

**NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY  
19 SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 9.30AM IN JAMES HOUSE**

**PRESENT:**

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

**EX OFFICIO MEMBERS IN  
ATTENDANCE:**

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

- (2) T/Assistant Chief Constable Ryan Henderson
- (3) Chief Superintendent Gary McDonald
- (4) Chief Superintendent Sue-Ann Steen
- (5) Superintendent Joanne Gibson
- (6) Inspector Pete Cunningham
- (7) Sergeant Julie Mark
  
- (8) Professor Mary Hanratty CBE – PSCP Impartial Assessor

**NORTHERN IRELAND  
POLICING BOARD  
OFFICIALS IN  
ATTENDANCE:**

Ms Jenny Passmore, Director of Partnership  
Five Board Officials

- (1) Absent between 10am and 11am
- (2),(3) Items 6.1 and 6.2
- (4) Left after Item 6.1
- (5),(6),(7) Item 6.2 only
- (8) Item 6.3 only

## 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mark H Durkan MLA.

The Chair welcomed all Members to the Committee.

The Committee agreed the agenda for the meeting, and the Chair advised that an update on the upcoming Engagement events will be provided at agenda item 9 under 'Any Other Business'.

A Member advised that they had attended the South Armagh review event and suggested it would be prudent for an update to be brought to the Committee.

It was **agreed**:

- That a South Armagh Review update will be brought to Partnership Committee at a later date. **(AP1)**

## 2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Three Members declared an interest in relation to the Police Property Fund (PPF) Large Grants Scheme due to their involvement with groups that may apply.

The Director of Partnership advised that there was no conflict at this stage given that the PPF Large Grant Scheme had not yet launched.

## 3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 JUNE 2024

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the Committee meeting held on 20 June 2024.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 20 June 2024 be approved.

#### **4. UPDATE ON ACTION LOG**

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

Action Point 1 from the meeting on 16 May 2024 regarding the Committee Terms of Reference will be discussed at Agenda Item 6.7 later at this meeting.

Action Point 3 from the meeting on 20 June 2024 regarding the 2023\24 ICV Annual report, the Director of Partnership advised the report was approved by the Board at its meeting on 5 Sept 2024 and will be published on the Board's website. This action can now be closed.

##### **4.1 Correspondence from PSNI - ASB figures for Belfast**

In relation to Action Point 1 from the meeting on 21 March 2024 regarding the correspondence from PSNI in respect of ASB figures for Belfast area, the Director of Partnership advised that a substantial briefing had been received outlining areas and actions taken. Members were advised that this briefing did not include the most recent disorder. This action can now be closed.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

**4.2** Correspondence from Department for Health (DOH) – Right Care Right Person

In relation to Action Point 1 from the meeting on 20 June 2024 regarding writing to the Health Minister and the Chair of the Health Committee and the Justice Minister and Chair of the Justice Committee to highlight the importance of the Right Care Right Person (RCRP) initiative and to seek support, the Director of Partnership advised that responses had been received from the Health Minister and the Chair of the Committee for Justice both outlining their support for the initiative and confirmation that the Committee for Justice intended to hold a concurrent meeting with Committee for Health on 7 November to hear evidence on RCRP.

**4.3** **Correspondence from PSNI in respect of how Right Care Right Person (RCRP) will be managed prior to the rollout of the Programme**

Regarding Action Point 2 from the meeting on 20 June 2024 in relation to writing to PSNI to clarify the governance arrangements for the RCRP initiative, the Director of Partnership advised that a response had been received from T/Assistant Chief Constable Ryan Henderson.

Members **NOTED** the response, and it was **AGREED**:

- To write to the PSNI to request details of the legal advice received regarding call handlers. **(AP2)**

## 5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

The Committee **NOTED** the updates and related verbal overview provided in respect of the following agenda items.

### 5.1 PSNI response to questions raised re Community Resolution Notice (CRN's) and Youth Engagement Clinics at June Committee

Members were asked to note that the last briefing on the PSNI's Children and Young People Strategy was provided to Members at their June 2024 meeting and PSNI have provided written responses to two questions that were asked by a Member of the Committee.

Members **NOTED** the update provided.

### 5.2 Invitation to Road Safety Roadshow

Members were advised that at the Committee meeting in March 2024, PSNI advised of the upcoming Road Safe Roadshow events they were planning to roll out at various venues across the country.

Members were asked to note PSNI's invitation to the Road Safe Roadshow on 15 October 2024, which was specifically for stakeholders, and were asked to advise if they planned to attend the event.

One Member asked if a question could be raised with the Chief Constable in relation to the use of significant underspend by the Road Safety Partnership.

Members **NOTED** the invitation.

## **6. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

Before PSNI joined the meeting Board officials provided Members with an overview of agenda items 6.1 and 6.2 (Policing Plan Measure 2.2.1 Satisfaction and the update on Children & Young People Strategy respectively).

### **6.1 Policing Plan Measure 2.2.1 Satisfaction**

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 the Partnership Committee last considered this measure in January 2024 and that participation in the PSNI victim satisfaction survey has had the highest response rate (16.6%) for the financial year to date 1st April - 30 June 2024.

The survey shows satisfaction with PSNI has increased in three out of the four survey questions when compared to the previous year with Question 1 - Police Officers/staff treated me with fairness and respect has decreased 2.5% in the latest figures.

Members were advised that there is no 2024 Northern Ireland Policing Plan Survey available to make a further comparison to the 2023 Survey, however a new Northern Ireland Policing Plan Survey is in planning stages and will hopefully be published in May 2025.

Members were also advised that the number of complaints received by the Police Ombudsman during 2023/24 increased by 5% on 2022/23 figures and was the highest recorded number received in the last five years and that there was also an 11% increase in allegations in 2023/24 but were advised

on a positive note these increases have clearly reversed in the first quarter of 2024/25.

Members were advised that no further information was provided in this report card regarding online reporting, however Members will welcome the update in the Chief Constables Accountability August 2024 report that 70% of respondents have rated online reporting as very good or good.

The Committee welcomed T/Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) Ryan Henderson, Chief Superintendent Gary McDonald and Chief Superintendent Sue-Ann Steen to the meeting.

T/Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) Ryan Henderson provided Members with an analysis of item 6.1 which included:

- The report card shows there are very effective advocates for victims in Northern Ireland who are proactive in holding PSNI to account,
- The Victim's Charter is an incredible statement of intent and how victims should be at the forefront and not just a tick box exercise and that front line Sergeants were key influences in relation to the Victims Charter,
- The report card remains consistent over the last five years which is quite an accomplishment with the reduction in officer numbers and the challenges this creates in maintaining Victim Satisfaction,
- The importance of good communication within Joint Victim and Witness Care
- How the use of updated technology in taking statements has transformed how information is collected from victims and witnesses,
- That the online reporting system is triaged in the same way as calls and gives flexibility to both victims and witnesses,

- How the Citizens Portal that is due to go live over the coming months will create a unique reference number and allow the victim or witness to be kept up to date and have contact with the Officer on their case,
- There is further development of the portal to enable the upload any digital evidence which should assist in speeding up the process,
- How the delay in the Justice system can impact on community satisfaction figures,
- A brief overview of their initiatives –
  1. Operation Ambuling – including community tensions linked to migrant housing,
  2. Operation Tenuous – including reports of racially motivated hate crimes
  3. Operation Alefnall which is aligned to the national policing operation Operation Navette, and
  4. Operation Gallop – which is an expansion of the ‘Trust Your Gut’ campaign within the equestrian community,
- That there is still a significant amount of fear and anxiety in the ethnic minority community and the work being undertaken between these communities and PSNI,
- That following on from the recent disorder in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Ards and North Down and under Operation Alefnall, 4,567 hours of CCTV footage has been gathered, 3,396 hours of footage reviewed, 19 images of subjects have been published, 8 have been identified, 46 arrests have been made with 36 being charged,
- That PSNI has engaged with PCSP Managers regarding Hate Crime Awareness Week and a high number of PCSP events are being implemented,
- The Hate Crime Outcomes rate of 11% is disappointing and a lot more work in this area is needed, albeit complex,
- The interaction between PSNI and ethnic minority groups to ensure they feel safe,



- There are a number of milestones approaching, including the first anniversary of the Israel-Hamas War which raises concerns for the safety of the communities concerned.

Following the presentation Members discussed:

- The percentage of victims that are not satisfied with how they have been kept informed,
- That the satisfaction questions and figures are relatively stable with the declining workforce,
- The new technology being rolled out is encouraging and it is hoped that this will greatly benefit the victim/witness journey,
- The possibility of using rooms in community facilities as police stations are not the most welcoming,
- More understanding around the final figure of 6,253 of victims sent a message,
- The stability of satisfaction figures with the increase in crime figures against the decrease in resources,
- What steps can be taken to improve the response rate,
- The complex needs of young people and what training is provided to cater for all of the community,

Following discussion, it was agreed that PSNI would revert in writing on a number of specific issues raised by Members.

PSNI addressed Members issues outlining the following:

- That over 90% of victims are updated within 10 days,

- The importance of providing quality updates to victims and ensuring the victim feels valued and the need to allow Officers the time to focus on informative updates,
- The use of No File Decisions which allows Officers to concentrate on files going to court which will hopefully speed up the Justice system,
- That online reporting is only as good as the person reporting it,
- That community rooms are routinely used within Women's Aid offices and Restorative Justice offices,
- That while crime levels are stable the complexity and nature of these crimes has shifted e.g. Violence against Women and Girls,
- That the draft Policing Plan is a great opportunity to move from numerous surveys to just one,
- There are various front line training initiatives such as Youth Diversion Officers, Neurodivergent training, Disability Hate Crime and connections with the Children's Law Centre and Children's Commissioner.

Members **NOTED** the update provided.

The Chair thanked Chief Superintendent Sue-Ann Steen, for their attendance and they left the meeting.

## **6.2 PSNI Update on Children and Young People Strategy**

The Chair welcomed Superintendent Joanne Gibson, Inspector Pete Cunningham and Sergeant Julie Mark to the meeting and invited Superintendent Gibson to present PSNI's update on the implementation of the Children and Young People Strategy.

Superintendent Gibson noted that the Children & Young People's Strategy was formally launched in June 2023 and is based on five key themes:

- Engagement
- Safety & Protection
- Suspected Offending
- Victims & Witnesses
- Stop & Search

Superintendent Gibson provided Members with an update on work undertaken since the previous update to the Committee in June 2024 and outlined various events, initiatives and programmes taking place across the various districts to engage with young people from a diverse range of communities and backgrounds to progress the commitments made by PSNI in the strategy such as:

- The Youth Championship Forum and Youth & Policing Partnership.
- Engagement with young people from the Muslim community following the recent public unrest which delivered a three-day summer scheme for young people in the Muslim community,
- The plans to hold another REaL event with young people in the coming months and funding which has been provided to Districts to hold local REaL events,
- The plans to run Youth Volunteer Academy programmes in six areas,
- The Trust Your Gut Campaign which is being expanded into the equestrian community under Operation Gallop,
- The Service Accountability Panel which meets quarterly to discuss matters such as the use of stop and search powers.

It was agreed at June's meeting that going forward the updates would be thematic in nature therefore members were provided with a presentation on Suspected Offending and Youth Justice.

Sergeant Marks advised Members that there are currently 24 Youth Diversion Officers and gave an overview of their primary role. Members were advised of the range of Justice Disposals that can be used when an offence has been committed. Members were also advised of the function of Youth Engagement Clinics and the Diversionary Disposals available to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS).

Members were advised of an early diversion pilot scheme being introduced in ABC Council and that if this is successful that PSNI would like to roll it out throughout all Northern Ireland.

During discussion Members raised the following with PSNI:

- Who the Youth Forum is made up of and the importance of including those in all areas of the community noting, that NICCY have reached out to various youth organisations in more deprived areas and the involvement of Voices of Young People in Care (VOPIC). Members also noted the work with Youth Diversion Officers, Neighbourhood Officers and sporting activities such as the Belfast Giants Breaking the Ice programme.
- If Community Resolution Notices (CRN's) would impact on job prospects or getting a Visa noting, that while a CRN is not a criminal conviction it does stay on the Police system for 12 months and under enhanced vetting may have an impact on job applications and that legal advice can be sought before signing a CRN.
- The invaluable work that NICCY does in making sure young people's voices, who interact with PSNI, are heard but the need to also note that the most vulnerable may not have the confidence to speak,
- If the various justice disposals are in increasing order of severity noting, that they are and that 1,174 CRN programmes were completed and that 1,600 CRN's were issued. Members also noted that there may be

other tailored solutions such as a written letter of apology or work in the community.

- That if a pilot scheme is successful the importance of rolling this out across all districts,
- The importance of being supportive to ethnic minority groups but cognisant of the need to ensure full community integration.

Members **NOTED** the update provided.

The Chair thanked T/Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) Ryan Henderson, Chief Superintendent Gary McDonald, Superintendent Joanne Gibson, Inspector Pete Cunningham and Sergeant Julie Mark for their participation, and they left the meeting.

### **6.3 PCSP Impartial Assessor's Report**

The Chair welcomed Professor Mary Hanratty CBE and invited them to provide Members with a summary of their findings and recommendations. Professor Hanratty outlined her background and discussed recommendations within the report including:

- Ensuring panel members at council level are sufficiently competent to conduct the process,
- The need for transparency in all panel documentation,
- The recommendation in relation to whether the panel composition was appropriate,
- The recommendation in relation to communication between potential candidates and the HR service provider,
- That in line with the conclusion within the report, the process was conducted in a fair, open and transparent manor.

During discussion Members raised the following:

- The need for a fundamental review of the process,
- Some Members did not agree with the recommendation relating to the panel composition at Council level,
- To ensure that the process is run to attract the best community representatives.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED**:

- To share the PCSP Impartial Assessor's Report with the Minister of Justice along with a caveat of Members comments. **(AP3)**

#### **6.4 Joint Committee Update**

The Director of Partnership presented a paper which provided Members with an update on the work of the Joint Committee.

The Director of Partnership advised Members that the last committee meeting was held in June 2024. A further workshop is being held in November 2024 between Joint Committee and PCSP designated organisation representatives to continue the work to enhance their role on the PCS.

The Director of Partnership also advised Members that Joint Committee minutes will be available on DecisionTime once approved by the Committee. be provided.

Members **NOTED** the update.

#### **6.5 Call for Police Property Fund Large Grants**

The Partnership Manager provided Members with the final draft documents for the Large Grants Scheme and advised Members that due to resourcing pressures, the launch of the Large Grant Scheme has to be deferred.

The Partnership Manager provided Members with an update of the Large Grants Scheme which included:

- The inclusion of up to £5,000 for small capital,
- That areas of guidance have been strengthened as a result of lessons learned from the Small Grants Scheme,
- That the application form now includes a section for Neighbourhood Officers to sign to acknowledge that they have had engaged in discussions with the project and that there will be a meeting with the Local Policing Lead to discuss the practicalities around this,
- If potential applicants were experiencing issues around completing application forms that the programme team were available to assist.

Members discussed:

- That the Neighbourhood Officer's signature should be confirmation of engagement and not a recommendation of the project application,
- The potential capacity of organisations to complete the application form.

Members **NOTED** the update provided and **APPROVED** the changes recommended by the Partnership Manager and the plan to launch a call for applications when resources permitted.

## 6.6 NIHE Public Consultation

The Partnership Manager advised Members of the ongoing consultation by the NI Housing Executive on their new Draft Community Safety Strategy 2025 – 2030 “Building Safer Communities Together”.

The Partnership Manager also advised Members of the three key Strategic Aims:

- Building Community Confidence
- Ensuring Local Solutions
- Working Together

The Partnership Manager advised Members that the NIHE recognises the need to evolve due to living in a more diverse and multi-cultural society ensuring services are equipped to deal with hate crime when they occur.

The Partnership Manager advised Members that the NIHE are a Designated Organisation of the PCSPs and suggested a letter of support was considered.

Members **NOTED** the update and **AGREED**:

To **APPROVE** the letter of response to the NIHE for issue. **(AP4)**

## **6.7 Draft Committee Terms of Reference (TOR)**

The Director of Partnership advised Members that the draft TOR have been updated to include the recent work of the committee including:

- Roads Policing
- Custody
- Children and Young People

The Director of Partnership also advised Members that the Members were as the Police Property Fund is independent of the police it had been moved to a new section in the ToRs.



The Director of Partnership also noted that there was a small addition added to encourage Members to attend PCSP events.

Members **NOTED** the update and **AGREED**:

To **RECOMMEND** the TOR to the Board for approval. **(AP5)**

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

A Member raised the following question for the Chief Constable:

The Committee has been advised that that the Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership (NIRSP) has, in the past three years, returned £2.2m to the Department of Finance that was attributable for the purposes of promoting road safety. Can the Chief Constable provide a summary of the costs associated with the Partnership over the last three years to include the income and expenditure and an explanation as to why the funds were not used to promote road safety.

## **8. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES / OPPORTUNITIES**

No other communication issues were raised.

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Engagement Manager provided Members with an update on the upcoming Engagement events and initiatives and asked Members to advise the Board if they wished to attend any of the following events:

- Boards Annual Volunteer Conference

- Attestation Events
- PSNI Road Safety Roadshows
- Partnering for Prevention Event

Members **NOTED** the update.

#### **10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 17 October 2024** at 9.30am in James House.

The meeting ended at 13.07pm

**CHAIR**

**PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORATE  
SEPTEMBER 2024**