

## **NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING OF PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 19 JUNE 2025 AT 9.30AM IN JAMES HOUSE**

#### **PRESENT:**

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

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

- (3)** ACC Melanie Jones
- (3)** Chief Superintendent Sam Donaldson
- (3)** One PSNI Official

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

Ms Jenny Passmore, Director of Partnership  
Seven Board Officials

- (1)** Until 12.40am
- (2)** From 9.40am
- (3)** Item 3.0 Only

#### **1. APOLOGIES**

No apologies were received for the meeting.

The Committee agreed the agenda for the meeting.

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

None.

### **3. PSNI POLICING PLAN INDICATOR 2.6 ROAD SAFETY**

Before PSNI joined the meeting, the Police Performance Monitoring Manager provided Members with an overview of agenda item 3 Policing Plan Indicator 2.6 Road Safety.

The Chair welcomed Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) Melanie Jones and Chief Superintendent Sam Donaldson to the meeting and invited them to present the report card on Policing Plan Indicator 2.6 Road Safety.

ACC Jones welcomed the addition of Road Safety into this new 2025-2030 Policing Plan and advised Road Safety remains a key Strategic Priority for PSNI. ACC Jones advised PSNI are still concerned about the high level of fatalities on our roads and welcomed the increased focus and scrutiny around this Policing Plan Measure. ACC Jones noted the PSNI have developed a strong Communications approach to the "Fatal Five", however despite continued media attention, in 2024 the speed detection vans have recorded the highest number of detections (84,004) according to the official statistics which were published yesterday.

ACC Jones noted that Road Safety is not solely an issue for PSNI, and they are working in partnership with the Department for Infrastructure (DFI) to try and implement a change to legislation that was passed in 2016 to introduce a Graduated Driving Licence scheme which is designed to gradually introduce new drivers to the road, often with restrictions during the initial stages after passing the driving test. ACC Jones noted DFI have advised that it is unlikely that this scheme will be implemented before 2027 and requested any Board advocacy to try and accelerate this timeframe. ACC Jones advised PSNI have also been liaising with DFI regarding plans to increase the levy of Fixed Penalty Notices for speeding charges to bring them into line with the current

level of fine imposed for use of a mobile phone whilst driving, however there has been a lack of impetus to progress this initiative.

ACC Jones advised PSNI are also working with partners in the Departments of Health and Infrastructure to assess the fitness to drive of elderly people and noted the need to strike a balance on removing driving licenses from those who are unfit to drive versus taking away the independence of other elderly people.

Chief Superintendent Donaldson then presented the PSNI Road Safety report card and provided Members with an overview of the key headlines contained within it including:

- The number of fatalities on NI roads to date in 2025 is 20 and noted that the aim of the NI Road Safety Strategy to 2030 is to reduce the number of deaths on our roads to 35 (which is half of the baseline figure of 70);
- Scandinavia remains the safest place in Europe to live in terms of Road Safety and noted that a student officer has recently been awarded a bursary to visit Scandinavia and review their road safety model and derive learning from it;
- The record number of speed van detections in 2024;
- The reduced capacity of Roads Policing Officers given the record low of police officer numbers across PSNI;
- The age group with the largest number of speed detections are those aged 40-54;
- The creation of a joint PSNI/An Garda Siochana (AGS) Road Policing Operational Plan and regular liaison with AGS colleagues re the Cross Border strategy;

- The continued good work of Operation Lifesaver; noting that 740 detections were recorded on the day that it launched;
- The importance of a continued focus on education, noting the NI Road Safety Partnership have provided funding for education packages and engagement and intervention initiatives are ongoing;
- Ambition to reduce the threshold for both drink driving and driving whilst under the influence of drugs; noting that the drug threshold is more complex and would have an impact on Forensic Science NI (FSNI) and there would be concerns about introducing this change if there is not the investment and resources to cope with the demand.

During discussion Members raised the following with PSNI:

- In relation to the staff working in the Collision Investigation Unit (CIU), the potential for further investment in officer welfare; noting the PSNI Assistant Chief Officer of People & Organisational Development is currently undertaking a piece of work to look at opportunities for sideways moves within the detective specialism for staff in that unit;
- What engagement there is with local communities in relation to the location of speed vans and consideration to be given to the time of the day the vans are operational;
- The potential for more use of initiatives such as “children’s courts” as deterrents to have a greater impact on offenders; noting that there are plans to start delivering these next year via the Neighbourhood Policing Teams;
- More work that can be done to improve rates of detections of mobile phone use while driving; noting that whilst PSNI have looked into using ANPR type cameras for this purpose, there are significant costs associated with it;

- The PSNI's assessment of the likelihood of getting additional resources within Roads Policing as a result of the PSNI Workforce Recovery Plan; noting that no additional resources will be made available during year 1 of the plan, however they are hopeful that in years 2 and 3 Roads Policing will benefit from additional resources;
- In relation to the NI Road Safety Strategy target of decreasing the number of fatalities on our roads each year by half (35 people), if there is a staged approach to measure the reduction;
- In relation to the proposal for Graduated Driving Licences, to ensure this focuses on all new drivers, not just young people;
- How the PSNI can change attitudes/mindsets/beliefs regarding the condition of the road being blamed/used as a causation factor in a road traffic accident;
- A breakdown of the cost of enforcement action and any pilots/initiatives using AI or advances in modern technology that PSNI could avail of to assist in enforcement/detecting offenders;
- Measures in place or being considered to reduce speed on rural roads;
- Why the number of Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI's) have increased in NI in comparison with Great Britain;
- If the NI Road Safety Partnership could lead on a campaign to reduce the speed limits across the province; noting that they would not have the capacity to do so;
- The level of influence PSNI has with DFI in relation to any new legislative amendments and if they have the capacity to effect change;
- If the PSNI are aware of the changes to Highway Code 23 in relation to enhancing road safety for cyclists; noting that they are aware of the changes, however the focus at present is on women and pedestrians.

The Chair thanked ACC Jones and Chief Superintendent Donaldson for their briefing and they left the meeting.

Members **NOTED** the update provided and following discussion, **AGREED** to write to the Minister for Infrastructure to support the timely implementation of the Graduated Driving License scheme, to advocate for a fundamental review of speed limits across NI and the increase of Fixed Penalty Notices for speeding charges to bring them into line with the current level of fines for use of a mobile phone whilst driving. **(AP1)**

#### 4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 APRIL 2025**

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the Committee meeting held on 17 April 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 17 April 2025 be approved.

#### 5. **COMMITTEE 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.

In relation to Action Point 2 from the meeting 17 April 2025 regarding representatives from the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics being invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee, the Director of Partnership advised this has been tentatively scheduled for the September 2025 Committee meeting.

In relation to Action Point 3 from the meeting 17 April 2025 in relation to a request for Legislative Change to the Road Traffic (NI) Order 1995, the

Director of Partnership noted correspondence on this issue was received from PSNI on 7 May 2025 and would be considered at the next agenda item 5.1.

In relation to Action Point 6 from the meeting 17 April 2025 regarding the Committee Effectiveness Questionnaire, the Director of Partnership noted the questionnaire was issued to Members on 15 May 2025, and the results would be considered later in the meeting at agenda item 7.6.

Members **AGREED** that Action Points 1, 4 and 5 from the meeting on 17 April 2025 relating to the publication of the PCSP Annual Effectiveness Report 23\24, Members' positions on Partnership Committee Clause 22 decisions and approval of the Partnership Committee Annual Report respectively, could now be closed.

#### **5.1 ACC McNally letter to Peter McReynolds – Request for Legislative Change to Road Traffic (NI) Order 1995**

Members noted the correspondence from ACC McNally to the Committee Chair, advising of the current position regarding the PSNI requested amendment to the Road Traffic (NI) order 1995. ACC McNally noted PSNI have been working with Department of Justice (DoJ) to progress the matter and have been advised that in the first instance DoJ are going to meet with Department of Infrastructure (DFI) representatives to explore the matter further before arranging a meeting with PSNI.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** that the Committee should write to the Minister for Infrastructure to advocate for and highlight the importance of this legislative change. **(AP2)**

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

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

## **6.1 PSNI Responses to queries raised at April Committee Meeting**

Members **NOTED** the written responses provided by PSNI to follow up questions raised by a Member at the April 2025 Committee meeting.

The Member who requested the responses confirmed they were content, however another Member noted that the response to the question on community background monitoring contradicts a recent response they had also received on the same issue and advised he would raise this via Performance Committee.

## **7.0 ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

### **7.1 Programme of Engagement 24/25**

The Engagement Manager presented a paper which provided Members with an update on the Board's Programme of Engagement 2023-2025, in relation to activity completed between April 2024 – March 2025.

The Engagement Manager advised that in November 2023, the Board agreed the Engagement Strategy and the associated Programme of Engagement for 2023-2025, which incorporates the "Strands of Engagement" noted below:

- Strand 1 – Engagement with the Community through Partnership and Collaboration
- Strand 2 – Engagement with Stakeholders
- Strand 3 – Consultation, Research & Reports

The Engagement Manager noted a comprehensive update on each strand is provided at Annexes A-C of the meeting papers and provided Members with an overview of the activities that have been delivered under each of the strands, covering the period April 2024 – March 2025. The Engagement Manager highlighted key events which took place throughout the reporting period across each sector and noted these events have been utilised to



promote and inform the wider community/community representatives of a number of key work areas for the Board.

During discussion, a Member suggested that it may be beneficial to add Community Restorative Justice (CRJ) to the Youth and Policing Partnership Forum as a means of engaging with some typically hard to reach groups. A Member also suggested that it would be useful to add a joint engagement opportunity with the Board, Department of Health (DoH) and PSNI in relation to the Right Care Right Person initiative to the Programme of Engagement 25/26.

Members **NOTED** the update provided.

## **7.2 Engagement Strategy 2025-2030 & Programme of Engagement 25/26**

The Engagement Manager presented a paper which provided Members with a copy of the Board's Draft Engagement Strategy (2025-2030) and Programme of Engagement for 2025/26.

The Engagement Manager advised that the Engagement Strategy for the period 2025-2030 was prepared based on the established format of the previous 2 year strategy which was introduced, approved and published in December 2023. The Engagement Manager noted the proposed strategy will cover a 5 year period which aligns with the Board's recently approved 2025-2030 Corporate Plan and the 2025-2030 Policing Plan.

The Engagement Manager advised during the development of the previous strategy the document was completely redesigned, restructured and adopted a new simplified approach with a view to making the document more accessible for the wider public.

The Engagement Manager advised that a result of the extensive work and consultation carried out in the development of the previous strategy document and as the new format has only been in place for the past 18 months, it is proposed that this strategy document continues in its current form subject to some minor updates and amendments, including the introduction of a fourth strand – Board Volunteering (which will incorporate all the activities and actions in relation to the Board’s Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) and Independent Community Observers (ICO) Schemes), and references to reflect the new Policing Plan and Corporate Plan and updated objectives and indicators.

The Engagement Manager also presented the Programme of Engagement for 2025\26, noting this is a live document which will be kept under review throughout the term of this strategy and will be presented annually to the Committee for review and approval. The Engagement Manager advised this programme takes into account all the engagement actions and activities that are currently ongoing and/or planned but can be adapted where necessary, to take account of emerging issues, needs or trends where further engagement may be required. The Engagement Manager noted that the Programme of Engagement 2025/2026 for each of the four Engagement Strands can be found at Annexes B, C, D and E of the meeting papers.

During discussion, Members considered how the Board could best support the recruitment of individuals from the CNR community at the next PSNI recruitment campaign. The Engagement Manager noted that views could be sought from the PSNI “Your Voice Forum” representatives in advance of the next PSNI recruitment campaign.

It was subsequently **AGREED** to:

- Approve the Draft Engagement Strategy (2025-2030);

- Approve the Programme of Engagement for 2025/2026; and
- Make a recommendation to the Board to publish the strategy on the Board's website.

### **7.3 Board Communications Plan 24/25 and Action Plan for 25/26**

The Communications Officer presented a paper which provided Members with details of communications activity to support the work of the Policing Board during the period 1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025 and also provided the Communications Action Plan for 2025\26.

The Communications Officer outlined the six main work areas of the Communications team and provided an overview of actions taken under each area in relation to the Communications Action Plan for 2024\25. The Communications officer advised that actions and activities highlighted in the Communications Action Plan are reviewed on a regular basis to allow new or emerging activities or priorities to be incorporated into the Plan. The Communications Officer noted that through the work of the Board, Board Members and officials frequently engage and communicate with a wide range of audiences and an assortment of communication channels and assets are used in the delivery of this Plan.

In relation to the Board's social media platforms, the Communications Officer advised the number of followers on Twitter/X has decreased over the past year due to a large number of users leaving the platform but noted there has been a significant jump in Facebook followers. The Communications Officer also advised that footage from the Board's Youtube channel has recently featured in BBC Spotlight documentaries and the Communications team are regularly receiving enquiries from the bigger news outlets.

In relation to the Communications Action Plan for 2025\26, the Communications officer advised that the Plan features the same generic format and structure as previous years, however noted that key activities included in this year's plan are to support the consultation and publication of the updated Code of Ethics, the Police Property Fund Large Grants Scheme, the development and progression of plans in support of the establishment of the Board, and to mark 25 years of policing in 2026, and the design and publication of PSNI senior officer and staff recruitment campaigns.

During discussion, Members raised the potential for a corporate Board Instagram account as a measure of reaching out to the younger generation and possibly partnering with other platform users to reach a wider audience. The Communications Officer advised she will forward the proposal to the Communications Manager for consideration. **(AP3)**

#### **7.4 Police Property Fund Large Grants Call**

Mr Patrick Nelson declared a conflict of interest at this agenda item and did not take part in any discussion or decision.

The Partnership Manager presented a paper which provided Members with the final draft documents for the first call of the Police Property Fund Large Grants Scheme. The Partnership Manager advised Members that the Committee previously approved these documents in September 2024, however due to resourcing pressures within the team the launch of the Large Grants had to be deferred.

The Partnership Manager advised now that resourcing levels within the team have stabilised, Board officials are proposing to launch the first call for Large Grants on 30 June 2025, with a value of £150,000 and noted the proposed implementation timeline. The Partnership Manager confirmed that following Members feedback at the September 2024 Committee meeting, all suggested

amendments and updates had been made to the scheme documents and the documents are being presented to Members for a reminder before going live.

Members confirmed they were content with all documentation, noted the implementation timeline, and **AGREED** to proceed with the launch of the Large Grants Scheme on 30 June 2025 with a value of £150,000.

## **7.5 Joint Committee Update**

The Partnership Manager presented a paper which 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 30 April 2025 and that these minutes will be made available subject to their agreement at the next meeting of the Joint Committee in October 2025. The Partnership Manager noted that the minutes of the meeting which took place in November 2024 are available for Members to view on Decisiontime.

The Partnership Manager provided an overview of items discussed at the recent meeting, which included an update on the Causeway Coast and Glens (CCG) PCSP audit, the outcome of the PCSP reserve process, PCSP Action Plans for 2025-26 and Strategic Assessments, the PCSP Annual Effectiveness Report for 2023-24 and feedback from the Designated Organisations (DO) workshop.

The Partnership Manager noted that at the meeting on 30 April 2025, the Joint Committee approved the PCSP Action Plans for 2025\26 and these are all now published on the Board's website and each PCSP website. In relation to the CCG PCSP audit, the Partnership Manager advised that the CCG Council

Chief Executive has advised that conflict of interest training has been delivered to PCSP members and the Council has commissioned an independent investigation regarding Conflicts of Interest. The Partnership Manager noted that Joint Committee agreed to write to the Council Chief Executive requesting a copy of the Terms of Reference for the investigation, and it was also agreed that the CCG 2025-26 funding Letter of Offer would be updated to include a condition that the funding provided is conditional upon satisfactory and urgent progression of outcomes arising from the independent investigation. The Partnership Manager noted that the Board's Internal Auditors have agreed to complete a follow up audit which is anticipated to take place in September 2025, dependent on any recommendations made as a result of the internal investigation.

In response to a Member's request, it was agreed that results of a survey undertaken by Designated Organisation representatives, regarding the format of future workshops would be circulated to Board members when they are available. **(AP4)**

Members **NOTED** the update provided.

## **7.6 Results of Committee Effectiveness Questionnaire**

The Director of Partnership presented a paper which provided Members with the findings of the Partnership Committee Self-Evaluation Questionnaire.

The Director of Partnership noted that in response to the second question 'Could the Committee be more effective? How can it improve?', several responses indicated that Members would like to see closer scrutiny of PCSP's. The Director of Partnership outlined the current PCSP governance structures and other assurances that are provided to the Board in respect of PCSPs and suggested compiling a summary document of these oversight and governance arrangements currently in place which would provide more in-depth information

on the Partnerships. The Director of Partnership also advised that Members may find it useful to attend a local PCSP or Policing Committee meeting to observe the business conducted at them and how they are run.

Following discussion it was subsequently **AGREED**:

- To develop and circulate guidance on PCSP governance structures **(AP5)**
- To issue the dates of PCSP meetings to all Committee Members **(AP6)**

The Director of Partnership noted that as discussed at the Board meeting on 5 June 2025, Members have been asked if there are any matters relating to Partnership Committee business that would benefit from a 'deep dive' as envisaged in the development of new Policing Plan 2025-30.

During discussion, it was suggested that there would be merit in exploring the second part of recommendation 16 of the Sweeney report which notes that "The NIPB should assert its good authority in advocating and supporting policing with the community, especially within communities where trust in policing has been historically low."

It was subsequently **AGREED**:

- To forward a suggestion to the Board that a deep dive be considered on how the Board can advocate and support policing with the community, especially within communities where trust in policing has been historically low. **(AP7)**

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

None.

**9. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES / OPPORTUNITIES**

None.

**10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Following the successful visit to the Roads Policing Unit in May 2025, the Engagement Manager relayed an invitation made by Chief Superintendent Sam Donaldson offering Members visits to other areas within PSNI OPS Support. If Members wish to avail of the opportunity, this will be factored into the Programme of Engagement going forward.

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for **Thursday 18 September 2025** at 9.30 am in James House

The meeting ended at 12.55.

**CHAIR**

**PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORATE**

**JUNE 2025**