

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 24
NOVEMBER 2022 AT 9.30AM AT WATERSIDE TOWER AND VIA ZOOM**

PRESENT:

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

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

- (1) Ms Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating Officer
- (2) Mr Mark McNaughten, Assistant Chief Officer
Corporate Services
- (3) Ms Clare Duffield, Assistant Chief Officer
People and Organisational Development
- (1) Ms Aldrina Magwood, Assistant Chief Officer
Strategic Planning and Transformation
- (1) Two PSNI Officials

**EX OFFICIO MEMBERS IN
ATTENDANCE**

Dr Tom Frawley

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- Mrs Sinead Simpson, Chief Executive
- Ms Jenny Passmore, Director of Resources
- (4) Mrs Aislinn McGuckin, Director of Police Pensions
and Injury Benefits
- Eight Board Officials

- (1) Items 6.1 to 6.3 only
- (2) Item 6.1 only
- (3) Item 6.2 only
- (4) Items 6.7 to 11 only

*Attended meeting by video conference facility

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received for the meeting.

The Committee agreed the agenda for the meeting and no one raised any business that they wished to discuss under 'Any Other Business'.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the Committee meeting held on 22 September 2022.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 22 September 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 2 from the meeting in September 2022, a meeting will be arranged with Staff Associations in the early part of 2023 and in respect of Action Point 3 from the June meeting, Members were advised that further information on Sickness Absence will be considered and discussed as a substantive item on the agenda for today's meeting.

The Director of Resources also provided an update on correspondence issued and received for agenda items 4.1 to 4.5.

4.1 Fixed Penalty Processing Centre (FPPC)

In respect of Action Point 1 from the meeting in September 2022 and issues previously highlighted with Fixed Penalty Processing the Committee has received a response following correspondence issued after the September meeting. This relates to Member concerns in respect of the number of statute barred cases and whether or not this constitutes a breach of contract from the third party provider. Clarification was provided from PSNI in respect of percentage calculations and considerations given to a breach of contract alongside assurances that a remedial action plan has been implemented to address the issues highlighted.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

4.2 PSNI Cultural Audit

In respect of Action Point 5 from the meeting in September 2022, a response has been received to provide Members with an update on the development of the PSNI Cultural Audit including ongoing work regarding quality control, link to the code of ethics, training competencies, proposed external focus and strategic resourcing plans.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

4.3 Recruitment Vetting

In respect of Action Point 7 from the September 2022 meeting, Members were provided with an update on the PSNI tattoo policy in response to a query

regarding the definition of “unacceptable tattoos” as part of recruitment vetting.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence and asked for additional clarification and the Director of Resources agreed to follow up with PSNI. **(AP1)**

4.4 Human Resources Issues

In respect of Action Point 4 from the September 2022 meeting, Members were provided with an update on various Human Resources items including the PSNI Report card format, baseline figures, living wage, exit interviews and temporary promotions.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence and it was agreed to request additional information in respect of the duration of temporary promotions and the likely impact on substantive promotion opportunities. **(AP2)**

4.5 Assisted Removals Extension

In respect of Action Point 6 from the September 2022 meeting, correspondence received provided an update on the case and addressed concerns raised in respect of ongoing costs, circumstances regarding the Northern Ireland Housing Executive’s (NIHE) current position and an overview of legal advice received.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

5. CHAIRPERSON’S BUSINESS

5.1 Cost of 2022 Parades

Members noted correspondence received from PSNI which provided a summary of the costs incurred in policing parades, protests and related

disorder over the core parading season in 2022.

5.2 Cost to increase officer headcount

Members noted correspondence received from the PSNI Chief Operating Officer (COO) which provided a financial assessment on growing police officer headcount to an estimated 7,100 over the next few years.

5.3 PSNI Holiday Pay Claims

Members noted correspondence between the Chief Constable and Department of Justice Permanent Secretary in respect of holiday pay claims and subsequent actions following a proposed mediation process. This matter will be discussed further with the COO later in the meeting.

6. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1 PSNI Finance Report and details of latest proposed reductions

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

The Chair welcomed the Chief Operating Officer (COO), Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) Corporate Services and ACO Strategic Planning and Transformation (SP&T) to the meeting.

The ACO Corporate Services presented an overview of the monthly Finance Report for October 2022 and provided further details in respect of proposals to address in-year financial pressures:

- The current year to date pressure of £5.2m with a full year projected pressure of £18m as at the end of October 2022. This is an improved position for the full year due to a projected reduction in utilities costs

and implementation of cost reduction measures.

- Proposed cost reduction measures were assigned to one of three categories based on ease of implementation and level of impact. Following detailed analysis and discussion within the Senior Team PSNI agreed to proceed with a number of specified cost reduction measures from Category 1 and Category 2.

During the briefing Members raised the following points with the COO and ACO Corporate Services:

Category 3 measures – Further information was requested in respect of Category 3 cost reduction measures. The ACO Corporate Services advised Members that these measures were not being considered for implementation at present as they are deemed to be high risk. The ACO Corporate Services advised Members that more information on Category 3 measures would be provided in the November 2022 Finance Report.

Category 2 measures – Members expressed concerns in respect of proposed cost reduction measures which included deferred security works and vehicle repairs. The ACO Corporate Services and COO advised that some security works can be rolled over to the next financial year and the suspension of vehicle repairs will be a short term cost saving solution and will not impact on operational capability.

PSNI Holiday pay claims – The COO provided an update on the holiday pay case progressing to the UK Supreme Court hearing scheduled for December 2022.

Provision of Tasers for Close Protection Unit (CPU) – Members noted the costs quoted in the business case and expressed concerns in respect of the absence of Board involvement in the discussion and decision making process

to issue Tasers to CPU. The COO and ACO Corporate Services advised that the business case had been progressed as a result of a College of Policing Review recommendation and the business case and related policies were still under development. It was agreed to write to PSNI for further information and refer the matter to Performance Committee for further consideration. **(AP3)**

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

6.2 Sickness Absence Recommendations Update

The Chair welcomed the Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) People and Organisational Development (P&OD) to the meeting and Members were provided with an update report on the attendance management recommendations following a review of the management of police officer sickness absence.

This included an overview of:

- Current organisational performance in respect of sickness absence and associated trends.
- Progress against recommendations made as part of the review of attendance management and associated services.
- Future direction of travel and next steps.

Members raised the following points with the COO and ACO People &OD:

- The report recommendation under the heading 'Role of HR' (Human Resources) has not yet commenced and this will be critical to success.
- The trigger or intervention point to review an individual's sickness absence and provide associated support is currently 28 days and Members expressed the view that consideration should be given to

reducing this period to facilitate earlier intervention and better outcomes.

- Any correlation between reduced overtime and higher levels of absence given rising living costs.
- The availability of data in respect of officers and staff taking second jobs and impact on absence levels.
- Clarification of the absence target figure and provision of actual figures for average days lost year to date, projected for this year and for previous five years. It was agreed to write to PSNI for further information in this matter. **(AP4)**
- Request for further information in respect of the actions 'in progress' against recommendations including timescales and it was agreed to write to PSNI on this matter. **(AP4)**
- Reasons for high absence levels in some departments, the role of management accountability structures, and impact of absence levels on service delivery.
- Consistency of absence management processes across police and staff roles.

The Committee **NOTED** the update provided and thanked the ACO P&OD for the briefing provided and she left the meeting.

6.3 Transformation Programme Update

The ACO Strategic Planning & Transformation provided Members with a progress update on the Transformation programme covering the following key areas:

- Transformation programme foundations based on the 10 key principles outlined in the PSNI Horizon 2025 Service Modernisation Plan.
- Further development of the PULSE Performance Framework.
- Utilising the Force Management Statement (FMS) to self-assess

current status and future plans to address capacity and demand.

- Overview of current projects, strategic priorities and challenges.

Members raised the following points with the COO and ACO SP&T:

- Impact of providing support to the Health Sector on PSNI service delivery.
- Challenges in respect of reshaping the organisation in response to new and growing areas of crime including Cyber-crime, the role of analysts and new ways of working.
- The requirement to prioritise Neighbourhood Policing as part of the transformation programme and to ensure commitment to change from new and existing officers/staff.

The Committee noted the update provided and thanked the ACO SP&T and COO for the briefing provided and they left the meeting.

6.4 PSNI Estate Disposal – Castleberg

Members **NOTED** an update from the Director of Resources on the proposed disposal of Castleberg PSNI station. A decision on the matter following a recommendation to the Board by Committee in September 2022 was deferred at the Board meeting in October 2022 for a period of two months. This was to allow for the provision of further information to inform Committee Member's decision regarding the proposal.

Additional information has been received including correspondence from the ACO SP&T following a request for information regarding timelines and related correspondence in respect of the proposed disposal process. In addition, information was provided from both the interested parties in respect of current readiness to acquire the site and receipt of legal advice regarding the criteria to be used for disposal.

Following the submission of additional information Members were asked to make a decision in respect of the preferred party to purchase the site of the former PSNI station in Castledearg.

The following points were discussed by Members in relation to the matter:

- Whether or not the local Council can support both parties' applications to acquire the site and concerns regarding planning permission for development.
- Strong support by some Members to progress with the disposal to the party who intend to develop social housing on the site.
- Need to ensure that governance framework for disposal process is correctly followed to ensure final decision is agreed in line with defined process and legal advice received.
- Following the deferment of the decision at the October 2022 Board Meeting, concerns were raised in respect of a further delay and the consequent costs associated with continuing to maintain the existing buildings and infrastructure considering PSNI financial pressures.
- Members noted that only one party is in a position to proceed with the purchase while the other party is unable to provide definitive dates in terms of confirmation of readiness to purchase.
- Status of the sponsoring body for each of the interested parties.

Following discussion Members submitted two proposals to be voted upon and the Chair put each proposal to a Members' vote.

The first proposal was to recommend to the Board the disposal of the former PSNI site at Castledearg to Apex Housing Association. This was proposed by Mr Gerry Kelly MLA and seconded by Mrs Linda Dillon MLA. Following the vote it was recorded that all Members present voted against this proposal with the exception of Mr Gerry Kelly MLA and Mrs Linda MLA who voted in favour.

The second proposal was to recommend to the Board the disposal of the former PSNI site at Castleberg to Derg & District Cultural Association. This was proposed by Mr Maurice Bradley MLA and seconded by Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA. Following the vote it was recorded that all Members voted in favour of this proposal with the exception of Mr Gerry Kelly MLA and Mrs Linda Dillon MLA who voted against.

Following the conclusion of the voting process it was **RESOLVED**:

- To recommend to the Board the disposal of the former Castleberg PSNI Station to Derg & District Cultural Association.

6.5 PSNI Section 8 Request of International Assistance

The Director of Resources presented a paper asking Members to consider new information in respect of a request for one police analyst to travel to Kosovo to provide international assistance to the Kosovo police for a two week period.

This request had previously been considered and approved by the Committee via written procedure in October 2022, however Members were now asked to reconsider and make a decision on providing assistance in light of the new and additional information provided.

Members outlined the importance of receiving a summary report detailing the tangible benefits of the support provided and were advised that future reports will be quality checked to ensure compliance.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED**:

- To agree to the request for PSNI staff members to travel to Kosovo for a period of 10 days in December 2022.

6.6 Consultation on draft NIPB Equality Scheme, draft Audit of Inequalities and draft Disability and Equality Action Plans 2023-25

The Corporate Services Manager presented a paper asking Members to consider and provide feedback on the revised draft Equality consultation documents and, if content, to make a recommendation to the Board to proceed with a 12-week public consultation on the updated draft documents.

Members were advised that all Public Authorities are required to have an Equality Scheme in place and to undertake an Audit of Inequalities to inform the development of Equality Action plans. The intention is to implement the action plans for a 2-year period from 2023 to align with the new NIPB Corporate plan which is currently out for consultation.

Members were also provided with the following information:

- The draft revised Equality scheme is based on the Equality Commission 'model scheme'.
- The draft Audit of Inequalities is an evidence-based analysis across the nine Section 75 categories of potential inequalities relevant to the work of the Board.
- The action plans have been drafted based on the findings of the draft Audit of Inequalities and Members were asked to note that all Section 75 categories have been represented in the proposed actions to be consulted on.

A Member had one comment on the draft revised Equality Scheme relating to the role of policy leads and the Committee's role as the final decision maker in

this policy area. Board officials noted this comment and advised the draft Equality Scheme would be updated accordingly.

Members **NOTED** the update provided and following discussion it was **AGREED**:

- To recommend to the Board that the draft revised NIPB Equality Scheme, draft Audit of Inequalities and draft Equality and Disability Action Plans go out to a 12 week public consultation from 12 December 2022 – 6 March 2023.

6.7 Police Pensions and Injury Benefits

6.7.1 Cases for Committee Decision

The Director of Police Pensions and Injury Benefits (PPIB) presented 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 17 October 2022 and 11 November 2022, SMPs had considered 13 cases referred to them under the relevant regulations.

Board officials advised Members that between 17 October 2022 and 11 November 2022, IMRs had considered 3 cases referred to them under the relevant regulations.

Members also noted an update on the 1 submission where the applicant has requested their case be reconsidered by the IMR. The Director of PPIB advised Members that this case is being progressed in line with established

practices and it is likely that a subgroup of Members will be asked to consider the case at a future date and then brought back to Committee for a decision.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that:

- The medical recommendations of the Selected Medical Practitioners in 13 cases assessed between 17 October 2022 and 11 November 2022 be approved.
- The medical recommendations of the Independent Medical Referees in the 3 cases assessed between 17 October 2022 and 11 November 2022 be approved.

6.7.2 Officer E 22/23 Re-determination of Eligibility for Ill Health Benefits

The Director of PPIB presented a paper asking Members to make a decision in respect of an application made by Officer E for the re-determination of eligibility for payment of ill health benefits under Regulation 34 of the Police Pensions Regulations 2015.

Members were advised that the final decision to be made was the Board's as pension Scheme Manager however this decision is informed by the SMP opinion and advice from the Pension Scheme Actuary, being the Government Actuary's Department (GAD), including utilisation of its Exclusion Matrix. Members noted that this information was provided with their papers for consideration.

Following discussion it was **AGREED** that:

- Pursuant to above that Officer E is ineligible for ill health benefits under the 2015 scheme.

6.8 PSNI Above Delegated Authority Request

The Director of PPIB presented a paper to Members outlining a proposed settlement of civil claim legal costs above delegated authority limit. Members noted that this relates to the approval of legal costs following the Committee's earlier recommendation to approve the damages element of the claim in February 2022. Members were reminded of earlier legal advice noting the Board's liability was agreed to be 5% of the value of the damages claim and PSNI liable for 95%.

Legal costs following the conclusion of the case have now been provided by PSNI and Members were asked to recommend the Board agree the settlement of legal costs on the same percentage terms as agreed in February 2022.

Following discussion it was **AGREED**:

- A recommendation be made to the Board to approve the payment of legal costs with the Board liable for payment of 5% of total legal costs with the remainder paid by PSNI.

7. Committee Programme of Work

The Director of Resources presented a paper providing Members with the draft programme of work for the Resources Committee covering the period December 2022 to March 2023.

Members **NOTED** the update and confirmed they were content with the planned programme.

8. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

Following the Secretary of State's earlier announcement on the NI budget, Members agreed to submit a written question to the Chief Constable regarding his intentions to engage with the Health Service about addressing the issues within the Health and Social Care system that can result in pressures on police time (such as when they have to remain with emergency calls at EDs, locate "missing" persons). **(AP5)**

9. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES / OPPORTUNITIES

No communication issues were raised.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members agreed to write to the Department of Justice (DOJ) in support of the PSNI receiving additional funding following the SoS's announcement of an unspecified uplift in funding for the DOJ. **(AP6)**

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 15 December at 9.30am** in Waterside Tower.

The meeting ended at 1.10pm

CHAIR

RESOURCES DIRECTORATE

NOVEMBER 2022