

## **NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON FRIDAY 20 FEBRUARY AT 10.30AM IN JAMES HOUSE, BELFAST**

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

- Mr Mukesh Sharma (Chair)
- Mr Brendan Mullan (Vice-Chair)
- Mrs Marian Cree
- Mr Tommy O'Reilly
- Mr Les Allamby
- Mr Gerry Kelly MLA
- Mr Frank McManus
- Ms Deirdre Hargey MLA

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

Mrs Sinead Simpson, Chief Executive

#### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Trevor Clarke MLA, Linda Dillon MLA, Mr Peter Osborne, Colin McGrath MLA, Kate Laverty, Cheryl Brownlee MLA, Patrick Nelson.

Members **AGREED** the agenda.

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

No conflicts of interest were declared.

Members did not indicate any matters they wished to raise under 'Any Other Business' at agenda item 4.

#### **3. REVIEW OF BOARD SENIOR STAFF STRUCTURE**

The Chief Executive presented a paper highlighting the structure being proposed to meet current and future demands placed on the Executive support

team. The Chief Executive emphasised the need for the Board to be supported to deliver the agreed actions emerging from the NIPB/Sweeney review and how this necessitated more strategic support and improved join up on issues such as policing plan monitoring and on strategic communications activity. The Chief Executive explained the process that had been gone through with Headstogether, the chair and vice-chair, to develop the report and proposal before members.

In discussion Members raised the following:

- The need for the report on the required structure to take account of the continuing need to deliver on the Board statutory functions, as well as issues emerging from the Board's response to the NIPB/Sweeney review, including important workstreams such as human rights monitoring and other elements of performance monitoring which go beyond those in policing plan.
- The need to ensure the proposed posts are not too heavily loaded and that they are appropriately graded.
- The value that could be derived from the new roles including a challenge function to PSNI before papers are presented to members.
- The desirability of considering other structure options.
- Need for more detail to be provided on proposed job description for the proposed new positions.
- The unsettling nature of any structural change process but an acknowledgment this would have to be managed if in best interests of Board.
- The implications of the changes for existing post-holders in the senior structure.
- The need for some urgency around filling the Corporate Services role given the impending vacancy in October 2026.

In response the Chief Executive noted that the review report could be revised to take on board member comments including the need to:

- Ensure reference to the existing statutory functions, as well as the new areas which have emerged as part of the Board response to the NIPB/Sweeney review.
- That the report could also be revised to include other options alongside the preferred model.
- That the development of the more detailed job descriptions and person specifications would be the next step in the process and that, in line with practice across the public sector, a grading exercise would be undertaken to determine the appropriate grading commensurate with other similar positions across the Civil Service.
- That HR advice would be taken on the implications for existing post holders in the senior structure.

Members also discussed the recent exercise to review the grading of the CE post. They expressed frustration with the process which they considered did not adequately cater for the grading of the CE post when comparing it to typical senior Civil Service posts.

**Members agreed:**

- to reconvene when a review report, amended as outlined, was available for consideration [AP1];
- that work could commence on the development of a Job description and person specification for the Corporate Services role set out in the review report [AP2];
- that HR advice be secured on the implications for existing post holders in the senior structure before any further next steps [AP3];
- to revisit this issue again.

**4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business raised by Members.

**5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next full Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 5 March at 9.30am in James House.

The meeting closed at 11:50am.

**Chair**