

## **NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING OF PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 16 MAY 2024 AT 9.30AM IN GARNERVILLE POLICE TRAINING COLLEGE, BELFAST.**

#### **PRESENT:**

Mr Peter McReynolds MLA (Chair)  
Dr Kate Lavery  
(1) Ms Cheryl Brownlee MLA  
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA  
Mrs Linda Dillon MLA  
Mr Patrick Nelson (Zoom)  
Mr Tommy O'Reilly  
Mr Keith Buchanan MLA

#### **EX OFFICIO MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Mukesh Sharma

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

(2) Assistant Chief Constable Singleton Local Policing  
(3) Chief Superintendent Gillian Kearney  
(4) Two PSNI Officials

#### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE INSPECTION NORTHERN IRELAND (CJINI)**

(5) Jacqui Durkin Chief Inspector of CJNI  
(6) Dr Claire Feehan Lead Inspector

#### **OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mrs Sinead Simpson, Chief Executive  
Ms Jenny Passmore, Director of Partnership  
Eight Board Officials

(1) Joined meeting at 10.40am.  
(2)(3)(4) Item 7.1 and 7.2 only  
(5)(6) Item 7.2 only

The Partnership Committee Chair welcomed all Members to the Committee and introduced himself as a recently appointed Political Board Member. The Chair also welcomed Mr Patrick Nelson and Mr Tommy O'Reilly as newly appointed Independent Board Members to their first meeting of the Partnership Committee. Before proceeding with the agenda Members were reminded of the importance of maintaining confidentiality in respect of Board business.

Members **noted** the introduction.

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Ms Marian Cree and Mr Mark H Durkan MLA.

The Committee agreed the agenda for the meeting.

### **2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

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

### **3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR**

The Chair advised Members that the previous Vice Chair of the Partnership Committee stood down following his election as Chair of the Board and therefore, there was a vacancy for the position of Vice Chair of Partnership Committee.

The Chair advised Members that guidance for the election of the Board Chair and Vice-Chair is set out in paragraph 4 of the Board's Standing Orders, and Committees follow the same process.

The Chair progressed the election of the Vice Chair by inviting nominations and requesting a proposer and seconder for nominations.

Mr Tommy O'Reilly proposed Dr Kate Lavery for Vice Chair, and Mrs Linda Dillon MLA seconded this proposal.

Dr Kate Lavery advised she was content to be nominated. There were no other nominations and Members unanimously agreed that Dr Kate Lavery should be elected as Vice Chair of Partnership Committee.

#### **4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2024.**

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the Committee meeting held on 21 March 2024.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 21 March 2024 be approved.

#### **5. UPDATE ON ACTION LOG**

The Committee **NOTED** the updates and correspondence detailed within the Action Log and the related verbal overview provided by the Partnership Director.

It was agreed that the following actions could now be closed as they had been implemented:

- Action Points 2 & 3 from the meeting in March 2024.

Regarding Action Point 3 from the February 2024 meeting of the Committee, the Director of Partnership noted that Board Officials received information from PSNI, and a letter was issued to the Department for Infrastructure on 5 April 2024 supporting a legislative change in relation to custody healthcare in PSNI. A response is awaited. This action will therefore remain open.

Regarding Action Point 1 from the March 2024 meeting of the Committee, the Director of Partnership noted that a response was received from PSNI in respect of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in the other neighbourhood areas that were selected as part of the performance plan measure for reporting. Board Officials are awaiting a response to the letter in respect of the review of ASB in Belfast City.

## **6. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS**

### **6.1 PSNI responses to questions raised re 999/101 calls and Road Safety at March 2024 Committee**

Members were asked to note that at the last committee meeting in April the Committee received a briefing on the Policing Plan measure relating to 101/999 calls and PSNI have provided written responses to four questions that were asked by Members of the Committee.

Members **NOTED** the update provided.

## **7. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

### **7.1 Policing Plan Measure 2.1.1 – Confidence**

Prior to the PSNI representatives joining the meeting a Board Official provided Members with a summary of the analysis of the PSNI reporting in

relation to Policing Plan Measure 2.1.1 - Confidence, including suggested discussion points.

Members were advised that this is the first opportunity this year the Partnership Committee has had to consider Measure 2.1.1 – regarding confidence in policing.

Members were advised that Board officials have reviewed the Northern Ireland Safe Community Telephone Survey 2022/23, which was published in March 2024 and included in the analysis is also the Northern Ireland Policing Plan Survey 2023, which was published in July 2023.

Members were advised that the new Northern Ireland Policing Plan Survey will be published in June 2025.

The Board Official noted that the Telephone Survey 2022/23 shows overall confidence in the PSNI has fallen slightly from 82% in 2021/22 to 81% in 2022/23 but whilst this figure has dropped 1% from the previous year, it represents a 1% increase from the 2019/2020 baseline of 80%.

Members were advised that all indicators regarding the Northern Ireland Safe Community Telephone Survey have seen a positive increase when compared to the 2019/20 baseline and that Board Officials will monitor any possible emerging trends in future papers.

The Board Official noted that the PSNI report card recognises several recent events will have had an impact on confidence, namely, the data breach and the closure of enquiry offices. However, Members were advised that the Northern Ireland Safe Community Telephone Survey 2022/23 was conducted prior to these events and therefore won't have affected the results of the survey. Future reports will provide further data and analysis, which

may reflect how much these events have affected Public Confidence in Policing.

The Chair welcomed PSNI representatives to the meeting and invited them to provide an update on Policing Plan Measure 2.1.1 – Confidence.

ACC Singleton provided Members with an analysis of item 7.1 which included:

- That the data is currently limited in this area,
- The downside of the Safe Community Survey being running 12 months behind,
- That the Board may not be able to complete the Policing Plan Survey next year due to budget restraints and how PSNI will need to look at how best to address this gap,
- The results are always only of a snapshot of a moment in time and how interesting it will be to see the 2023/2024 Community Policing Plan Survey after the recent events PSNI went through,
- That the 81% confidence figure was strong in comparison to England and Wales,
- The importance of visible and accessible policing,
- The significant impact that Neighbourhood Policing has in public confidence,
- That the 10-year trend figures demonstrate the increased acceptance of PSNI and how this is something to be proud of.

Following the PSNI presentation, Members raised the following points with the PSNI team:

- If the overall confidence figures had anything to do with the cuts in Neighbourhood Policing,

- If the Strategic Community Impact Assessments can be shared with Members,
- If the Reflective Engagement and Listening (REaL) events detailed in the Community Impact Survey can be shared with Members and what future REaL events were planned,
- Whether the methodology used by England Forces to measure confidence was the same to enable a comparison between the 81% achievement in Northern Ireland and their achievement figures,
- If there are any plans to develop a scorecard around accessibility,
- How the Telephone Survey was completed, who completed it and the breakdown of figures.

PSNI addressed Members issues outlining the following:

- It was too early to say if the cuts in Neighbourhood Policing had any effects on the figures provided,
- That Neighbourhood Policing cuts will certainly impact on the visibility of officers and the concern in local communities of the impact this will have,
- That there are 75 vacancies across the Neighbourhood teams with no capacity to fill them,
- That PSNI are in as good a place as they can be,
- That the Strategic Community Impact Assessments can be shared with Members,
- That the future REaL events schedule can be shared with Members,
- The usefulness of the Community Impact Survey across the province not just locally,
- That it is accepted that the comparison to England's figures are slightly different, but they are broadly measured the same,
- That Accessibility and Victim focused areas are looked at in other areas.

The Chair thanked PSNI for the presentation.

## **7.2 Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland CJINI Report on Community Safety and Local Policing Arrangements**

Prior to PSNI and CJINI representatives joining the meeting the Director of Partnership provided Members with an overview of the CJINI Report on Community Safety and Local Policing Arrangements in Northern Ireland.

The Director of Partnership advised that some background had been provided to Members, including the role and remit of CJINI along with a summary document produced by the organisation.

The Director of Partnership advised Members that whilst this inspection notes that PSNI have a critical role in how safe people are and how safe they feel in their communities, it did acknowledge that the Service wasn't the sole owner of community safety, and it is very much a partnership issue with other government departments, councils and voluntary and community organisations.

The Director of Partnership noted that there was praise for the dedication and hard work within the Neighbourhood Policing Teams but also a recognition of the challenges they face in terms of the impact of reduced budgets.

The Director of Partnership advised that the report concluded with eight recommendations and six of those are for PSNI to implement and asked Members to note that CJINI have specified a timeframe for completion against each one. The Committee will be seeking regular updates on progress and the first update is scheduled for October 2024.



The inspection also followed up on the recommendations from the 2019 review of PCSPs which raised seven recommendations. Two of the seven recommendations have been marked as achieved, four partially achieved and one not achieved. Joint Committee will discuss what further action can be taken to bring those recommendations to a conclusion.

The Chair welcomed Jacqui Durkin, Chief Inspector of the Criminal Justice Inspectorate and Dr Claire Feeney Lead Inspector to the meeting and invited them alongside ACC Singleton to provide an update on the CJINI Report on Community Safety and Local Policing Arrangements.

During discussion Members raised the following queries:

- The importance of strategic recommendations being addressed through a bottom-up approach which responds to local needs,
- The use of Community Impact Assessments in building up trust in the local communities,
- That funding is an issue and should be taken into consideration when completing the mapping exercise of the strategic and community safety forums,
- How abstraction policy principles can be applied, and consistency implemented,
- If the performance framework is different across Neighbourhood teams and what this means,
- The need for meaningful partnership and engagement,
- How the timeline will be managed,
- The language and vocabulary used regarding local Neighbourhood Policing and if there is an argument for it to be a strategic priority going forward.

PSNI and CJINI addressed Members issues outlining the following:

- That the report has been accepted by the Department,

- That speaking to a number of organisation's is an integral part of the Inspection,
- The need to look at any areas of duplication,
- Where funding is coming from and what it is supposed to do,
- The requirement to be authoritative for organisational clarity on what they are doing and achieving,
- The need for it to be a meaningful experience for everyone,
- The importance of how community safety is being delivered in Northern Ireland,
- That Management and Neighbourhood Teams may not always align as to what constitutes an abstraction,
- The need for consistency when applying the abstraction policy,
- The tightening up of data roles and looking at needing more resources and structures and recalibrating where necessary,
- The importance of not taking away the core role of Neighbourhood Teams,
- The increasing number of events that are being held and the increased expectations and demand on PSNI to manage these events,
- The importance of Community Impact Assessments and the requirement for Neighbourhood Policing Teams to be consulted and kept informed of issues,
- That Neighbourhood Policing is defined as engagement with a purpose and creating trust,
- That work is done nationally to identify the right kind of activity for Neighbourhood Officers in trying to find the right balance and create confidence within their communities,
- That there are huge discrepancies on how teams are managed and monitored and how this can contribute to officer frustrations,
- The need to be mindful of the different views of the Community Safety Networks, what they bring and what is expected of them,

- Organisations will have seen a draft report before publication and would have had an opportunity to say if timescales were feasible or not,
- That more than one organisation is involved and the need to have more qualitative than quantitative data.

The Chair thanked PSNI and CJINI representatives for their attendance and they left the meeting.

### **7.3 Joint Committee Update**

The Partnership Manager provided Members with an update on the work of the Joint Committee in relation to their statutory obligation as the oversight body of Policing & Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs).

The Partnership Manager advised Members that the Joint Committee last met on 24 March 2024 and that these minutes will be made available subject to their agreement at the next meeting of the Joint Committee in June 2024.

The Partnership Manager advised Members that the Joint Committee were provided with a summary of the PCSP Action Plans 2024/25 along with any issues to be considered and subject to some minor amendments, approved all Plans.

The Partnership Manager informed Members that a brief discussion took place on the CJINI report recommendations for PCSP's. As the CJINI report was only recently released further discussions will take place at future Joint Committee meetings along with update on the PCSP reconstitution.

During discussion Members requested clarification on discussions around PCSP quarterly reporting templates. The Partnership Manager advised that this was a piece of work associated with the BCS project, aimed at reducing

administrative work for PCSPs and provide Joint Committee officials with a greater blend of quantitative and qualitative information. A further discussion with PCSP Managers to agree a reporting structure that suits all will take place over the coming weeks.

Members **NOTED** the update provided.

#### **7.4 Youth Forum Update**

The Engagement Manager provided Members with an update on the Youth Justice Forum.

The Engagement Manager advised that this initiative was initially established with a view to delivering a Youth Conference which would be led and co-designed by young people. A steering group was established to oversee the delivery of this event which included representatives from Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY), PSNI, Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (OPONI) and the Board.

The Engagement Manager advised that engagement meetings with all partners and youth representatives were carried out throughout 2023 with a view to delivering the conference in November 2023. However, in August 2023, due to various factors and considerations the conference was postponed but the stakeholders involved agreed that it would be beneficial and advantageous to maintain the progress made to date, including the relationships established with the young people involved. Furthermore, it was agreed that in the absence of a conference, work would be progressed with regards to the establishment of a 'Youth Justice Forum'.

In order to facilitate further engagement with young people, around the design and establishment of a forum, a two-day residential was held on the 4 and 5 April 2024. The Engagement Manager noted that a draft Terms of

Reference is currently being prepared, incorporating the feedback from the young people at the residential, and this draft is expected in mid-June 2024.

Members **NOTED** the update provided.

## **7.5 Partnership Committee Annual Committee Report 2023/24**

The Partnership Director provided members with the draft Annual Committee Report for 2023/24 which provides information on Committee business throughout the year. A link to this and the other Board Committee Annual Reports is included in the Board's Annual Report and Accounts for the 2023/24 year.

The Partnership Director advised Members that the committee met nine times throughout the 2023/24 year and the report outlines the membership and Members' attendance at each meeting, and then summarises the key areas of focus for the committee throughout that time.

The Partnership Director advised Members that the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Committee were last agreed in June 2023 and normally would be reviewed again around this time of the year, however, given that seven out of ten Members are new to the Committee, it would be the intention to bring the ToR to the September 2024 Committee for consideration allowing Members to be in a better position to offer their views.

The Partnership Director informed Members that If approved, final approval will be sought by the Board and a link to it, and the other committee reports, will be included in the Board's Annual Report and Accounts.

Following the update:

- Members agreed to bring the ToR to the September 2024 Committee meeting. **(AP1)**

Members considered the Partnership Committee Annual Report for 2023/24 and agreed to make a recommendation to the Board to approve the Report.

**(AP2)**

#### **8. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE**

No questions were raised.

#### **9. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES / OPPORTUNITIES**

There were no communication issues or opportunities for update.

#### **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Partnership Manager provided an update on the Police Property Fund.

The Partnership Manager advised Members that 22 projects were approved, that 23 people were trained on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024 and that once everyone is trained the money will be released and work can commence.

The Partnership Manager advised Members that due to variations in original costs submitted in application forms, there have previously been a high number of requests from projects for budget re-profiling.

Members were advised that the previous Committee approved a request for the Partnership Manager to have delegated authority to approve these minor re-profiling requests as long as any budget movement did not fundamentally

impact or change the nature of the project. The Partnership Manager sought approval to continue to have delegated authority over such decisions.

Members **NOTED** the update are **Approved** the delegated authority requested.

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 20 June in James House.**

The meeting ended at 12 noon.

**CHAIR**

**PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORATE  
MAY 2024**