

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 27
JANUARY 2022 AT 2PM AT WATERSIDE TOWER AND VIA ZOOM**

PRESENT:

Mr Gerry Kelly MLA (Chair)
Dr Janet Gray (Vice-Chair)
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA*
Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA
Mr Frank McManus*
Ms Deirdre Toner
Mr John Blair MLA*
Mrs Linda Dillon MLA*
Mr Colm McKenna*

**EX OFFICIO MEMBERS IN
ATTENDANCE**

Dr Tom Frawley*

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

- (1) Mr Simon Byrne, Chief Constable
- (2) Mrs Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating Officer
- (3) Mr Mark McNaughten, Assistant Chief Officer
Corporate Services
- (4) Mr Will Young, T/Assistant Chief Officer People
and Organisational Development
- (5) Ms Tabitha Ramsay, T/Director of HR

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- Mrs Sinead Simpson, Chief Executive
- (6) Ms Aislinn McGuckin, T/Director of Police
Administration
Seven Board Officials

- (1) Item 6.3 only
- (2) Items 6.1 and 6.3 only
- (3) Items 6.1 and 6.3 only
- (4) Item 6.2 only
- (5) Item 6.2 only
- (6) Items 6.8 and 6.9 only

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Jonathan Buckley MLA.

The Committee agreed the Agenda for the meeting and no one raised any further business for consideration under 'Any Other Business'.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 DECEMBER 2021

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the Committee meeting held on 16 December 2021. It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 16 December 2021 be approved.

4. UPDATE ON ACTION LOG

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

In respect of Action Point 2 from the meeting on **25 November 2021** regarding how the PSNI current sick absence target of 11.2 days is calculated, the Chief Executive advised that she is meeting with the T/ACO People and Organisational Development next week and will raise this issue with him at that meeting. **(AP1)**

In relation to Action Point 6 from the meeting on **25 November 2021** the Chief Executive advised this will be considered at the next agenda item 4.1.

4.1 Correspondence from PSNI re Above Delegated Authority Grant Requests

The Chief Executive noted correspondence received from the Chief Operating Officer (**COO**) Pamela McCreedy in response to a letter from the Committee Chair which expressed Member's concerns regarding the handling and communication around the Above Delegated Authority requests for Grant payments to 3 organisations who provide Hate Crime Advocacy Services. Members noted that the COO advised the PSNI will endeavour to avoid any recurrence of these circumstances and will ensure that going forward, any such requests are submitted within the required timescales.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

4.2 Correspondence from PSNI in relation to Police College Entrance Requirements

The Chief Executive noted correspondence received from the PSNI providing details on English Language equivalency qualifications for those applying to the PSNI for whom English is not their first language. Members noted this had been requested at the November 2021 Committee meeting following the briefing and presentation on the Police College at Garnerville.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

5.1 Vesting Order – Transfer of Lands at Woodbourne Police Station

The Chair referred Members to the papers provided at agenda item 5.1 relating to lands vested adjacent to Woodbourne Police Station for the purpose of a

road-widening project to accommodate the Belfast Transport Glider scheme. Members noted PSNI advice that LPS have confirmed the compensation of £24,000 represents good value for money and as such, PSNI recommend the acceptance of the statutory receipt to formalise the process.

The Chair confirmed the necessary 3 signatures had been sought and asked the Committee if they were content to recommend the acceptance of the statutory receipt to the Board in order to finalise the process.

Members confirmed they were content to **RECOMMEND** acceptance of the statutory receipt to the Board.

5.2 Barriers to ACC Recruitment – Final Report from HeadsTogether

The Chair advised this second item of business related to the final report received from HeadsTogether regarding their research in respect of Barriers to ACC Recruitment. It was noted that HeadsTogether have been invited to attend the March 2022 Committee meeting to present the report in more detail.

Members **NOTED** the report.

5.3 Correspondence from Scottish Police Authority re Policing of COP26

The Chair asked Members to note correspondence received from Martyn Evans, the Chair of the Scottish Police Authority thanking PSNI for their contribution to the smooth running of the COP26 summit in Glasgow in November 2021.

Members **NOTED** this correspondence.

5.4 Verbal Update on Forward Programme of Work

The Chair advised Members that the Board Chair will be giving an update at the February Board meeting in respect of the Board's forward programme of work given the upcoming election. Members noted that, in light of this, Board officials would be giving consideration to possible revisions to the Resources Committee Programme of Work and will bring an update to the February meeting.

5.5 Correspondence from PSNI re fixed Penalty Notices

The Chair advised that correspondence had been received from the Chief Constable regarding backlogs which have been identified in the PSNI's Fixed Penalty Processing Centre and the mitigation measures the PSNI have put in place to address this issue.

Members discussed this correspondence and agreed that the Chair should write to the Chief Constable expressing Members' concerns and seeking reassurances as to how these issues will be handled, including the preventative plan referenced in the Chief Constable's correspondence and how it will mitigate the impact of the issues identified and prevent the scale of the problem from escalating further. Members considered that these further reassurances would be important for public confidence in the justice system, as well as road traffic safety messaging. **(AP2)**

6. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1 PSNI Finance Report – December 2021

The Committee noted the PSNI's monthly Finance Report and Board officials provided a summary of the PSNI's financial position as at 31 December 2021.

The Chair welcomed PSNI Chief Operating Officer (COO) Mrs Pamela McCreedy and PSNI Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) Corporate Services Mr Mark

McNaughten to the meeting and invited them to present this month's report.

The ACO Corporate Services presented an overview of the monthly Finance Report including a summary of the PSNI's financial position to 31 December 2021 including:

- The position at this stage of the financial year is that the PSNI are reporting a current under-spend of £4.4m and a projected full year pressure of £13.2m.
- There is a year to date Capital underspend of £5.7m which is mainly due to delays in Estate and Fleet projects. However PSNI advised they are reasonably confident that the remaining capital budgets will be spent in year, and,
- That the updated 10-Year Capital Plan was submitted in early January 2022 to the Department of Justice (DoJ).

The ACO Corporate Services advised that since the production of this monthly report the outcome of the January monitoring bid has become known and the PSNI were allocated £14m last week therefore a breakeven full year position is anticipated.

During the briefing Members raised a number of questions with both the COO and ACO Corporate Services including:

PSNI Overtime - The ACO Corporate Services advised that due to the introduction of new COVID-19 regulations in December and the consequent implementation of different shift patterns, December was a difficult month and the PSNI are currently £3m overspent on the overtime budget. Members noted the comments from the ACO Corporate Services in terms of how PSNI are actively managing this.

More broadly in respect of PSNI overtime, Members discussed difficulties in the accurate assessment of demand, the extent to which overtime is perceived by

officers as an “expected” element of their salary and the corollary, if any, between increasing officer numbers and decreasing levels of overtime.

Draft Budget allocation – The ACO Corporate Services advised that the proposed draft baseline position is a flat budget for the next 3 years which is at the outset £40m less than this year’s budget.

Members noted that the projected operating shortfall had increased from £180m over the 3 year period to £226m noted in the papers provided. The COO updated Members on the revised planning assumptions and ring-fenced costs which have led to the difference in this projection.

The COO also updated Members on the decision to defer the March intake of 85 new officers until such times as there is more clarity on the budget position. In addition, the Committee noted the timetable of activities and engagement by the PSNI on the budget position between now and April 2022 would be shared by Board officials.

Members expressed deep concern at the likely consequences for the PSNI should there be no change to the current draft budget settlement and acknowledged PSNI’s view in terms of the consequences this will have in terms of service delivery should there be no change to the current position.

The Committee thanked the COO and ACO Corporate Services for the update provided and they left the meeting.

6.2 PSNI Update on People Strategy Action Plan

The Chair welcomed the T/ACO People and Organisational Development Will Young and the PSNI T/Director of HR (T/DHR) Tabitha Ramsay to the meeting and invited them to present the updated People Strategy Action Plan.

Mr Young provided a brief synopsis on the overall development and

implementation of the Action Plan to date and noted that the People Strategy Action Plan launched 9 months ago, with progress being managed through 5 delivery groups which became active 6 months ago.

Following a brief introduction in respect of the 5 People Principles, Mr Young handed over to the T/DHR Tabitha Ramsay to present an update on People Principle 1 - Being Representative and Inclusive.

Ms Ramsay gave an overview of the actions and related measures being progressed in respect of this People Principle including:

- The commissioning of a Barriers to Recruitment Strategy.
- The creation of a Gender Action Plan with the aim of encouraging more women to take up roles in areas such as Tactical Support and Close Protection Unit which have to date been perceived as being predominately male roles.
- The drafting of the Dignity at Work Policy Suite which they hope to publish by 31 March 2022.
- Quarterly PULSE surveys planned from March 2022 to be administered against the 5 People Principle Headings.
- Violence against Women and Girls Working Group and the internal support mechanisms being developed.
- The establishment of 2 new staff support networks – Catholic Police Guild and Disability Support Network, and,
- The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) website which was a finalist in the CIPD Diversity awards 2021. Members congratulated PSNI on their inclusion as a finalist.

Mr Young then presented an update on People Principle 3 – Leading Together, which included details of some of the actions being progressed. These included:

- The development of Terms of Reference (ToR) seeking support from an

external provider to progress work on a coaching and mentoring framework

- The launch of new “My Point” Hub scheduled for April 2022, which will see the eventual phasing out of the Knowledge Centre.
- The attendance of newly promoted female Superintendents on a pilot development programme run by Police Scotland.
- A development programme secured with education partners for senior colleagues, and,
- The proposed establishment of a dedicated Leadership and Organisational Development Unit within the Police College.

Following the briefing Members discussed a number of points with the T/ACO of People and Organisational Development and T/DHR. These included:

- Further discussion on how PSNI will understand barriers to recruitment/promotion in order to put corresponding ‘enablers’ in place;
- While acknowledging the activity that has taken place in terms of the implementation of the plan, Members were keen to know more about how the PSNI will measure success against the action plan;
- How the work of Professional Standards Department will be reported on under the Action Plan. PSNI advised Members that this will primarily be reported on under the Serving with Professionalism People Principle.
- The extent to which there is/will be any external community engagement in respect of the Action Plan. PSNI noted strong evidence of community engagement with PSNI via social media and also the programme of community events held in respect of the recent PSNI recruitment campaign.
- In respect of the Cultural Audit, Members wanted to understand how PSNI would ensure meaningful data is captured to inform this work. PSNI advised that the Senior Executive Team is scheduled to consider the Terms of Reference for a Cultural Audit at their upcoming meeting in February.

In addition to the above the Committee noted their disappointment at lack of female applicants in the recent PSNI ACC recruitment competition. Opportunities to address this via the People Strategy Action plan were discussed and it was agreed that the PSNI and Board officials would continue to engage on this at upcoming meetings.

The Chair thanked the T/ACO People and Organisational Development and the PSNI T/DHR for the presentation and briefing and they left the meeting.

6.3 Outline Case for Additional Assistant Chief Constable

The Chair welcomed the Chief Constable and Chief Operating Officer to the meeting and invited the Chief Constable to address the Committee regarding the PSNI's request that the Committee consider recommending to the Board an increase in the current establishment of ACCs by one post. The Chief Constable thanked the Committee for the opportunity to present this agenda item and noted the paper which had been provided to Members providing an outline case for the proposed additional Assistant Chief Constable, Information and Risk Management.

The Chief Constable went on to brief the Committee on the reasons PSNI have identified as to why the current establishment of four ACCs should be increased to five. The key reasons identified included:

1. Operational Command Resilience and the wellbeing of Senior Officers. The Chief Constable noted the substantial burden placed on the current team of ACCs within the last 18 months, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Information Management Risk. The Chief Constable highlighted the number of risks on the Service Risk Register which pertain to the theme of information management and discussed his preference to have an ACC lead in this area, driving progress in areas such as Crime

Recording, Records Management and Disclosure and Discovery.

3. Legacy Transition. The Chief Constable discussed the significant change in political circumstance, as it relates to legacy matters, in the time since the decision was made to leave vacant the ACC Legacy post following the resignation of the ACC in February 2020. He advised Members that demand in this area has increased considerably in scale and pace with legacy inquests and legacy-related litigation expanding at a rate beyond expectation.

Member concerns in respect of the request made by PSNI centred primarily on two areas, timing and the previously agreed revised structure of the PSNI Senior Executive Team which was agreed in late 2019/early 2020.

- Member concerns regarding the timing of this request were particularly in the context of the recent deferral of the March intake of Police Officer recruits to the PSNI Training College. Members considered that filling an additional senior post at this time would not be consistent with the overall projected pressures and ongoing discussions in respect of the draft 3 year budget. Members also considered this would impact on serving officer and staff morale in a climate where resources are under pressure and are likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.
- Regarding the revised SET structure agreed in late 2019/early 2020, Members noted that several new ACO appointments have just recently been made with some appointees not yet in post. The Committee felt that, while acknowledging to some extent the pressures outlined by the Chief Constable, the benefits of the new agreed structure had not yet been realised and should be afforded the time to bed in and deliver results before making any further changes to the SET.

The Chief Constable advised Members that he understood their concerns, particularly in the current financial climate. He welcomed the opportunity to have a positive discussion around the issues detailed in the paper and noted

that, in the event the Committee could not currently support making a recommendation to the Board for an additional ACC, the PSNI SET would adapt to meet the ongoing operational challenges.

The Committee thanked the Chief Constable and Chief Operating Officer for the briefing and they left the meeting.

Following discussion, all Members were in agreement that for the reasons outlined above, it would not be appropriate at this time to recommend an increase in the PSNI ACC establishment. Therefore it was agreed that the Committee's recommendation to the Board would be **not** to agree to increase the ACC establishment by one at this time.

6.4 PSNI Chief Officer and Senior Civilian Staff Equivalents – Removal and Relocation Policy

The Chief Executive presented a paper asking Members to consider a request for flexibility in the application of the Removal and Relocation Policy for PSNI Chief Officer and Senior Civilian Staff Equivalents. Members noted this would not vary the overall value of the package but would allow flexibility in the period over which the package can be availed of.

The Chief Executive advised that this is common practice in other Police Forces and could also help attract applications from external candidates with regard to future recruitment for Senior PSNI positions. Following discussion Members **AGREED** to this request and also that the policy should be amended to reflect this flexibility going forward.

In response to a comment from a Member, it was also **AGREED** that the language would be updated to reference Police Staff equivalent and remove "civilian" references. **(AP3)**

6.5 Update on ACC Recruitment Process

The Chief Executive provided a verbal update in respect of recent ACO competitions and also the ACC recruitment process which concluded on 20 January 2022.

Regarding the ACC competition the Chief Executive advised Members that 4 applications were received all of whom were shortlisted to proceed to interview. Following the interviews 1 applicant withdrew from the competition and the remaining 3 applicants were successful at the interview stage and were all deemed appointable. The top 2 appointable candidates were put forward by the Board to the Minister of Justice for approval to fill the current 2 ACC vacancies within PSNI with the third candidate remaining on a reserve list for 12 months. Members were also advised of expected start dates for the 2 successful ACC candidates.

Members noted that no there had been no female applicants for the ACC posts and the Chief Executive advised that the Board Chair would be engaging with a female officer who had attended the Strategic Command Course but subsequently elected not to apply for the PSNI ACC positions, and that there would be further discussions with PSNI about redressing this situation for the future.

The Chief Executive also provided an update on the recent ACO competitions which concluded in December 2021. The Committee was provided with an estimated start date for the ACO Planning and Transformation. Members noted that Mark McNaughten, who had been successful in securing the role of ACO Corporate Services, was now substantively in post. In addition, Members were advised that the recruitment campaign for the ACO People and Organisational Development is underway and it is hoped that interviews will be held before the end of the financial year.

The Chief Executive noted that the report to the Justice Minister in relation to these appointments has been included in the Chair's correspondence to go to the Board meeting next week.

6.6 Draft Estate Protocol

The Chief Executive presented a paper outlining the draft protocol between the Board and PSNI in respect of the day to day operating procedures regarding the PSNI Estate. The Chief Executive noted this protocol has been developed to formalise the arrangements in terms of what the Board needs to approve, what the Board should have sight of and what is carried out on our behalf by PSNI. The purpose of the protocol is ultimately to provide assurance to the Board that the estate is being managed effectively.

The Chief Executive noted that an initial draft of this protocol had been presented to Members at the October 2021 Committee meeting and following Members' feedback, the document has been updated to reflect the comments provided. The Committee was asked to consider the updated document and if content, agree the Joint NIPB-PSNI Protocol in relation to Operating Arrangements of the Police Estate.

Members discussed whether the 8 week notice period for Category 1 activities was sufficient and asked Board officials to explore with PSNI what, if any, scope existed to extend this period. Members also requested that reference should be included under the Category 1 activities in relation to the Board's role in approving the Estates Strategy.

Following discussion it was **AGREED** Board officials would revert to PSNI with further feedback on the Draft Estate Protocol including:

- Possible change to 8 week notice period
- Include reference under CAT 1 to the Board role in approving Estates Strategy **(AP4)**

6.7 Disposal of Ballyclare PSNI Station

Board officials presented a paper requesting Members consider a report provided by PSNI Estate Services in respect of the proposed disposal of the former Ballyclare Police Station and, if content, make a recommendation to the Board regarding its disposal.

During discussion Members questioned the difference between the initial guide price and the subsequent offer price which they were being asked to approve, given that this offer price is some £225k less than the initial guide price. Members requested further information on how this is being recommended as good value for money in order to make an informed decision in respect of the station's disposal.

It was **AGREED** Board officials will revert to PSNI in respect of the foregoing and bring an update to the February Committee. **(AP5)**

6.8 Police Administration Cases for Committee Decision

The Committee considered 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).

Board officials advised Members that between 9 December 2021 and 19 January 2022, SMPs had considered 15 cases referred to them under the relevant regulations.

Board officials advised Members that during the same period the Department of Justice (DoJ) did not provide any IMR reports to the Board, therefore there are no IMR Cases for the Committee to consider.

Members also considered one submission where the applicant has requested their case be reconsidered by the SMP.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that:

- The medical recommendations of the Selected Medical Practitioners in 15 cases assessed between 9 December 2021 and 19 January 2022 be approved.
- The one anonymised case (RECON SMP 14–21.22), progress to reconsideration by a SMP.

6.9 Above Delegated Limits Compensation Payment

The T/Director of Police Administration presented a paper which provided Members with background to a case involving a civil litigation claim lodged by a former officer against the both the PSNI and the Board. Members were advised that following mediation a settlement has been proposed above delegated authority limits.

The T/Director of Police Administration advised Members that this paper is for information only at this stage as further information is expected from PSNI to supplement the information provided in today's paper. Members noted that on receipt of the expected information from PSNI, the paper will be brought back to Committee for decision in respect of any above delegated limit settlement proposal.

Members **NOTED** the paper.

6.10 Resources Committee Programme of Work

The Chief Executive tabled a draft programme of work for the period January –

March 2022. The Chief Executive asked Members to note the current programme of work and asked the Committee to give consideration to what core items of business will need to be brought before the Committee during February and March 2022 in advance of the Assembly Elections in May. She advised that this item would be brought back to the February meeting for further discussion.

Members **NOTED** the programme.

7. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

It was agreed that one Committee question be submitted to the Chief Constable for a written response regarding the Fixed Penalty Notice correspondence considered at agenda item 5.5. It was agreed this question would address another additional backlog and what mitigation measures are being put in place to address this. **(AP6)**

7.1 Response to Member Question

Members noted the response from the Chief Constable in response to the written question submitted following the December 2021 Committee meeting.

8. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES /OPPORTUNITIES

No communication issues were raised.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was conducted.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 24 February 2022 at 2pm in Waterside Tower.

The meeting ended at 5.30pm

CHAIR

RESOURCES DIRECTORATE
January 2022