

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 30 JUNE 2022 AT 9.30AM AT WATERSIDE TOWER AND VIA ZOOM

PRESENT:

Mr Trevor Clarke MLA (Chair)
Mr Gerry Kelly MLA
Mr Frank McManus
Mr John Blair MLA
Mrs Linda Dillon MLA
(1) Ms Carmel McKinney (Vice Chair)*
Mr Maurice Bradley MLA*
Michael Atkinson

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

(2) Ms Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating Officer
(2) Mr Mark McNaughten, Assistant Chief Officer
Corporate Services
(3) Mr Richard Ross, Director of Legal Services
(3) Joe McEvoy, Senior Counsel
(3) Colin Stafford, Legal Representative
(3) C/Supt Ian Saunders, Legacy Branch
(3) Assistant Legal Advisor

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

Mrs Sinead Simpson, Chief Executive
Ms Jenny Passmore, Director of Resources
Five Board Officials

- (1) From 9.55am on
- (2) Items 6.1 & 6.2
- (3) Item 6.2 only

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA and Ms Deirdre Toner.

The Committee agreed the Agenda for the meeting and under 'Any Other Business' the Chief Executive advised there was an update in respect of work completed as part of an NIPB organisational review and it was agreed to

update Members later in the meeting at Agenda item 9.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 MARCH 2022

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the Committee meeting held on 24 March 2022.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 24 March 2022 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 Director of Resources.

In respect of Action Point 4 from the meeting on 24 March 2022, a meeting has been scheduled with the PSNI Director of Legal Services in August 2022 to agree the format and frequency of information to be provided to the Committee by PSNI Legal services.

In respect of Action Point 5 from the meeting on 24 March 2022 relating to an ongoing Assisted Removals case, Members were advised that in this case, and any similar cases an interest free discretionary loan can be offered to the applicant if the Northern Ireland Housing Executive do not make an offer to purchase. It is recognised that this is out of the control of the applicant and the PSNI and is intended to enable the applicant to dispose of the property privately and make alternative living arrangements.

In respect of Action Point 6 from the meeting on 24 February 2022, regarding the breakdown of costs around disused PSNI stations, the Director of Resources advised this information will be included in the next update on the PSNI Estate Strategy scheduled for the September 2022 Committee meeting.

The Director of Resources also provided an update on correspondence issued and received for agenda items 4.1 to 4.6.

4.1 Fixed Penalty Processing Centre

In respect of Action Point 2 from the meeting on 27 January 2022 additional correspondence was received from the Office of the Chief Constable addressing Members concerns regarding Fixed Penalty backlogs, cancelled fines and reassurances on the mitigations going forward to address the issues raised. Members were provided assurance that additional mitigations, preventative actions and reviews have been implemented. Issues with the managed service provider have been identified in the areas of resourcing, performance management and process improvement with a subsequent remedial action plan implemented to address these concerns. The PSNI continue to closely monitor and scrutinise the managed service provider's performance.

During discussion Members queried the value of the service provider contract and how similar contracts are managed in other jurisdictions. It was agreed that the Director of Resources will liaise with PSNI to ascertain the value of the contract. **(AP1)**

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

4.2 Assessment of Overtime required

In respect of Action Point 3 from the meeting on 27 January 2022, Members requested information on officer and staff expectation to receive overtime, how overtime requirements are assessed and how the actual numbers of officers and staff available impacts on levels of overtime. Correspondence from the Deputy Chief Constable advised that there should be no fixed expectation of receiving overtime and rotas are developed to minimise this. In respect of how overtime requirements are assessed, this relates to ensuring public safety and the need to mitigate prevailing threats or risks at the time. In terms of a correlation between officer/staff numbers and the level of overtime required, Members were still unclear of the linkages and requested further clarification from PSNI. Question to the sent from the Committee to the Chief Constable. **(AP2)**

Further discussion raised points in respect of the expectation of overtime and perception that it is used to bolster salary to a higher amount at the detriment of seeking promotion; the relationship between overtime and productivity; and the impact of overtime in the weekly working pattern in terms of how it can have a knock on impact with unplanned days off required to compensate.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

4.3 Civil Claim for Damages

In respect of Action Point 9 from the meeting on 24 February 2022, in relation to a Civil Claim for damages from an officer who served in the Child Abuse and Rape Enquiry (CARE) Unit, the Committee had written to the PSNI regarding levels of support in place for officers working in the field of Public Protection. Correspondence received from the ACO People & Organisational Development outlined the importance providing a high level of support through Occupational Health & Wellbeing (OHW) and Human Resources (HR). To

support Health and wellbeing the PSNI have agreed to deliver a number of initiatives including:

- Embedding an effective health and safety culture.
- Implementing a workforce survey, incorporating wellbeing.
- Publishing a Mental Health Strategy supported in the longer term by a Health and Wellbeing strategy.
- Developing health related policies and guidance to address the top three causal factors of absence.

A Member also raised initiatives that are undertaken in the area of social work and suggested that PSNI could adopt similar ideas – it was agreed the Member should raise this directly with the Chief Operating Officer or at the next Board meeting.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

4.4 Above Delegated Limits Compensation Payment

In respect of Action Point 7 from the meeting on 24 February 2022, Members were advised of correspondence received in response to questions raised regarding the time line for the case and mediation process.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

4.5 FMO Delivery Model

In respect of Action Point 5 from the meeting on 24 February 2022, Members had requested information regarding plans to move to a shared funding model for the provision of Forensic Medical Officer (FMO) services and the extent to which there is potential for Department of Health (DoH) involvement in the model. Correspondence received from the ACC, Community Safety

Department, referred to progress in respect of delivering the collaborative Transformation of Custody Healthcare project with funding contribution from DoH. Further detail was provided in the following areas – FMO Contract for delivery of custody healthcare, transformation of police service custody healthcare and a commentary regarding costs.

Members responded positively to the progress made and also raised concerns regarding the amount of time spent by officers in environments such as hospital A&E departments, and how this could be reduced. Members felt that previous trials in respect of a 'Triage' system had not been fully implemented despite being a success and would like an update on the current position of these initiatives. It was agreed to take this forward via Partnership Committee.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

4.6 Review of Police Officer Sickness Absence

In respect of Action Point 2 from the meeting on 24 March 2022, Members requested information regarding the sickness absence target of 11.2 days and an insight into how this target will be reconsidered as part of a wider review of the Human Resources function.

Correspondence received from the Chief Operating Officer outlined the intent to calculate percentage of deployable officers and staff as a means of resolving the percentage deployability of officers and staff, this will be compared against a target and reviewed annually.

During discussion Members raised a number of points including the need to prioritise Sickness Absence, the view that the level of sickness is a reflection on how officers and staff are treated and the impact of sickness absence on public safety. Members expressed concerns around the target figure of 11.2 days, which was carried over from a former policing plan and discussed the

requirement to provide clarity around the assumptions made to produce the percentage of deployable officers and staff calculation outlined in the correspondence. It was agreed to request that PSNI provide this information at their next update on Sickness Absence at the October meeting of the Committee. **(AP3)**

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

5.1 Acquisition of Land at Antrim PSNI Station – Agreed in May 22

Members were reminded that in the absence of a Committee meeting in April and May 2022, the approval by written procedure of the acquisition of a small piece of land at Antrim PSNI Station. Board agreement was reached to purchase at the Land and Property Service (LPS) valuation of £15k and PSNI were advised accordingly on 6 May 2022.

Members **NOTED** the Board approval to purchase the land.

5.2 Meeting with the Catholic Police Guild – Verbal Update

The Chief Executive advised that she met with the Catholic Police Guild in May 2022 and the following subjects were discussed; Irish Language Policy; engagement with Irish Language community in the PSNI Engagement Strategy; engagement with the Catholic Guild regarding recruitment and representation in the service; reference to national discussions on representation; and the upcoming cultural audit.

In addition, discussions regarding work carried out and actions taken by the Guild, for example, supporting members, outreach activities, improving the role of policing in the Catholic community and suggestions to make the police

environment more welcoming for Catholic officers.

Following discussion Members **AGREED** to invite the Catholic Guild to meet with the Committee at a future date to be confirmed. **(AP4)**

5.3 Correspondence from the Chief Constable to DoJ re PSNI Resource Plan 22-23

Members NOTED the correspondence issued to DoJ from the Chief Constable with regard to the PSNI Resource Plan 2022-23 outlining the range of measures being taken in the Resource Plan to address the funding gap of approximately £59m. The Chief Constable also noted PSNI are progressing with the planned reductions in service in the absence of in-year or interim funding.

6. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1 PSNI Finance Report – May 2022

The Committee noted PSNI's monthly Finance Report and Board officials provided a summary of PSNI's financial position as at 31 May 2022.

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.

The Chair invited the ACO Corporate Services to present the report.

The ACO Corporate Services presented an overview of the monthly Finance Report including a summary of the PSNI's financial position to 31 May 2022 including:

- For this year PSNI were advised by DoJ of a 'Contingency Planning Envelope (CPE). The CPE for 2021-22 is £760m, this compares to an allocation of £800m in the previous year. Overall, there was a projected funding gap of £59m, to be addressed through the Resource Plan.
- The current year to date position is an easement of £0.2m, and a projected full year overspend of £25.6m. Additional allocations are expected in June and are likely to reduce this figure to £20m, however cost pressures are expected to continue.
- The year to date Capital overspend is reported as £0.5m, due to a number of projects working ahead of schedule. The full year projection is £0.9m overspend due to unfunded NI Protocol projects. A budget allocation for this has been confirmed and is expected as part of the next monitoring round.
- The Overtime budget for this year was reduced by £2m, and year to date there is an £89k underspend, despite a busy period in May with Elections taking place.

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

Budget – The ACO Corporate Services advised that budget allocation for Fresh Start Funding is expected soon and this will be fed into the budget lines on the Finance Report. Members raised queries in respect of the overspend for Close Protection and were advised that this is based on demand, the number of principals involved, and the level of service provided. Members requested a breakdown of the costs from April – June 2022. COO advised she will provide these figures so that analysis can be made, and comparisons drawn against the previous year.

Discussions in respect of planned overtime highlighted spikes in the year ahead due to public order and seasonal events, however PSNI are focusing on reducing the overtime budget gradually, with an understanding that there may be a need to increase it due to events at the time. Members requested additional information on the projected spikes predicted during the year.

NI Protocol Funding - it was noted that there is insufficient budget allocation to cover the full year of projected costs. The ACO Corporate Services advised that the PSNI are still lobbying to secure additional funding to cover the shortfall. Members requested a breakdown of the number of officers involved in this area of work, and details of where they are deployed/what they are working on. The COO advised that these resources are being utilised in community and neighbourhood policing and the officers involved are not exclusively engaged in working solely on EU exit work.

Discussions also focused on managing rising fuel and energy costs, efficient management of vehicle utilisation and the current position on new student officer recruitment.

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

6.2 High Value Compensation Cases

The Committee received a confidential briefing from the PSNI and their legal representatives regarding two proposed Above Delegated Limit Compensation payments. A confidential annex detailing this briefing can be made available to Members for review but will not be published at this time.

6.3 Disposal of Castleberg PSNI Station

The Head of Finance presented Members with a paper seeking Members' consideration of a request from PSNI Estate Services for approval to dispose of the former Castleberg PSNI station. Two separate parties have expressed interest in purchasing the site and have indicated they are willing to pay the site value as advised by LPS. LPS Advisory Unit had advised that as the owner of the police estate the Board should make the final decision in terms of which party the land should be disposed to. Members were also asked to consider the reports from PSNI Estate Services and make a recommendation to the Board regarding which applicant has been successful.

During discussion Members raised a number of points regarding the suitability of each applicant including timeframes for business case approval, sources of funding, planning permission, anticipated completion date and the need for social housing in the area. Members felt that further information, consideration and discussion was required before selecting the successful applicant. **(AP5)**

Following discussion Members:

- **AGREED** to recommend to the Board the disposal of the former Castleberg PSNI Station.
- **AGREED** to defer a decision on which applicant has been successful until receipt of further information to be discussed at the next Committee meeting in September 2022.

6.4 Police Administration

6.4.1 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) and Independent Medical Referees (IMRs).

Board officials advised Members that between 16 April 2022 and 17 June 2022, SMPs had considered 53 cases referred to them under the relevant regulations.

Board officials advised Members that between 16 April 2022 and 17 June 2022, IMRs had considered 6 cases referred to them under the relevant regulations.

Members also considered 8 submissions where the applicant has requested their case be reconsidered by the SMP/IMR.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that:

- The medical recommendations of the Selected Medical Practitioners in 53 cases assessed between 16 April 2022 and 17 June 2022 be approved.
- The medical recommendations of the Independent Medical Referees in the 6 cases assessed between 16 April 2022 and 17 June 2022 be approved.
- The 8 anonymised cases (RECON IMR 3 -22.23, RECON IMR 4 - 22.23, RECON IMR 5-22.34, RECON IMR 6-22/23, RECON IMR 7- 22/23, RECON SMP 4 -22.23, RECON SMP 5-22/23 and RECON SMP 6-22/23), progress to reconsideration by either a SMP or IMR.

- The Committee agreed to approve Police Administration cases via written procedure for July 2022 and August 2022.

6.4.2 Officer B Ill Health Retirement

The Chief Executive presented a paper asking Members to reconsider an officer's (Officer B 2021) application for Ill Health Retirement (IHR) and Injury on Duty (IOD) award.

The Chief Executive provided background information on this case including that a subgroup comprising of three Resources Committee Members had previously reviewed and considered the case in detail and the Resources Committee had also considered the case at its meeting on 25 November 2021. At that time the Committee resolved to refuse Officer B 2021's application for IHR owing to extant disciplinary proceedings. Following the subsequent resolution of these proceedings, a request was made for the Committee to further consider the case.

After discussion it was **AGREED** that:

- The SMP recommendation in relation to IHR and IOD is approved.
- In light of contemporaneous issues and the outcome of the disciplinary proceedings, further information is requested from PSNI to ascertain lessons learned. **(AP6)**

6.5 Committee Terms of Reference

The Boards' Standing Orders state that Committee Terms of Reference are reviewed at the start of each financial year.

The Director of Resources presented a paper asking Members to consider the Draft Terms of Reference and, if content with the suggested changes, make a recommendation to the Board for approval.

Following discussion it was **AGREED** that:

- The Draft Terms of Reference, with the suggested changes, are recommended to the Board for approval.

6.6 Committee Annual Report 2021-2022

The Director of Resources provided Members with the Committee Annual Report outlining the work of the Committee from April 2021 to March 2022.

The Director of Resources noted that due to the Assembly elections there was no Committee meeting in May 2022 and as such, the report was tabled and approved at the Board meeting on 9 June 2022 to ensure it was approved in time for inclusion in the Board's Annual Report and Accounts and in order to publish a composite report on the work of all of the Committees of the Board for the financial year 2021/22.

Members **NOTED** the report.

6.7 Committee Programme of Work

The Director of Resources presented a paper providing Members with the draft Programme of Work for the Resources Committee for the period September 2022 to March 2023. Members were asked to consider the draft document and advise of any comments or feedback.

Members confirmed they were content with the planned programme.

7. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

Correspondence to be issued regarding Overtime concerns, as discussed at item 4.2.

8. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES /OPPORTUNITIES

Due to recent media focus it was indicated that PSNI financial pressures are likely to be raised at the next Board meeting.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chief Executive provided Members with an update in respect of the recent NIPB Organisational review carried out by HeadsTogether Consulting. This was a limited review of the Senior Management Structure with a focus on the work of the Resources Directorate.

The review was commissioned following feedback received from Members and the Senior Management Team which had identified a wide and challenging remit for Resources as well as gaps in experience and expertise in particular areas including Estates and Finance. A number of recommendations have been made and these are currently being reviewed and implemented where possible. Work also continues with recruitment to improve capacity and provide more stability and expertise, with further plans to recruit at Senior Director level at the end of the Summer.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members agreed to conduct morning meetings going forward and the next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 22 September at 9.30am** in Waterside Tower.

The meeting ended at 12.35pm

CHAIR

**RESOURCES DIRECTORATE
JUNE 2022**