

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON MONDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2023 AT 7.15PM IN JAMES HOUSE BELFAST AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE FACILITY

PRESENT:

Ms Deirdre Toner Chair
Mr Edgar Jardine (Vice-Chair)*
Mr Gerry Kelly MLA
Ms Joanne Bunting MLA
Ms Nuala McAllister MLA
Mr Mukesh Sharma
Mr Peter Osborne*
Mr Les Allamby*
Dr Janet Gray *
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA*
Mr Brendan Mullan *
Mr Mark Durkan MLA *
Mr John Blair MLA *

EXTERNAL ADVISORS IN ATTENDANCE:

Joanne Kane, HeadsTogether Consulting
(Independent Human Resources Advisor)

Wendy Williams, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), Wales and Western Region

External Independent Policing Advisor

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs Sinead Simpson, Chief Executive
Mr Sam Hagen, Senior Director of Resources

2 Board Officials

*Attended meeting by video conference facility

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Ms Liz Kimmins MLA, Mrs Linda Dillon MLA, Mr Frank McManus and Dr Kate Laverty.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. AGREEMENT OF APPOINTMENT PANEL DECISION OF CHIEF CONSTABLE AND NEXT STEPS

The Chair thanked Members for convening this meeting at short notice to ratify the decision of the recruitment panel with regard to the appointment of a preferred candidate for the position of PSNI Chief Constable. The Chair conveyed the outcome of the recruitment process to members and invited the Chief Executive to provide the detail on the process followed, which would then be formalised in a written report to the Secretary of State/Department of Justice.

The Chief Executive outlined the elements of the assessment and selection process for the position of PSNI Chief Constable from development of the paperwork through to advertisement, shortlisting and then assessment, and noted that the Assessment and Selection Panel had, following a shortlisting process, assessed two candidates on 6 November 2023. The assessment included a seen presentation, an unseen briefing and then a competency and values based interview.

The Chief Executive included details on how efforts had been made to ensure all elements of the process were fair and enabled the panel to judge candidates against nationally agreed standard.

The Chief Executive noted that the other candidate was also deemed appointable by the panel, and would remain as a reserve candidate for one year.

The Chair invited comments from the two Independent Recruitment Panel Advisors. Both provided Members with assurances that the recruitment and selection process had been fair and consistent throughout, that discussions had been evidence based and that Equality and Diversity guidance had been applied and reflected during the process. HMICFRS representative advised Board members that the process had been scrupulous in efforts to be fair and consistent. Both Independent Advisors endorsed the panel's recommendation.

The Chair of the Board, asked if any Member had any questions; no Member questions were raised. The Chair then concluded that the preferred appointable candidate be put forward to the Secretary of State for approval to appoint to the role of PSNI Chief Constable. Mr Gerry Kelly MLA proposed that Mr Jon Boutcher be put forward for approval as the PSNI Chief Constable. This was seconded by Ms Nuala McAllister MLA. Members indicated by a unanimous show of hands their support of the Assessment and Selection Panel's recommendation of the preferred appointable candidate.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- That the preferred appointable candidate would be recommended to the Secretary of State for appointment to the position of Chief Constable, PSNI.

The Chief Executive advised that approval will be requested from the Secretary of State for the appointment in accordance with legislation and reminded all Members of the need for continued confidentiality in relation to this appointment whilst the necessary approvals are sought and the unsuccessful candidate is notified.

The Chief Executive outlined the approval process and associated timescales.

A Member raised concerns regarding the Secretary of State's capacity to ratify the decision of the appointment panel within 24 hours, given his commitments in Westminster the next day and also how the Board ensures that the governance arrangements in place to safeguard the independence of work undertaken by the preferred candidate in a former role are adhered to. The Chief Executive noted that the Board, via its scrutiny at regular Board and Committee meetings and through ongoing liaison with the Temporary Deputy Chief Constable will have the opportunity to derive assurances that the governance arrangements and controls put in place are being followed.

In response to a Member's question regarding how the outcome of the competition is communicated to the unsuccessful candidate, the Chief Executive advised that once the Secretary of State has ratified the appointment of the preferred candidate and the necessary approvals are in place the Board Chair will communicate the outcome to the successful and unsuccessful candidates, the latter being given the opportunity to receive feedback from the panel.

5. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

No actions were required until the preferred candidate was approved by the Secretary of State and had formally accepted the offer.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was conducted.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm.

Strategic Planning & Governance

Date: November 2023

Chair: