

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY 9 JUNE 2022 AT 9AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, CLARENDON DOCK AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE FACILITY

PRESENT:

Mr Doug Garrett Chair
Dr Tom Frawley Vice-Chair
Mr Michael Atkinson
Mr Maurice Bradley MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Dr Janet Gray
Mr Edgar Jardine
Mr Gerry Kelly MLA*
Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA
(1) Ms Liz Kimmins MLA*
Mrs Linda Dillon MLA
Mr Frank McManus
Ms Carmel McKinney
Mr John Blair MLA
Ms Joanne Bunting MLA
Ms Nuala McAllister MLA
Ms Sinead McLaughlin MLA
Ms Deirdre Toner

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

(2) Mr Simon Byrne, Chief Constable
(2) Mr Mark Hamilton, Deputy Chief Constable
(2) Ms Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating Officer
(2) Ms Zoe McKee, D/Chief Superintendent

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs Sinead Simpson, Chief Executive
Mr Adrian McNamee, Director of Performance
Mrs Dymphna Thornton, Director of Partnership
Ms Aislinn McGuckin, T/Director of Police
Administration
Ms Jenny Passmore, Director of Resources
Four Board Officials

OTHER OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr John Wadham, Human Rights Advisor

*Attended meeting by video conference facility

- (1) On video conference from 10am**
- (2) Item 10 only**

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Colm McKenna for the full meeting and Ms Liz Kimmins for the first hour of the meeting.

The Chair offered sincere condolences on behalf of all Members to a Board staff member and senior PSNI officer in respect of recent family bereavements and in relation to the recent death of a serving officer after a short illness.

The Chair welcomed two new political Members to the Board, Ms Sinead McLaughlin MLA and Ms Nuala McAllister MLA. The Chair extended formal thanks, on behalf of the Board, to outgoing Members Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA and Mr Jonathan Buckley MLA for their contribution over the period of their tenure at the Board and wished them every success for the future.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. BOARD STANDING ORDERS

The Chair referred Members to Section 25 of the Board's Standing Orders which require a review of the Standing Orders to be undertaken at the beginning of each new Board. The Chair proposed that unless anyone had any issues or concerns to raise the current Standing Orders remained fit for purpose.

The Chair advised Members that if they had any concerns to raise to bring these to the attention of the Chief Executive before the next Board meeting on 7 July 2022, otherwise the Standing Orders would remain as per the paper.

Members confirmed they were content with this approach and **AGREED** to proceed with the Board's current Standing Orders.

4. DRAFT MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON:

4.1 Thursday 24 March 2022

It was **RESOLVED**:-

- That the minutes of the Board meeting held on 24 March 2022 be approved.

5. BOARD ACTION LOG

Updates as detailed within the Action Log from the Board meeting held on 24 March 2022 were noted in addition to the following verbal update provided by the Chair.

Action Point 5 – The Chair advised that further commentary will be provided in respect of Operation Yurta under the Chair's report at item 6.1.

6. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

6.1 Chair's Report

The Board noted a Report from the Board Chair who advised Members of:

- The Chair's engagements, including meetings held by teleconference and video conference facilities during the period between 24 March 2022 and 6 June 2022.
- A list of notable correspondence issued and received by the Board Chair during the period between 24 March 2022 and 6 June 2022. A full list of correspondence issued and received during this period will be included in the Chair's report for the July Board meeting.

In relation to engagements, the Chair highlighted the following items:

- Meeting with the Chief Executive and new DoJ Permanent Secretary, Mr Richard Pengelly, and confirmed his involvement in the upcoming Board Member induction event.
- Completion of Independent Members assessments.
- Meeting with the DCC in respect of developments relating to Operation Yurta. The Chair advised Members that the PSNI commissioned QC report has now been completed and the Board will be provided with an executive summary, along with the intended next steps to address the lessons learned highlighted by the QC. This will be provided to Members as soon as it is made available.

The Chair highlighted the following correspondence:

- Correspondence received from the PSNI in respect of the upcoming launch of the “Hallmarks of Neighbourhood Policing” strategy.
- A report by the Police Ombudsman regarding Unlawful Disclosure of Information by PSNI Extradition and International Mutual Aid Unit.
- Correspondence received from the Justice Minister confirming the appointment of Political Members to the Board.

It was also **AGREED** that the following correspondence be issued:

- To Members who have recently left the Board, thanking them for their contribution and service.
- To those connected with Policing and the Policing Board who received honours in the Queen’s Jubilee Birthday Honours.
- To congratulate a PSNI officer on the successful appointment to Assistant Commissioner with An Garda Siochana.
- To congratulate the three PSNI candidates who were successful at Senior Police National Assessment Centre, and who will attend the Strategic Command Course later this year. **(AP1)**

7. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

The Board noted a report from the Chief Executive which provided an update on various items of business.

The Chief Executive highlighted the following items:

- The NIPB Draft Annual Report and Accounts has been submitted to the NIAO and is on target to be signed off and laid in the Assembly prior to summer recess; subject to consideration at the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting later this month.
- Staff recruitment and reorganisation continues at the Board as a result of a recent organisational review.
- An ongoing senior officer misconduct case. Members noted that advice is being sought regarding next steps and that they will be provided with more details at the July Board meeting.
- The Board's relocation to James House is now scheduled for the beginning of August, and subject to any unforeseen delays it is hoped that the new premises are fully operational to facilitate the September Board meeting.
- Members are advised that the recruitment competition for Independent Members is planned for July. This will be applicable to Members whose current term expires later this year and also in early 2023.

Members raised the following points with the Chief Executive:

- The extent of consultation with the Board in respect of the appointment of new Independent Members.

- Whether Committee members will be invited to attend future PCSP regional events.
- The recent Audit of Mid & East Antrim PCSP, the audit selection criteria and timescales for completion of that audit.
- Further information was requested in relation to the recent NIPB Organisational Review and the proposed appointment of a Senior Director of Resources. Board officials will bring this to a future Resources Committee. **(AP2)**
- Additional information was requested regarding the case of alleged senior officer misconduct including timeframes, prior consultation and the disciplinary process. Board officials will bring a paper to a future Board meeting. **(AP3)**
- In respect of the PSNI briefing material considered at the Professional Standards Department (**PSD**) presentation to Performance Committee in March 2022, it was agreed this material would be circulated to all Members. **(AP4)**
- Information was requested in respect of the Organised Crime Gangs analysis report. Board officials to make report available to the Member. **(AP5)**
- A Member requested information on the steps being taken by the Board to engage with the PUL community to address under representation in the PSNI and negative perceptions from the community. The Director of Partnership will liaise with the Member to take this forward as part of the Board's wider Engagement strategy. **(AP6)**

8. BOARD BUSINESS

8.1 Committee Terms of Reference and Proposed Committee Membership

The Chief Executive presented a paper asking Members to consider the Terms of Reference for the Board's main Standing Committees, appoint Members,

Chairs and Vice-Chairs to those Committees, and agree Committee scheduling and induction plans.

In respect of the Terms of Reference for the Board's main Standing Committees, Members noted that it had been agreed at the 3 March 2022 Board meeting that officials should, in light of Members' comments, review the Terms of Reference for the Board's Committees and that this process has now been completed. Members were advised that suggested amendments will be considered at forthcoming Committee meetings and the amended Committee Terms of Reference brought back to the Board for ratification.

It was agreed by Members to:

- **APPROVE** the current terms of reference for the Standing Committees and that these will be effective until such times as they are reviewed by Committees and amendments agreed by the Board.

The Chief Executive outlined one exception in respect of membership of the Chair's Advisory group. The Terms of Reference state that the group is made up of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board and the Chairs of each of the Board's Committees. While the group meets infrequently, historical practice has been that a representative from each of the Board's Political parties has been a member of the group and the Chief Executive proposed that, should the group meet in future, this practice would continue and therefore the Terms of Reference of the Chair's Advisory Group would be formally amended at the same time as the other Committees to reflect this.

The Chief Executive outlined the process to appoint Members to the Committees. The proposed Committee membership seeks to achieve representation across all Parties and Independents, and Members were asked to agree the Committee membership as set out in the paper.

It was agreed by Members to:

- **APPROVE** the appointment of Members to the Committees as laid out in the paper.

The Chief Executive outlined the process for the election of Chair and Vice-Chair and Members **AGREED** to nominate Chair and Vice-Chair to each of the Committees.

Members were asked to nominate a Chair for the Audit and Risk Management Committee. Mr Colm McKenna was nominated by Mr Michael Atkinson and seconded by Mr Frank McManus. No further nominations were received and it was **AGREED** by all to elect Mr Colm McKenna.

Nominations were asked for Vice-Chair and Mr Edgar Jardine was nominated by Mr Frank McManus and seconded by Mr Michael Atkinson. No further nominations were received and it was **AGREED** by all to elect Mr Edgar Jardine.

It was **RESOLVED:**

- That Mr Colm McKenna is elected as Chair and Mr Edgar Jardine is elected as Vice-Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

Members were asked to nominate a Chair for the Partnership Committee. Mr John Blair MLA was nominated by Mrs Linda Dillon MLA and seconded by Mr Michael Atkinson. No further nominations were received and it was **AGREED** by all to elect Mr John Blair MLA.

Nominations were asked for Vice-Chair and Mr Michael Atkinson was nominated by Ms Deirdre Toner and seconded by Dr Janet Gray. No further nominations were received and it was **AGREED** by all to elect Mr Michael Atkinson.

It was **RESOLVED:**

- That Mr John Blair MLA is elected as Chair and Mr Michael Atkinson is elected as Vice-Chair of the Partnership Committee.

Members were asked to nominate a Chair of the Performance Committee.

Mr Gerry Kelly MLA was nominated by Ms Deirdre Toner and seconded by Mr Edgar Jardine. No further nominations were received and it was **AGREED** by all to elect Mr Gerry Kelly MLA.

Nominations were asked for Vice-Chair and Dr Janet Gray was nominated by Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA and seconded by Ms Joanne Bunting MLA. No further nominations were received and it was **AGREED** by all to elect Dr Janet Gray.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- That Mr Gerry Kelly MLA is elected as Chair and Dr Janet Gray is elected as Vice-Chair of the Performance Committee.

Members were asked to nominate a Chair of the Resources Committee. Mr Trevor Clarke MLA was nominated by Mr Maurice Bradley MLA and seconded by Mr John Blair MLA. No further nominations were received and it was **AGREED** by all to elect Mr Trevor Clarke MLA.

Nominations were asked for Vice-Chair and Ms Carmel McKinney was nominated by Mr Frank McManus and seconded by Mr John Blair MLA. No further nominations were received and it was **AGREED** by all to elect Ms Carmel McKinney.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- That Mr Trevor Clarke MLA is elected as Chair and Ms Carmel McKinney is elected as Vice-Chair of the Resources Committee.

The Chair thanked Members for expediting the process to finalise the Committees structure by nominating a Chair and Vice-Chair and wished Members success in their new or recurring roles.

The Chief Executive advised Members that Senior Board Officials will be in contact with Chairs and Vice-Chairs to plan Committee business over the coming months. The schedule of meetings will also be supplied to Members and will aim to follow the normal pattern of meetings from September onwards.

(AP7)

In respect of the induction programme, feedback from Members highlighted the benefits of spending time with the PSNI Senior team and a comprehensive induction to the work of the Board. In response to the feedback received there will be three elements to the induction programme – briefing session for all Members on the work of the Committees, induction session with the PSNI senior team on strategic board issues, and via the Committees' programme of work a degree of PSNI outreach to maximise engagement.

In the context of the Board's overall effectiveness, a Member noted the importance of the Board making the best use of its limited time with the Chief Constable at the monthly Board meetings.

8.2 Draft Performance Plan Annual Assessment 2021/22

The Director of Performance presented a paper to Members which included a Draft Performance Plan Annual Assessment for 2021/22 for discussion and asked for their feedback.

The Police (NI) Act 2000 requires the Board to prepare and publish for each financial year a summary of the Board's Assessment of the Chief Constable's performance and delivery of the Policing Plan. All thirteen Measures within the Performance Plan 2021/22 were presented to Members at Committee between May 2021 and March 2022 and the report represents Year 2 of a five year

Policing Plan. Each measure of the 2021/22 Performance Plan has been considered in detail both in the report and throughout the year by the Board's Committee structure. The Director of Performance invited comments from Members in respect of the Plan.

A Member raised a query regarding why detail in respect of grades, gender, community and socio-economic background was not included in the Performance Appraisal in the Annual Report and Accounts. The Director of Performance explained that these new baselines were only identified by the Policing Plan Review Working Group and were agreed by the Board in February 2022 to come into the Policing Plan to be reported on and measured from April 2022 onwards. Therefore they would first be reported on in September 2022 to the Resources Committee and could not be included in the previous year Annual Report for 2021/22 as they have not been reported on yet.

Following discussion the Chair asked Members to:

- **PROVIDE** comment and feedback on the Performance Plan Annual Assessment 2021/22 to Board officials by 17 June 2022.

8.3 Composite Committee Report

The Director of Resources presented a paper to Members and provided a composite report on the work of the Board Committees during 2021-22, which falls under the wider Corporate Plan. The report contained details of Committee membership and attendance throughout the year alongside the work carried out by the Committees.

Following discussion Members **APPROVED** the report of the Board's Committees.

It was also **AGREED** to use the report:

- i) For reference where appropriate in the Board's Annual Report and Accounts of the composite Committee Report document.
- ii) For publication on the Board's website

9. KEY ISSUES OF PUBLIC INTEREST

The Board noted a paper which detailed recent issues of public interest which were relevant to the Board's areas of work.

10. PRIVATE SESSION WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE INCLUDING CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT

The Chair welcomed the Chief Constable, Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) Mark Hamilton, Chief Operating Officer (COO) Pamela McCreedy and D/Chief Superintendent Zoe McKee to the meeting.

The Chief Constable made introductory remarks on a number of topics including the release of positive 2021 crime rate statistics versus England and Wales, the reduced threat level, managing the Election/Centenary parades, the recent Spotlight programme and the impact of the draft budget allocation on operational resources.

During the meeting Members discussed a number of issues with the Chief Constable including:

- Spotlight programme – The Chief Constable noted the concerns raised by Members in respect of the issues raised by the programme. The Chief Constable advised that PSNI were offered limited opportunity to engage with the makers of the programme, however the views/position they had put forward were not reflected entirely in the programme that was broadcast. The Chief Constable advised Members that legal assurances have been sought and received in respect of the PSNI's current policy on

Whistleblowing and that all allegations made in the programme are under investigation.

While PSNI could provide only limited information on the specific case, Members did discuss additional related issues such as protection and support available internally for those that wish to raise a concern, delays in the progression of misconduct cases and the overall role of the Professional Standards Department as it relates to the issues under discussion.

- Violence against Women and Girls Strategy – The DCC and COO referenced the Statement of Intent in respect of areas surrounding misogyny, domestic violence and abuse. The VAWG strategy is supported by work being carried out as part of the cultural audit and dignity at work, with further actions to follow.
- Budget – The Chief Constable discussed the likely impact of a reduction in the PSNI operational budget on crime and advised there are no plans to reduce numbers in neighbourhood policing or at the emergency response contact centre at this stage. However, there will be a focus on training and development and the utilisation of new technology to provide officers with the skills to assist with additional investigative duties. There will also be a continued focus on victim follow up and overall satisfaction.
- Social Media posts regarding Michaela McAreevey – The Chief Constable and DCC noted Members' grave concerns about the distribution on social media of offensive material and advised that an investigation was currently underway following which the Public Prosecution Service would make a decision on the matter in due course.

In addition to the above the Chief Constable, Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Chief Constable addressed a range of questions from Members concerning:

- An ongoing sexual misconduct case
- The probable permanent use of Spit and Bite Guards
- Legacy cases
- PSNI Staff morale

The Chair thanked the Chief Constable, Deputy Chief Constable Mark Hamilton, Chief Operating Officer Pamela McCreedy and D/Chief Superintendent Zoe McKee for their private briefing to the Board.

11. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

None raised.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was conducted.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Board Meeting was scheduled for Thursday 7 July 2022 at 9.30am.

The meeting closed at 11.40am.

Corporate Services

Date: June 2022

Chair