

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON FRIDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2024 AT 18:30 IN JAMES HOUSE BELFAST AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE FACILITY

PRESENT:

Mr Mukesh Sharma (Chair)
Mr Brendan Mullan (Vice-Chair)*
Mr Gerry Kelly MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Peter McReynolds MLA
Dr Kate Lavery
Mr Peter Osborne*
Mr Patrick Nelson*
Mrs Cheryl Brownlee MLA *
Mrs Linda Dillon MLA *
Mr Mark Durkan MLA *
Mrs Marian Cree *
Mrs Nuala McAllister MLA *
Mr Frank McManus *
Mr Alan Chambers MLA *
Mr Tommy O'Reilly *

EXTERNAL ADVISORS IN ATTENDANCE:

Joanne Kane, HeadsTogether Consulting
(Independent Human Resources Advisor)

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs Sinead Simpson, Chief Executive

2 Board Officials

*Attended meeting by video conference facility

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Les Allamby, Mr Keith Buchanan MLA, and Mr Cathal Boylan MLA.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

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

The Chair advised that the purpose of this Special Board meeting is to provide Members with an update on the DCC Appointment process and to ask Members to ratify the recommendation of the Appointment Panel for the DCC position.

The Chair thanked Members for making themselves available at this late hour and outlined the usual arrangements for those joining the meeting remotely.

The Chair reminded Members of the care that is needed in respect of protecting the confidentiality of Board business and noted how this is especially pertinent in relation to appointments processes. The Chair advised there would be a discussion towards the end of the meeting about arrangements for communication of the outcome of the competition but underlined the importance of Members treating the information shared in confidence until released in accordance with our communications plan.

The Chair provided Members with a synopsis of the following:

- Board agreement in May 2024 on the composition of the panel and the eligibility for the role namely, and in keeping with national practice, eligible candidates to have successfully completed the Police Executive Leadership Programme (Level 5) or the previous Strategic Command Course (SCC) or equivalent; and have a minimum of two years service at Assistant Chief Constable grade or equivalent.

- The roles and responsibilities of the advisors to the Appointment Panel including Joanne Kane, Headstogether Consulting Ltd who provided HR and equality advice and the Chief Constable who provided professional policing advice, as is required by Board guidance on the appointment of senior officers. Members noted that neither were part of the decision-making panel.
- The provision of other support from Board Chief Executive and other Board officials.

The Chair noted the thanks of the panel for all the advice and support they had received throughout the process.

Moving to the specifics of the DCC competition the Board Chair advised as follows:

- The Deputy Chief Constable competition was launched on 19 September 2024 with a closing date for applications of noon on 10 October 2024.
- The number of applications received.
- Shortlisting was conducted on 11 October and resulted in all applicants being deemed as suitable to progress to the Assessment Days which were held on 13 & 15 November 2024.

In terms of the process followed, the Chair advised:

- The NIPB Guidance for the Appointment of Chief Officers and Senior Police Staff Equivalents (Section 3) which outlines the Principles of Appointment as being: Merit, Fairness and Openness, had been followed.

- Panel members had undertaken all necessary training to ensure that appropriate knowledge of effective assessment and selection practices, the relevant legislation and assessor skills were in place, and applied throughout the process.
- The necessary requirements to perform the role of PSNI Deputy Chief Constable were drawn from the national competency and values framework.
- Due diligence was followed in respect of checking information disclosed for all of the DCC candidates. This included an enhanced vetting procedure to ensure alignment with national best practice, post the Angiolini report, which would include re-vetting should it be necessary to draw from a reserve list.

In terms of the assessment process the Chair advised members as follows:

- Assessment took place over 13th and 15th November and involved candidates being challenged and assessed against the criteria advertised for the role using a robust process.
- Candidates submitted a pre-seen presentation. Candidates also had to prepare and deliver an unseen briefing, and they underwent a competency and values-based interview. In total the assessment process for candidates lasted three hours.
- A marking framework had been agreed in advance of the selection process.

In relation to the outcome of the process, the Chair advised of the Panel's unanimous decision regarding the preferred candidate, which was being recommended to the Board, along with a recommended reserve list to be

retained for a 12-month period. The decision of the Appointment Panel was unanimous.

The Chair invited the HR and Equality advisor to the panel to comment.

Joanne Kane from Headstogether Consulting Ltd confirmed that the process which was followed complied with the framework set out in advance and adhered to Board's own guidance on Appointment of senior officers, as well as to HR best practice.

As the Appointment Panel Chair, and in line with para 4.1.7 of the Board's Guidance, the Chair recommended to the Board the preferred candidate for the role of Deputy Chief Constable for PSNI.

The Chair confirmed other Appointment Panel Members had no further comments to add.

The Chair invited Board members to ratify the decision of the appointment panel and agree the preferred candidate should be appointed to the role of Deputy Chief Constable subject to Ministerial approval, and that a reserve list should be retained for 12 months.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- That the preferred appointable candidate would be recommended to the Minister of Justice for appointment to the position of Deputy Chief Constable, PSNI, and her agreement secured in relation to a reserve list.

In terms of next steps, the Chair advised that he would, at the conclusion of this meeting, speak with the Minister and seek her verbal approval of the Board's decisions. Once that is secured, he would advise the Chief Constable

of the outcome and will then contact each candidate by telephone. He also noted that issues required for finalising the terms and conditions of appointment would be progressed by the Chief Executive.

5. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

The Chair outlined the intention to issue a public statement at 10am on Monday 18th November to confirm the appointment.

The Chair reiterated that the panel and their advisors have signed a confidentiality agreement and have been assiduous in maintaining the confidentiality and integrity of the process and asked that all Board Members do likewise in relation to the information shared with them in this meeting. The Chair emphasised the importance of the details of the preferred candidate not entering into the public domain in advance of the announcement on Monday 18th. The Chair advised that Board Members should not engage in commentary before the official confirmation of the appointment decision is announced.

The Chair also advised that Members should not comment on any aspect of the appointment process so that candidate confidentiality is maintained.

The Chair concluded by thanking the Appointment panel for their work and all members for attending the special Board meeting to ratify the Appointment panel decision.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was conducted.

The meeting closed at 19:00.

RESOURCES DIRECTORATE

November 2024

Chair