

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 20th October 2022 AT 2PM IN WATERSIDE TOWER AND ZOOM.

PRESENT: Mr John Blair (Chairperson)
Mr Michael Atkinson (Vice Chair) *
Ms Sinéad McLaughlin (Zoom)

Ms Janet Gray
Ms Linda Dillon MLA
Ms Liz Kimmins MLA (Zoom)
Mr Colm McKenna
Mr Maurice Bradley (Zoom)

PSNI: (1) ACC Bobby Singleton
(1) Chief Superintendent David Beck
(3) Chief Superintendent Muir Clarke
(3) Superintendent Norman Haslett, (Zoom)
(1) Fiona Hart, Deputy Principal, Strategic Partnerships & Prevention, PSNI
(2) Una Williamson, Head of Justice Healthcare, PSNI
(3) Damian Foley, Project Sponsor, Estate Services, PSNI
(1) Lianne Band PSNI Staff – Observing only

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Sinead Simpson, Chief Executive
Mrs Dympna Thornton, Director of Partnership
7 Board Officials

(*) The Vice Chair stepped in to chair this meeting briefly (from 15.40pm to 15.45pm)

(1) Present for Items 6.1 – 6.3

(2) Present for Item 6.2 only

(3) Present for Items 6.2 and 6.3

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Joanne Bunting MLA and Ms Carmel McKinney.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chairperson asked Members to declare any conflicts of interests arising from the agenda. No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of meeting on 15th September agreed.

4. UPDATE ON ACTION LOG

The Director of Partnership provided Members with an update on the Committee's rolling action log:

AP 28.7 from November 2021 – Communication has been reinstated with PSNI by the new Engagement Manager and it is anticipated that a visit to an OSD site will take place before Christmas. Date will be shared with Members when we have confirmed date. **Members agreed to keep action open.**

AP 29.4 from December 2021– Engagement Webinar with PCSPs is being progressed in line with Engagement Programme of Work for 2022. The Engagement Manager is progressing with plans to hold webinar with the PCSPs in relation to Cyber Crime (in early December). **Members agreed to keep action open.**

AP 32.3 – Partnership Committee Draft Terms of Reference: Draft Terms of Reference discussed and updated in line with Members' and Chief Executive requests. Further suggested updates provided by Members. This will be discussed in Committee Business 5.9. Suggest closure of this action as it is superseded by AP 33.7. **Members agreed closure of this item.**

AP 32.6 - Custody suite visit: Visit to custody suite for Members has now been arranged with the PSNI. An email invite was sent to all Board Members from NIPB Corporate Services on 5th September 2022 and the visit is scheduled to take place on 26th October. Linda Dillon wanted it noted that she can no longer attend this event. **Members agreed closure of this item.**

AP 32.8 – Paper on Regional Events: Final event will be held in the Northwest on 26th October. A composite paper with information on all 4 events will be brought to November's Committee meeting. **Members agreed to keep action open.**

AP 33.1 - Strand Road Police Station: Response received and noted by members. **Members agreed closure of this action.**

AP 33.2 – Youth Engagement Consultation report: : Response received and noted by members. **Members agreed closure of this action.**

AP 33.3 – Single Officer Patrolling Guidance: : Response received and noted by members. **Members agreed closure of this action.**

AP 33.4 – Future Survey work linked to Policing Plan Outcome 3: Directors of Partnership and Performance will liaise with PSNI to explore ways in which survey and stakeholder focus groups should be arranged going forward. An update will be provided to Committee when this has been considered and discussed with PSNI. **Members agreed to keep action open.**

AP 33.5 – ICO Annual Report 2021/22: The report is now available on the Board's website. **Members agreed closure of this item.**

AP 33.6 – Engagement Strategy 2020-2023: Meeting to be arranged with interested Members to discuss future Engagement opportunities. The Engagement Manager is planning to schedule a meeting for interested members (in mid/late Nov) to discuss the next Engagement Strategy and future engagement opportunities. **Members agreed to keep action open.**

AP 33.7 – Terms of Reference Paper: Having been previously considered by Committee in June 2022 and Sept 2022, a further revision of this paper is included for consideration at the October 2022 meeting of Partnership Committee. **Members agreed closure of this item.**

5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

5.1 PSNI Youth Voice Consultation report

The Director of Partnership provided Members with an overview of the Youth Voice Police Service Northern Ireland Consultation" report and highlighted the summary at page 14.

Members discussed:

- The findings of report as requested at September's Committee meeting.
- The need to retain Local NPT engagement in communities
- The need for specific training for Officers on dealing with young people

NOTED

5.2 Response from PSNI re: Strand Road Station / Single Officer Patrols

The Partnership Director advised Members that clarification was received from PSNI regarding intentions for Strand Road PSNI site, and an update will be provided by PSNI on Single Officer patrolling.

NOTED

6. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1 report on Policing Plan Measure 2.1.1 – Confidence

A Board Official provided an overview of the information contained in the report card received from PSNI. This included identification of key issues including the development by PSNI of a Performance Portal and the need to develop strategies to improve trust and confidence in PSNI.

The Committee welcomed ACC Singleton, Chief Superintendent Beck and PSNI staff member Fiona Hart to the meeting.

Members discussed:

- The training of Officers in working with young people and the need to role this out across the service to assist in enhancing confidence in policing.
- The PSNI Violence Against Women and Girls' strategy and queried how the Board will be updated on this.
- Overall confidence figures and whether PSNI might wish to see the range of data related to this issue collated.

- Members discussed the possibility of PSNI developing a heat map of Northern Ireland to identify areas where engagement with PSNI is less frequent.
- Whether public confidence in policing in Northern Ireland is benchmarked against that in other policing areas.
- The rationale for contact with the police and a query on the number of staff members in PSNI Strategic Community Engagement Team.
- The possibility of Partnership Committee receiving a written update on the work of the Strategic Community Engagement Team.
- The highlighting of police behaviours in light of recent reports on misogyny within the Metropolitan Police and the need to ensure PSNI seriously consider this issue.
- The need to ensure targeted engagement with young people and to ensure that such engagement is not binary but is reflective of all strands within society.
- Operation Mobiliser and how it is being received and rolled out by NPTs.

In addressing Members comments PSNI noted the following:

- PSNI will further consider those areas where levels of confidence in young people is low and the need to be aware of gaps in knowledge in this area.
- The 5 key pillars in the PSNI's Here for You strategy and the opportunity which the launch of that strategy provided in allowing PSNI to test its thinking.
- Acknowledgment that young people are a key strand within that strategy.
- The development of an engagement plan by PSNI for each District

- Recognition that the recent survey carried out by the Policing board is positive but recognition of the need to assess engagement at local levels through Policing Plan Measure 3.1.3.
- Recognition of low levels of confidence of policing in areas where paramilitaries are active or in instances where victims of crime have contacted police but may have had a poor user experience.
- The need to layer multiple sets of information from a range of surveys and data to provide greater understanding.
- Recognition that where interaction with PSNI has been negative there is a disproportionate impact on confidence in policing.
- PSNI would welcome the opportunity for the Strategic Community Engagement Team to update Partnership Committee.
- PSNI agreed to respond to the Board on the Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, acknowledging that Officer conduct is a priority area of focus within the organisation and noting that PCSP's are to be briefed by PSNI Professional Standards department as a demonstration of local accountability in tackling Officer behaviour.
- The lag in figures for drug related deaths was referenced by PSNI who commented that Operation Mobiliser seeks to reassure the community on enforcement action being taken by PSNI regarding the drugs issues in communities.

It was **AGREED**: -

- The PSNI Strategic Community Engagement team will be invited to provide an update on their work to the Committee (AP1).
- PSNI will provide a response to the Board in respect of it's recently launched Violence Against Women and Girls strategy (AP2).

6.2 PSNI Presentation on MATTs

PSNI provided Members with an overview on the work of the Multi-Agency Triage Team which was requested by the Board's Partnership Committee meeting in June 2021.

The Committee welcomed PSNI staff member Una Williamson to join the meeting.

Miss Williamson provided information outlining that front line Officers can refer into the MATT service. It was also noted that between July 2018 and February 2020 there were 439 referrals to the service and 240 diversions from hospital emergency departments as well as significantly less numbers of people detained under the Mental health Act.

It was confirmed that the MATT teams do have access to the Ambulance service should a paramedic be needed, however there was acknowledgement of the geographical limits on this service and a recognition that it needs to be hand in hand with the Health Department and have better access to community psychiatric nurses.

Members discussed:

- The resource intensive nature of this service but the recognition of the efficiencies which it can generate.
- Whether the service collates data for referrals of young people under the age of 18 and whether the service can be used for that group.
- Gaps in knowledge regarding costing models and the need for government to consider the wider picture as regards prevention.
- Cost analysis of the service and felt that the benefits of MATT are understated, and this initiative should be expanded.

In addressing Members comments PSNI noted the following:

- Recognition within PSNI of the potential benefits and efficiencies which MATT arrangements can provide.
- When MATT was set up it was decided that it would focus on over 18's only since the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) exists for the young age group.
- PSNI officers can seek guidance from a community psychiatric nurse should this be required, and in addition officers in MATT teams train with community psychiatric nurses.
- All existing partners who contribute personnel to MATT meet monthly to consider financial and non-monetary benefits of these arrangements.
- Engagement with the NIAS would be welcomed by PSNI who noted that not all calls for service in this area require PSNI presence.

It was **AGREED**: -

- The Board, with PSNI input, write a letter to both the Minister of Health and the Justice Minister noting the importance of this initiative and the need to consider further development of this approach (AP3).

6.3 South Armagh Review update

The Director of Partnership provided Members with further update on progress against delivery of the remaining recommendations in this Review which has been assigned to Partnership Committee to monitor.

The Committee then welcomed Chief Superintendent Muir Clarke, Superintendent Norman Haslett and PSNI staff member Damian Foley to the Meeting.

Members discussed:

- The need for the Committee to receive reassurance regarding Recommendation 2 (Revised Policing Model).
- Progress against recommendation 40 (Vulnerability Focus) as well as progress on development plans for Crossmaglen and Newtownhamilton PSNI stations and levels of public engagement on these plans.
- The timeframe for delivery against Recommendation 34 (Establishment of an IAG) and recommendation 48 (Cross Border Communications).
- The need to consider membership of IAG's.
- The possibility of replicating good practice emerging from this review in other areas as the work being done in this area could benefit many others.
- The need to prioritise resources in respect of development of PSNI estate in the area, which will be more fully explored in Resources Committee.
- The level of engagement which has taken place with the local community in both Crossmaglen and Newtownhamilton.

In addressing Members comments PSNI noted the following:

- The process of recruitment to key roles in the area resulted in very high numbers of applications for these roles which PSNI noted as very encouraging.
- Acknowledgment that NPT's have a strong focus on recognising vulnerability and its links to the VAWG strategy.
- The financial pressures which have led to difficult decisions regarding establishing a dedicate Chief Inspector post for the area.
- A Terms of Reference has been agreed for the IAG.
- Face to face meetings with cross border colleagues were curtailed during Covid but there are now regular meetings with the Garda and other relevant partners in the area.

- Acknowledgement that the South Armagh review was put in place to benefit all communities living in that area.
- PSNI remain committed to preserving the function of the NPT in the area.
- Meetings have taken place with Political party Members in the local area regarding development plans for the Newtownhamilton site however, there has been no formal engagement to date with the local community in Crossmaglen however a number of public meetings are scheduled to discuss development plans starting next month.

The Committee Chair thanked PSNI for their presentations and attendance.

6.4 PCSP Reconstitution – 2023/24

The Partnership Manager provided members with the indicative timeline for the delivery of the PCSP Reconstitution (2023) and sought recommendation for Board approval to allow officials to commence the process.

Members were advised that they will be updated on all associated activity as this progresses. Attention was drawn to the Code of Practice and the Boards policy which is based on that Code. Members were advised of the necessity to appointment an Impartial Assessor with the Partnership Manager noting that the previous Impartial Assessor report while positive noted the need for the Code of Practice to be revised by DOJ. The Partnership manager advised that the department have sought legal advice regarding this revision, and she also noted that a consultation document on updates to the Code of Practice is due to be issued imminently.

Members discussed

- The need for inclusivity and to ensure accessibility of the process to all groups and communities. This was noted as particularly important to engage new nationals now living in Northern Ireland in order to ensure those communities do not feel excluded in having a voice in police accountability mechanisms.
- The need for Councils to engage with bodies such as The Equality Commission if they note a lack of diversity in applications.
- Issues which might arise resulting from the legal advice .

It was **AGREED**: -

- To progress plans for PSCP recruitment
- The consultation document will be sent to all Board Members for comment and will be discussed at November's Committee meeting (**AP4**)

6.5 Draft Committee terms of Reference

The Director of Partnership provided Members with an updated version on the Committee's Draft Terms of Reference noting that a small number of suggested additional revisions which had included.

Members discussed:

- The additional updates to the Committee's Terms of reference.

It was **AGREED**: -

- Members agreed to approve the proposed revisions and to finalise the Terms of Reference for the Committee.

7. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

- 7.1** Members noted the response provide by PSNI regarding recommendation 1 of the South Armagh review.

There were no further questions for the Chief Constable

NOTED

8. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES / OPPORTUNITIES

An update was provided on communications activity since the last meeting and areas of work in the month ahead to support the Custody Visiting Recruitment Campaign, Consultation on the Corporate Plan and publication of 2 key reports by the Board.

NOTED

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Verbal Update on Local Policing Review Infographic

The Director of Partnership provided an update on the Local Policing Review Infographic which was shared with members in September 2022. Subsequent to this further information has been shared with the Board regarding the significant pressures on PSNI budget and possible implications for neighbourhood policing.

It was **AGREED**: -

- The Committee Chair will write to ACC Singleton to propose postponing publication of this infographic until early 2023 when there may be greater certainty regarding PSNI's budget.

9.2 Verbal update following meeting of Joint Committee

The committee chair provided a brief update on matters discussed at the recent Joint Committee meeting. He confirmed that minutes from that meeting will be placed on Decision Time when they have been approved by Joint Committee.

NOTED

9.3 Verbal update

The Partnership Manager advised Members that the Board have very recently received an audit report that was completed on Belfast PCSP. Given the audit finding in this report it will be necessary to convene a meeting of Joint

Committee very soon to consider actions to be taken as a result of the findings.

Members discussed:

- The concerning nature of this verbal update
- The role of the Council in respect of this audit
- What learning Belfast PCSP might have been taken from the previous audit of their activities

The Partnership Manager advised as follows:

- The Board understand that Belfast City Councils Audit and Risk panel have considered this report however was unsure if the PCSP were aware of it.

NOTED

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting will be on Thursday 17th November 2022 at 2pm in Newry PSNI Station following a visit by Members to the local area.

(Meeting closed at 17.05 PM).

**PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORATE
OCTOBER 2022**



Chairperson

