately after the Board meeting in public.
- The publicity surrounding the Third Anniversary of the Board.
- The work which the Board's new Information Officers would be involved in.
- Features regarding Independent Board Members being placed in local papers
- The Board holding meetings with school children in order to brief them on the role and work of the Board
- The allocation of the Communication budget
- The inclusion of a questionnaire in the Board's Annual Report in order to obtain feedback on the work of the Board
- The Board participating in an annual international event in order to promote the role and work of the Board.

In conclusion, it was agreed that Members should provide any other comments on the framework to the Director of Communications who would subsequently arrange for the draft strategy to be considered by the Committee at its next meeting.

## **8. ADVERTISING, DESIGN AND PRINT AND PUBLIC RELATIONS CONTRACTS**

The Committee noted:-

- Details of the Advertising Company who had been awarded a contract on 27 April 2004 to provide an advertising service for the Board.
- Details of a contract which had been awarded to a Company to provide design and print for the Board.
- That the requirement for the Board's public relations contract would be reviewed by the Director of Communications and a recommendation brought to the Committee for consideration.

## **9. MEDIA RELATIONS AND EVENTS SCHEDULE**

The Committee noted details of a schedule which outlined details of forthcoming events for the period November - December 2004.

## **10. COMMUNICATION SUPPORT FOR DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS**

The Committee noted the content of a paper regarding current activity in relation to the provision of specialist communication support to DPPs and issues in relation to possible new areas of support.

## **11. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS – 2005**

The Committee agreed the dates of meetings of the Press and Public Relations Committee for 2005.

## **12. MATTERS TO BE RAISED WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE AT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING**

The Committee agreed there were no matters to be raised with the Chief Constable at the next Board meeting.

## **13. PRESS ISSUES**

The Committee agreed that there were no matters arising from the meeting which should be released to the Press.

## **14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **14.1 Review of Policing Board Meetings in Public**

The Committee discussed the Board meeting in public which had been held in Armagh on 4 November 2004. It was agreed that the benefits of the meeting to the local community should be weighed up against the cost of holding the meeting outside Belfast. In response to a query from the Chairman of the Board, Officials undertook to provide him with copies of the articles regarding the meeting which had appeared in the local papers in Armagh.

The Committee noted that meetings of the Board in public were scheduled to be held in Antrim and Enniskillen in 2005.

During a subsequent discussion the following points were made:-

- Consideration should be given to inviting representatives from schools to attend Board meetings in public
- The Board should consider organising a series of morning conferences in order to advise the community about the role and work of the Board
- The Board should consider giving the public an opportunity on a quarterly basis to ask the Chief Constable questions at the Board meeting in public.

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting had been arranged for 9 February 2005 at 2.00pm.

(Meeting closed at 3.30pm)

**SECRETARIAT**  
**November 2004**

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**CHAIRMAN**