

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT
MEMBERS TO PCSPs:**

REPORT OF THE IMPARTIAL ASSESSOR TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

Contents

1) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
2) GENERAL INTRODUCTION	7
3) CODE OF PRACTICE	8
4) CONSULTATION.....	9
5) AVAILABILITY OF THE CODE	9
6) ESTABLISHMENT OF PCSPs AND DPCSPs.....	9
7) COUNCILS – PCSPs and DPCSPs.....	10
8) POLITICAL MEMBERS	10
9) INDEPENDENT MEMBERS	10
10) DESIGNATED MEMBERS.....	11
11) EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY AND REPRESENTATIVENESS	11
12) GUARANTEED INTERVIEW SCHEME	12
13) PROBITY	12
14) OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY PROBITY.....	12
15) INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY	12
16) DISQUALIFICATION.....	13
17) CONFIDENTIALITY	13
18) APPOINTMENT OF OUTSIDE HUMAN RESOURCE (HR) PROVIDERS.....	14
19) TIMESCALES	15
20) APPOINTMENT OF TRAINING PROVIDERS	15
21) INTITIAL OVERVIEW	16
22) MONITORING THE PROCESS STAGE BY STAGE	17
23) PLANNING THE PROCESS	18
24) ADVERTISING/PUBLICITY	19
25) TRAINING.....	20
26) RECOMMENDATIONS	22
27) SELECTION.....	22
28) SHORTLISTING.....	23
29) SHORTLISTING FEEDBACK	24
30) INTERVIEWS.....	24
31) CHECKING OF DOCUMENTATION.....	26
32) COUNCIL PANEL MEMBERS	26
34) STAGE 3 BOARD APPOINTMENTS	28
35) APPOINTMENT PANEL TRAINING SESSIONS	30

36) INDEPENDENT COMPLAINTS MONITOR	31
37) RECRUITMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE.....	31
38) CONCLUSION	31
39) MEETING WITH APPLICANT.....	32
40) RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE 2015 REPORT	32

Appendix 1

Determined Size of Partnership.....	34
-------------------------------------	----

Appendix 2

Evaluation Report on Communications Activity.....	35
---	----

Appendix 3

Analysis of Independent Member Appointments.....	44
--	----

1) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Northern Ireland Policing Board carried out a recruitment process between September 2018 and April 2020, to appoint Independent Members to 11 District Council Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) and the 4 Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (DPCSPs).
- 1.2 The process was conducted according to the Code of Practice issued by the Department of Justice (DoJ) in April 2019. The Code is issued under paragraph 6(2) of Schedule 1 and paragraph 6(2) of Schedule 2 to the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.
- 1.3 Although these appointments do not come within the remit of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, they are made using a process which follows the Commissioner's Code of Practice as best practice.
- 1.4 Policing and Community Safety Partnerships are statutory bodies established under the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 to help make communities safer.
- 1.5 The Code of Practice states, at paragraph 3.5 that the process must involve independent scrutiny at every stage. There were three levels of independent scrutiny:
 - Impartial Assessor, appointed by the Policing Board at the start of the planning process. The role of the Impartial Assessor is to assess the process for openness, transparency, probity and effectiveness, to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice and to prepare a report for the Policing Board at the conclusion of the process.
 - Independent Assessors, appointed by the Policing Board, taken from the Commissioner for Public Appointments' list of approved assessors. Independent Assessors are panel members with full voting rights.
 - Complaints Monitor appointed by the Policing Board to investigate complaints. There were no complaints forwarded to the Complaints Monitor.
- 1.6 The Department of Justice reissued the Code of Practice in April 2019. The code set out clearly guidance to District Councils, the Policing Board and all others involved in the recruitment process on their respective roles in the nomination and appointment of independent members to PCSPs and DPCSPs.

- 1.7 I am pleased to report that the recommendations included within the Impartial Assessor's report of 2015 were successfully implemented in this recruitment process. Panels were made aware of the names of candidates following selection at shortlisting sessions, thus avoiding delays on interview days if a panel member had a conflict of interest. The availability of scores during the appointment process assisted the panel members in their selection of independent members to PCSPs and DPCSPs. Where there were two or more candidates considered equally suitable for appointment based on representativeness scores were available to the panel to assist in their decision making.
- 1.8 Application forms were designed to make their completion by candidates more straightforward. A highly informative Information Booklet was produced by Policing Board officers to assist those interested in applying for independent membership of a PCSP or DPCSP.
- 1.9 Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) In line with the Equality Commission's 'Positive Action for People who are Disabled guidance', the Policing Board invited applications from those who qualified under this scheme. There was some confusion with the reference in the Information Booklet to 'essential criteria' as the application form refers to 'eligible criteria'. There was 1 application received under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme. Panel members should be given all relevant information on GIS at the training sessions.
- 1.10 The training provider appointed in July 2019 commenced training sessions at the beginning of August 2019. The training was well structured and informative.

Recommendations

- 1.11 It is noted within the contents of this report that there are 12 recommendations for improvement to be considered for the next competition which follow:
- 1) Responsibility for the overall process should remain with the Policing Board, who will make the final judgment on who is appointed as an Independent Member to PCSPs and DPCSPs. Independent Assessors, appointed by the Policing Board will be panel members with full voting rights;

- 2) Stage 2 should remain the responsibility of District Councils. They are supported by their Human Resource managers, who have expert knowledge in recruitment practices and are qualified to give expert HR advice to panel members. This was evident in the 2012 recruitment campaign to appoint independent members to PCSPs. The Reform of Public Administration is now complete, so they should be able to meet their responsibilities in the next recruitment round. The Code of Practice, at paragraph 3.40 states that Councils are responsible for Stage 2 recruitment competitions. Councils should be put on notice that the Policing Board will expect them to undertake Stage 2 in the next recruitment competition;
- 3) All those involved in the recruitment campaign should be appointed early in the process to avoid time pressures;
- 4) There should a review of documentation and any necessary amendments made to the Core Process Manual;
- 5) A Guaranteed Interview Scheme was offered to applicants in this recruitment round. This is considered best practice and should continue to be offered in the next recruitment;
- 6) The Code of Practice should be made available to all panel members prior to the training sessions. Policing Board officers would then be available to answer queries;
- 7) Training for panel members should be continued and developed to include role play for **all panel members**;
- 8) Training for all panel members should be more focused on note taking and scoring;
- 9) Training should continue to include the shortlisting processes and the need for panel members to have considered and scored applications before the Shortlisting meeting;
- 10) Training should continue to refer to selection documentation and a requirement to annotate any changes to scoring during the selection process. Although this was included in the training there were a number of occasions when changes were made without any comment or annotation completed by the selection panel member. This did not happen in a number of occasions;

- 11) Contact with candidates should not be limited to emails. If a candidate does not respond to an email within 48 hours, a hard copy letter should be issued. This should reduce the number of 'no shows' on interview days. Candidates who have not responded should not be included on the interview schedule; and
- 12) DoJ should carry out a full review of the Code of Practice (following the issues highlighted in the CPANI report into the appointment of Chair and members to the Probation Board) to ensure that the process is legally robust.

Conclusion

- 1.13 I am pleased to report that the process to appoint independent members to the PCSPs and DPCSPs has been conducted in a manner that is fair, robust, open and transparent and complies with the Code of Practice issued by the Department of Justice in April 2019.
- 1.14 The Policing Board officers are to be commended for the speed in which they got the recruitment process planned and progressed and the efficient manner in which they managed the process throughout.

EOIN DOYLE

IMPARTIAL ASSESSOR

2) GENERAL INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) carried out a recruitment process between September 2018 and June 2020 to appoint Independent Members to the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships and the District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships.
- 2.2 Whilst the appointments are not within the remit of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, the process is carried out following the principles and best practice in relation to public appointments.
- 2.3 The process was conducted according to the Code of Practice issued by the Department of Justice in March 2015. Codes of Practice issued in October 2014 and December 2014 were amended to reflect a significant change in the process to appoint Independent Members to the PCSPs and DPCSPs. In addition, the Code of Practice was updated and reissued in April 2019 to reflect the role of Access NI in carrying out checks for potential appointees (in place of the PSNI).
- 2.4 The process involved the appointment by the Policing Board of an external HR provider. It had been expected that the Councils would undertake the responsibility for Stage 2 of the appointment of Independent Members to the PCSPs, but, after consultation with the Councils, the Councils took the decision not to undertake this task.

3) CODE OF PRACTICE

- 3.1 The Code of Practice, April 2019 gives guidance to the Northern Ireland Policing Board, the District Councils and any others involved in the recruitment of Independent Members to the PCSPs, on their respective roles in the nomination and appointment of Independent Members to PCSPs and DPCSPs.
- 3.2 The Code is issued under paragraph 6(2) of Schedule 1 and paragraph 6(2) of Schedule 2 to the Justice Act Northern Ireland 2011.
- 3.3 The provisions under the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 enable the Department of Justice to issue and from time to time revise a code of practice containing guidance as to the exercise by Councils and the Policing Board of their functions in the nomination and appointments process for Independent Members to PCSPs.
- 3.4 The provisions governing the operation and functions of PCSPs and DPCSPs are set out in Part 3 of the Justice Act and Schedules 1 and 2. These provisions set out how PCSPs and DPCSPs are to be established – how appointments of political and independent members and designated organisations are to be made – the constitution of the partnerships – arrangement for oversight by the Joint Committee and how the positions of chairperson and vice-chair are to be filled. They also provide a statutory basis to produce the code.
- 3.5 Under paragraph 6(1) of Schedule 1 and paragraph 6(1) of Schedule 2, District Councils and the Policing Board must have regard, in carrying out their functions, to this code and the relevant parts of the Justice Act.

4) CONSULTATION

4.1 In line with paragraph 6 of Schedule 1 and paragraph 6 of Schedule 2 to the Justice Act, the DoJ has consulted Councils, the Policing Board and the Equality commission on the code, prior to issue.

4.2 Although these appointments do not come within the remit of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, they are made using a process which follows the Commissioner's Code of Practice.

5) AVAILABILITY OF THE CODE

5.1 The Code of Practice was made available to the Policing Board, District Councils, Councillors, Council staff, training providers and HR providers appointed by the Policing Board, independent panel members, the impartial assessor and all those involved in the selection and appointment of independent members. It was also available, on request, to those wishing to apply for membership of PCSPs and DPCSPs.

6) ESTABLISHMENT OF PCSPs AND DPCSPs

6.1 Section 20 of the Justice Act provides that each District Council shall establish for its district, a Policing and Community Safety Partnership. It also provides that the District Council for Belfast shall establish, for each police district established under section 20 (2) of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, a body to be known as a District Policing and Community Safety Partnership. These have been established to reflect the four areas of North, South, East and west within the Belfast City Policing district. The Act does not permit the establishment of DPCSPs outside Belfast.

6.2 PCSPs were established under the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 to help keep communities safer. The functions of PCSPs and DPCSPs are set out at paragraphs 21(1) and 22(1) of the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. Included in these functions is the requirement to make arrangements for obtaining the co-operation of the public with the police in preventing crime and enhancing community safety in the police district.

6.3 Following the reorganisation of local government, the 26 Councils were reduced to 11 Councils in 2015. There is therefore a requirement for 11 PCSPs and 4 DPCSPs – one for each police area in Belfast City Council District I.e. North, South, East and West Belfast.

7) COUNCILS – PCSPs and DPCSPs

7.1 The PCSP areas are:

- Antrim and Newtownabbey
- Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon
- Belfast
- Causeway Coast and Glens
- Derry and Strabane
- Fermanagh and Omagh
- Lisburn and Castlereagh
- Mid and East Antrim
- Mid Ulster
- Newry, Mourne and Down
- North Down and Ards

8) POLITICAL MEMBERS

8.1 By virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 1 to the Justice Act, a PCSP shall consist of 8, 9 or 10 political members as the Council may determine. By virtue of paragraph 2 of Schedule 2 to the Justice Act a DPCSP shall consist of 6 political members.

8.2 In appointing political members, the Council shall ensure, so far as is practicable, that the political members of PCSPs and DPCSPs reflect the balance of parties on the Council immediately after the local election.

9) INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

9.1 Paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 to the Justice Act states that the number of independent members of the PCSPs and DPCSPs shall be one less than the number of political members.

9.2 Appointments shall be made by the Policing Board from among persons nominated by the Council and shall, as far as is practicable, secure that political and independent members of PCSPs and DPCSPs (taken together) are representative of the community in the district.

9.3 Independent members of both PCSPs and DPCSPs are appointed by the Policing Board who have overall responsibility for the recruitment process, from nominations made by the Council. Paragraphs 4 and 5 of Schedule 1 and paragraphs 4 and 5 of Schedule 2 to the Justice Act refer to independent members' appointments to PCSPs and DPCSPs

respectively.

9.4 In making these appointments, the Policing Board is required to seek, as far as is practicable, to ensure that the overall membership of each PCSP is representative of the community in the Council area. Within Belfast, the Policing Board must seek, as far as is practicable, to ensure that the membership is representative of the community of Belfast as a whole and that membership of each DPCSP is representative of that district. It is possible for candidates to be appointed to both Belfast PCSP and a DPCSP.

9.5 The determined size of Partnerships for PCSPs and DPCSPs is made up of 133 Political Member posts and 118 Independent Member posts. See details in **Appendix 1**.

10) DESIGNATED MEMBERS

10.1 In addition, by virtue of paragraph 7 of Schedules 1 and 2 of the Justice Act, each PCSP and DPCSP must designate at least 4 organisations that will be required to provide representation on that PCSP and DPCSP and include any organisations designated by the Department of Justice through order. Designated members will have the same status as political and independent members.

11) EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY AND REPRESENTATIVENESS

11.1 The Policing Board and Councils are governed by statutory duties relating to the equality of opportunity and representativeness, they are required by section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to ensure that all candidates have equality of opportunity to apply and to be considered for appointment, irrespective of age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, racial group, community background, political opinion or because a person has or has not dependants.

11.2 The Policing Board is also required, under paragraph 4 (3) of Schedule 1 and paragraph 4 (2) to the Justice Act, to secure, as far as is practicable, that the members of the PCSPs and DPCSPs are representative of the community in that area. Both of these duties make it important to ensure that the widest possible range of candidates is encouraged to apply, and that equality of opportunity is promoted between section 75 groups.

12) GUARANTEED INTERVIEW SCHEME

12.1 For the 2020 recruitment of independent members to PCSPs and DPCSPs, the Policing Board had a Guaranteed Interview Scheme.

12.2 This scheme guaranteed to interview anyone with a disability whose application met the minimum criteria. Minimum criteria meant that the candidate must provide evidence in his/her application form which demonstrated that he/she generally met the level of competence required for each criterion, as well as meeting any of the skills and experience defined as essential.

12.3 There was one request under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme. This was progressed in line with the Scheme.

13) PROBITY

13.1 Adherence to high standards of probity and propriety in the appointments process ensures public confidence in it. Those involved in making the appointments should endeavour to ensure that appointees are committed to, and capable of, carrying out their duties in line with the principles and values of public service, as defined by the first report of the House of Commons Committee on Standards in Public Life. These are: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

14) OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY PROBITY

14.1 The appointments process must be open and transparent in order to encourage public confidence in the procedures that support the final selection.

15) INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY

15.1 The Code of Practice reissued in April 2019 by the DoJ states at paragraph 3.5 that the process must involve independent scrutiny at every stage of the recruitment process.

There were three layers of scrutiny:

- Independent Panel Members (IPMs) appointed by the Policing Board for each of the shortlisting and interview panels and appointment panels. The IPMs were taken from the Commissioner for Public Appointments' (CPANI) list of approved and trained independent assessors. IPMs have full voting rights;

- An Impartial Assessor, appointed by the Policing Board at the commencement of the planning process to oversee all aspects of the process. The role of the Impartial Assessor is to assess the process for openness, transparency, probity and effectiveness, to ensure compliance with the Code and to provide a report for the Policing Board at the conclusion of the process; and
- An Independent Complaints Monitor (ICM) appointed by the Policing Board. The Independent Complaints Monitor will investigate complaints from candidates.

16) DISQUALIFICATION

16.1 By virtue of paragraph 9(1) of Schedule 1 and paragraph 9(1) of Schedule 2 to the Justice Act, a person is disqualified from being an independent member of a PCSP or DPCSP if he/she is:

- a police officer
- a member of the police support staff
- a member of the Policing Board
- a local Government Councillor
- an employee of the Council to which they are applying

16.2 In addition, under paragraph 9(3) of those Schedules, individuals are disqualified if they have, within the past 5 years, served or been discharged from a sentence of imprisonment or detention. Suspended sentences do not count for the disqualification, unless they have been ordered to take effect. Former prisoners need to have been out of prison for five years before they can be considered for membership of a PCSP or DPCSP.

17) CONFIDENTIALITY

17.1 The Code of Practice at paragraph 3.1 states that the Policing Board, Councils, Councillors, independent panel members, the impartial assessor, independent complaints monitor and anyone else involved in the process to nominate and appoint independent members to a PCSP or DPCSP should respect the confidentiality of personal information, unless a candidate has given permission for its release and must sign a confidentiality agreement.

18) APPOINTMENT OF OUTSIDE HUMAN RESOURCE (HR) PROVIDERS

- 18.1 The Impartial Assessor's report for the 2015 Reconstitution process noted that due to the issues around the Reform of Local Government (RPA) at that time, Councils did not have the capacity to fulfil their legislative requirement to implement stage 2 of the reconstitution process.
- 18.2 The report also strongly recommended that Councils fulfil this role for the next reconstitution process. In taking this forward, Board officials met with Council Chief Executives in October 2018 to discuss their role. The Council Chief Executives acknowledged the key role that Councils have to play in the process however, again advised that there continued to be pressures on Council HR departments from RPA which would limit their ability to implement stage 2.
- 18.3 They suggested that officials work closely with the Councils' HR Managers group to ensure that Council HR Managers were kept aware of the arrangements to enable them to provide a level of support to an external HR provider. Officials met with this group twice to assist with the development of a Specification for an external HR provider and to agree their role in the process.
- 18.4 Through the development of the Specification, the general consensus from Council HR Managers was that although they wished to be kept advised and could assist with room bookings and catering, the management of stage 2 should remain with the external HR provider. To note: HR Managers or Officers did provide assistance in most Councils in relation to identifying the PCSP elected members to sit on the panels, however, for some Councils, this was left to the PCSP Manager to arrange.
- 18.5 As the external HR provider for the last reconstitution was procured through the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD), Board officials commenced work with them in May 2019.
- 18.6 The previous HR external provider was HR Connect who had been deemed as effective in delivering stage 2 on the last occasion.
- 18.7 As part of the discussions with CPD, they advised that as the Department of Finance had a Service Level Agreement with HR Connect, it was possible that the Board could use HR Connect through this SLA rather than undertaking an expensive and time consuming procurement exercise.

18.8 Board officials contacted the contracts manager in DoF who confirmed that the Policing Board as an ALB of the Department of Justice could directly contract HR Connect. Officials met with Fujitsu who own HR Connect to share the specification and ascertain whether they had capacity to deliver stage 2 within the project timeline. This was confirmed and officials commenced working with HR Connect in early August 2019 which was well within the project timeline.

19) TIMESCALES

19.1 Stage 1 took place from December 2018 to July 2019. Stage 2 took place from July 2019 to December 2019. Stage 3 took place from January 2020 to March 2020.

19.2 The functions of the HR providers were – to provide all administrative tasks – consult with Council officials to arrange shortlisting and interview dates and venues for 11 Council areas – provide professional advice and guidance to panel members at shortlisting and interview stages – liaise with candidates before, during and after the recruitment process. This had to be done within very tight timescales.

20) APPOINTMENT OF TRAINING PROVIDERS

20.1 Paragraph 3.46 of the Code of Practice states that the Policing Board should ensure that training is provided, by experienced trainers, to all those involved in shortlisting / interviewing. Only panel members who have attended training sessions should sit on panels. Specific training should be provided for Chairs of the shortlisting and interviewing panels.

20.2 The Policing Board through its procurement process appointed a training provider to carry out four regional training sessions during late August / early September 2019 with an additional ‘mop-up’ session required at the end of September. This procurement of a trainer and the timing of training was put forward to all Councils to confirm their recruitment panels. This was completed in September 2019.

20.3 In addition, Board officials, appointed a training provider to provide good practice for recruitment and selection for the stage 3 appointment panels as part of five appointment panel training sessions.

21) INTITIAL OVERVIEW

- 21.4 This report will consider, stage by stage, the process for the appointment of 118 Independent Members to Northern Ireland's PCSPs and 4 Belfast DPCSPs. It will identify issues that have arisen in the process and will make recommendations (if any) for improvement in future competitions.
- 21.5 As the Impartial assessor, it was important that I acted, through the whole process, in a manner that was separate, independent, impartial and objective and adhered to the requirements of the Code of Practice, reissued by the DoJ in April 2019.
- 21.6 The Policing Board retain overall responsibility for the process to appoint Independent Members to PCSPs and DPCSPs. However, Councils have responsibility for Stage 2 of the process. This involves the selection and nomination of candidates solely on merit and is designed to identify those candidates who are deemed suitable to be considered for appointment.
- 21.7 Stage 1 of the process, undertaken by the Policing Board is an eligibility sift to identify those who are disqualified by virtue of paragraph 9(1) of Schedule 11 and paragraph 9(1) of Schedule 2 to the Justice Act. There were no candidates sifted out at this stage.
- 21.8 Stage 2 of the process was completed by Councils supported by the external HR provider. The short listing under this stage was completed between 1st October 2019 and 25th November 2019. Feedback to unsuccessful candidates was provided between November 2019 and mid December 2019.
- 21.9 Stage 3, governed by legislation and by the Code of Practice, requires the Policing Board, in appointing from among the persons nominated by the Councils to, as far as is practicable, secure that the membership of each PCSP and DPCSP (both political and independent members taken together) is representative of the community in the Council area, or in the case of DPCSP, the area covered by that District Partnership.
- 21.10 Stage 2 interviews were conducted at Councils and completed between 15th October and 16th December 2019. This included a combination of panel availability and rescheduled interview requests by candidates.
- 21.11 Feedback was provided to 9 candidates who were unsuccessful, and this was carried out during January 2020.
- 21.12 As referred to earlier in this report, the Councils, after some months of negotiation with the Policing Board, took the decision that, due to the Reform of Public administration

(RPA), their workload was too heavy to enable them to undertake Stage 2 of the process.

22) MONITORING THE PROCESS STAGE BY STAGE

22.1 I was appointed as Impartial Assessor on 06 March 2019. My first task was to scrutinise all documentation to be used in the recruitment process, including the advertising of the appointment of Independent Members to PCSPs and DPCSPs.

22.2 The Policing Board officers had taken on board recommendations from the Impartial Assessor's report, following the 2015 competition and had modified the application form to make it more 'user friendly'. Essential and desirable criteria were replaced by three Eligible criteria, making completion of the application form more straightforward.

22.3 A very useful and informative Information Booklet was produced by Policing Board officers to assist in the completion of the application form. Policing Board officers were available by telephone to answer queries from potential applicants. This was considered a limited option due to the small team of Policing Board Officials, however, all queries were responded to.

22.4 However, despite all the assistance available, some applications were noticeably light in information, making it difficult for panel members at shortlisting stage to assess the applicant's experience and competence. It is difficult to know what more can be done in this regard, as the Information Booklet sets out very clearly the experience and competencies required and the importance of demonstrating, by way of examples how the criteria should be met.

22.5 There was regular interaction during the process between the Policing Board officers and me and, when the HR provider was appointed, weekly conference calls were established to keep everyone up to date with progress and to resolve any queries.

22.6 The Impartial Assessor's remit is very comprehensive. It included the following tasks, which give a flavour of the Impartial Assessor's work:

- Scrutinising all documentation
- Attending information events designed to encourage applicants
- Regular meetings with Policing Board Officers
- Attending meetings with Training providers and training sessions
- Attending meetings with HR providers
- Checking Stage 1 Sifting process

- Attending shortlisting and interviewing panels in 11 Council areas
- Monitoring the process for feedback to candidates
- Attending training for appointment panel members
- Observing at appointment panels
- Checking paperwork of HR provider to ensure accuracy of information
- Examining the results of the Appointment process
- Preparation and presentation of this report to the Policing Board

22.7 The Impartial Assessor's report is intended to provide the Policing Board, the District Councils, the general public, the Department of Justice, relevant Government Departments and other interested parties, with a wholly independent account of the process by which Independent Members are appointed to PCSPs and DPCSPs.

22.8 The report will express the view of the Impartial Assessor on the compliance of the nomination and appointments process with the Code of Practice and will assist those with responsibility for the planning and implementation of the process to identify opportunities to refine and improve the process for future competitions.

22.9 The Impartial Assessor's role is to ensure that independent members of the PCSPs and DPCSPs are appointed through a process of openness, transparency, probity and effectiveness, to ensure compliance with Code and to provide a report at the conclusion of this process.

22.10 I wish to put on record my thanks to the Policing Board officers for their co-operation and timely responses to any requests for meetings and information.

23) PLANNING THE PROCESS

23.1 As with previous recruitment rounds, the process was a large and complex one, requiring a fair and consistent methodology for appointing 118 independent members to 11 PCSPs and 4 DPCSPs, using different shortlisting / interviewing panels in every District and processing 373 applications.

23.2 The Policing Board produced an Indicative Timetable for the appointment of Independent members to the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships and District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships. This was approved by the Board.

23.3 From the indicative timetable, the detailed plans for each stage were developed and agreed.

24) ADVERTISING/PUBLICITY

- 24.1 The Policing Board is responsible for the publicity and awareness raising to support the appointment of independent members to PCSPs and DPCSPs. The DoJ Code of Practice for the Appointment of Independent Members to PCSPs and DPCSPs at paragraph 3.35 and paragraph 3.36 provides guidance to the Policing Board on publicity.
- 24.2 The key aim was to achieve the widest possible coverage and awareness to ensure that communities are informed about the appointment process and how people can apply to become an independent member of their PCSP.
- 24.3 A comprehensive Communications Plan was developed to cover all stages of the process and included multi-media platform reach, including press advertising and a focus on the use of social media. In implementing the plan, board officers issued media packs to all PCSPs to enable effective awareness raising through their social media channels and their key stakeholders and community and voluntary groups.
- 24.4 Board officials also used the extensive Consultation on Local Policing as a platform to raise awareness of the recruitment. Over 3000 people attended 87 consultation events and were provided with information on the recruitment process. As a result, 165 people registered their interest in applying. Officials also used 10 other Board engagement events to publicise and raise awareness and offered and delivered 5 bespoke sessions with key stakeholders and organisations that represent section 75 groups. Questions from any of the audiences were very competently addressed by Policing Board officers. As the Impartial Assessor all these events occurred before my appointment.
- 24.5 Other forms of publicity and awareness included an in-house video produced by the Communications Branch, which was uploaded onto the Board's YouTube channel, press releases, media coverage. Both the Board and PCSP's Facebook pages and Twitter accounts were used extensively. Information was given to Designated Bodies, Youth Advisory Panel, NICS internal website, Churches, Voluntary/Community groups, Universities and the Business community. Several Councils published the advertisement on their websites.
- 24.6 The total number of applications for up to 118 PCSP Independent Member positions totalled 423 which represented 373 individual applicants¹. It was hoped that the

¹ Individuals applying for Belfast could select on their application their wish to sit on the Belfast Principal PCSP and any or all of the DPCSPs which resulted in 423 applications representing 373 individual candidates.

campaign would attract at least 3 times the positions available (357). The final number of applications showed that the target had been exceeded. The Communications branch took on board the recommendations in the 2012 & 2015 Impartial Assessor's reports and reached out to the communities in an incredibly positive and well targeted campaign.

24.7 A breakdown of the applications received across the 11 new District Councils:

District Council area	Applications received
Antrim and Newtownabbey	37
Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon	39
Belfast	62
Causeway Coast and Glens	35
Derry and Strabane	32
Fermanagh and Omagh	25
Lisburn and Castlereagh	31
Mid and East Antrim	23
Mid Ulster	26
Newry, Mourne and Down	28
North Down and Ards	35

Total completed forms 373 (with additional multi selections for Belfast)

24.8 One Council – Mid Ulster initially had 13 applications and following additional promotion and a re-advertisement period they attracted a further 13 applications which enabled the Policing Board to make appointments that would reflect the communities.

An evaluation on the communications activity can be found at **Appendix 2**.

25) TRAINING

25.1 The Policing Board appointed outside trainers in July 2019 following a tendering process. Training on interview skills commenced during August and September 2019. All panel members were advised that they could not partake in the process if they had not attended the training.

25.2 The training providers were well prepared and delivered very structured and informative training sessions. They were well prepared, having read the Code of Practice and the Impartial Assessor's 2015 report.

25.3 The training comprised of a Half day for all panel members and included note taking, scoring, interview skills, using role play and references to the Code where appropriate.

It also included a session delivered by the HR provider on the shortlisting and interview packs to increase understanding of what was expected. There was no evidence to suggest that any of the panel members had read the Code of Practice so it would be important to ensure that panel members had some knowledge of the Code before training commenced. Policing Board officers attended the training sessions and answered any queries; therefore, no panel member should have been in any doubt of the requirements of the Code but having read it beforehand would have been helpful. This will be a recommendation.

25.4 A session was set aside for specific training for chairs, as recommended in the 2012/2015 reports. This was well received and should have prepared the chairs for their important role. Emphasis was placed on the Chairperson's introduction and closing statements. There was also a simulated selection interview/role play which was considered beneficial.

25.5 Feedback from participants indicated that most had found the training extremely helpful. Some Councillors, who had been through the training for previous PCSP competitions felt that they had not benefitted greatly as they had 'heard it all before'.

25.6 The training was a requirement for all panel members to attend. I attended as an Impartial Assessor and observed the training. I noted that the role plays only involved the Chairs of panels.

See Recommendation regarding role play for all panel members.

25.7 The training providers used the documents in the Core Process Manual during the training to ensure that panel members were familiar with the forms and the process.

25.8 Training was completed by the end of September 2019. Unfortunately, due to the timing in commencement of the recruitment process, some panel members advised that they had forgotten most of what they had learned. However, the HR providers were more than capable of ensuring that panel members completed all the documentation correctly and no candidate was disadvantaged in any way.

26) RECOMMENDATIONS

26.1 Training should include role play for all panel members.

26.2 There must be greater emphasis placed on detailed note taking for all panel members during training.

26.3 Code of Practice should be read by all panel members in advance of training.

26.4 Training should be aligned to the commencement of the recruitment process and this will always be a challenge and be dependent upon panel member availability.

25.1 All panel members must be reminded that if they make alterations to any of the selection paperwork regarding scoring that it must attract an annotation to justify the changes.

27) SELECTION

Stage 1

27.1 The Policing Board is responsible for Stage 1 of the process. Each of the 373 applications was given a unique reference number. The initial sift of applications was carried out to establish eligibility. The Policing Board ensured that a candidate was not disqualified under the provisions of Paragraph 9 of Schedule 1 or paragraph 9 of Schedule 2 to the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. Under this legislation a person is disqualified for being a political or Independent member of a PCSP or DPCSP if that person is:

- a police officer
- a member of the police support staff
- a member of the Policing Board
- an employee of the Council responsible for the PCSP * if they will not sign a declaration against terrorism
- if they have in the last 5 years served all or any part of a prison or detention sentence or been released from a prison or detention sentence on license or in pursuance of a grant of remission * will be a Councillor as at 1 April 2015
- No candidate was disqualified at this stage. As the Impartial Assessor I checked the Policing Board's results and agreed with their determination. Monitoring information was removed, and all applications forwarded to the HR provider.

27.2 Stage 2

1. Stage 2 is the responsibility of the Councils. The Policing Board appointed an outside Human Resource provider to undertake Stage 2. This HR provider was appointed in May 2019.
2. The HR provider had been involved in this campaign in 2015. Therefore, they were considered to have the necessary experience in this type of process. The recruitment process was carried out entirely within the rules laid down in the DoJ Code of Practice April 2019.
3. The following documents were used for all applications across the process:
 - shortlisting summary assessment form
 - interview summary assessment form

27.3 The purpose of both these forms is to record the panel's agreement to the list of those candidates shortlisted and the scores allocated at interview to each candidate. These forms were signed by all panel members.

28) SHORTLISTING

28.1 As the Impartial Assessor, I attended five of the shortlisting meetings.

28.2 Shortlisting meetings were organised by the HR provider and commenced early October 2019. The HR provider facilitated at these meetings, ensuring that the panel were familiar with the process and the completion of documentation.

28.3 The panel members were provided with the section 2 of each candidate's application form which provides the candidate's responses to the criteria prior to the shortlisting meeting to enable each individual panel member to record his/her decision before a collective decision was made on the day of the shortlisting meeting. Each panel member was required to record whether a candidate had 'met' or 'not met' the shortlisting criteria.

28.4 There was evidence that some panel members had not recorded their individual decisions. Some panel members had not completed this work before they attended the shortlisting meeting (see recommendation 11).

28.5 Good practice dictates that individual decisions should be recorded prior to a collective decision being taken. It will be a recommendation that this practice is mandatory during the next PCSP recruitment process.

- 28.6 Following the completion of the shortlisting exercise, the HR provider communicated to panel members the names of all successful applicants to ensure there were no conflicts of interest.
- 28.7 The panel agreed interview dates, venues, timetables, questions and the allocation of questions. The panel were assisted by a list of questions contained in the Core Process Manual and on which they had been familiarised at the training sessions.
- 28.8 The panel were also given a rating scale to assist with scoring – again, they had been given training on how to use the rating scale.

29) SHORTLISTING FEEDBACK

- 29.1 The HR provider notified unsuccessful candidates by email. Those who requested further feedback were forwarded a copy of the Chairperson's Summary. If this proved unsatisfactory to the candidate, he/she was referred to the Chairperson of the selection panel for further information.
- 29.1 Of the 373 applications received, 3 candidates withdrew prior to Stage 2, 92 were rejected through shortlisting and 283 were invited to interview. 227 candidates were subsequently interviewed of which 24 failed. 9 candidates requested feedback and 203 candidates were deemed appointable. 1 candidate withdrew from the process prior to stage 3. From the 202 candidates deemed appointable, 118 candidates were appointed.

An analysis of appointed candidates can be found at **Appendix 3**.

30) INTERVIEWS

- 30.1 In my role as Impartial Assessor, I attended 6 interview days across the various Councils.
- 30.2 The HR provider advised candidates by email of the dates, time and venues of interviews. Whilst this was acceptable to most candidates, who either confirmed their agreement or requested alternative dates, some 18 candidates did not attend and did not offer any explanation. Although they had not confirmed their attendance at interview, the HR provider scheduled them in for their appointment. It is noted that HR Connect were advised that if they did not receive a confirmation by email, they must telephone the candidate to confirm attendance. Unfortunately, this was not actioned and resulted in no shows. This resulted in panels experiencing long periods of down-time, which

caused considerable frustration. Some Independent Panel Members expressed their dissatisfaction with what they described as 'a waste of their time'.

- 30.3 Under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme one candidate who met the eligible criteria could proceed to interview, without going through the shortlisting process.
- 30.4 The HR provider had two staff members facilitating at each of the interview days. One to meet and greet the candidate and complete ID and the second member of staff to take notes during the interviews and to record the agreed score on the master Candidate Interview Assessment sheet. There was an overall Summary Interview Assessment Form completed and signed. This form is important as it records individual panel member's scores and reasons for any disparity in the scoring. Panel members signed this form confirming their agreement to the final scores.
- 30.5 This was completed for each of the Council's interview days which was signed by panel members, it made easier the task of checking the documentation at the end of the process.
- 30.6 In general, the interviews went well, with the HR provider's staff well organised and helpful. Most Councillors took their role seriously, whilst a few seemed disengaged from the process. There were varying degrees of ability, interest and attention from a few of the chairs, even though they had been through training for their role. This is not a new problem as previous Impartial Assessor reports have highlighted similar concerns. The Councils are responsible for nominating the Councillor panellists and they have to ensure that they achieve the correct political balance, but this requirement can sometimes result in the appointment of Councillor panellists with very little recruitment experience. This makes training before the process begins even more important.
- 30.7 The Policing Board was responsible for the recruitment of independent panel members. 16 were chosen from the Commission for Public Appointments' list of experienced assessors. For some of them, this was a new experience, and some were more confident than others. Whilst the training sessions were informative some expressed the view that separate training sessions specifically geared to their role would have been helpful. None had read the Code of Practice prior to the training and were therefore unaware of the differences between the recruitment of independent members to PCSPs and the Public Appointments' process. However, they were all fully committed to their role and their general recruitment experience added considerable value to the shortlisting and interview processes. The more experienced assessors intervened, for

example, when some Councillors attempted to introduce outside information about candidates. Their independent role is a vital part of the process.

30.8 In total 227 candidates were interviewed. 203 passed their interview on merit and were deemed suitable to be considered for appointment as independent members of PCSPs. Lists for each Council area were compiled and forwarded to the relevant Council for their perusal, who then forwarded them to the Policing Board. The HR provider sent successful interview letters.

31) CHECKING OF DOCUMENTATION

31.1 The Impartial Assessor is required to check all documentation relating to the recruitment process. Of vital importance is the checking of the lists, provided by the HR provider, of those candidates who have passed Stage 2 and are deemed suitable for appointment. These lists must be verified before the Policing Board appointment panels meet to select candidates from the lists provided.

31.2 Over a period of 6 days at the HR provider's premises I conducted a thorough checking process to ensure that the information on those very important lists was 100% accurate. I wish to record my appreciation for the HR provider's co-operation in this exercise.

31.3 All 11 lists were checked - Of the 11 lists checked there were some errors, which the HR provider quickly rectified.

31.4 The documentation showed careful attention by the HR provider's staff to the recording of their information at shortlisting and interview days, in particular their note taking during interviews. As the standard of note taking by panel members varied considerably, this record was of particular importance in the event of a challenge and a possible tribunal case.

31.5 As referred to earlier, the Interview Summary Assessment Forms were used in all of interview days. The completion of these forms assisted in the checking process. Best practice would dictate that an overall summary of scores agreed by the panel should be completed and signed by all panel members. This provided a level of assurance.

32) COUNCIL PANEL MEMBERS

32.1 Many of the panel members are very experienced in recruitment processes and provided an excellent service. There were a small number who clearly did not have this experience and for whom the training was particularly important. For some, the delay

between the training and commencement of recruitment of independent members to PCSPs meant that they had forgotten a lot of what they had learned.

32.2 This was particularly evident in the note taking, which, in some cases, was sparse, to say the least. Another concern was in the scoring which did not always reflect the written comments. Although there was always an agreed panel score, there was no recoding of how the panel had reached their decisions, especially when some panel members had recorded a score of say 3, but then agreed a panel score of 6. On some of the score sheets panel members had split their scores as 3 / 4, 3 being a fail and 4 a pass. This is just not acceptable. In previous competitions the independent panel member and the HR observer intervened when concerned about these matters, but this happened very rarely this time around. It was noted from the paperwork that in all Council areas individual scoring sheets had scores amended without any annotation. This does not reflect best practice and should be monitored more closely by the HR provider in future competitions and covered more extensively in the training for future schemes.

32.3 This is not a new problem. Previous Impartial Assessors' reports highlighted the same concerns. The training providers did cover the importance of note taking and very comprehensively explained the scoring system. Councils, when nominating Councillor panel members have to be cognisant of the requirement to achieve a correct Political balance of Councillors, but it is also important, to ensure that they have the skills and experience required giving candidates the best possible opportunity to give of their best at interview. I stress that these concerns apply only to a small number of Councillors. The majority did perform their tasks to the required standard.

32.4 The quality and quantity of the Chairperson's Summary varied considerably. Many of the panel members had input into the content of the Chair's Summary, but in some cases, the Chair wrote the Summary without any reference to the other panel members. This is an important part of the documentation as the Chair's Summary is forwarded to unsuccessful candidates who request feedback. Some candidates, who received this feedback, were unhappy with the information they received. It should be noted that it was the responsibility of HR Connect to ensure that the Panel Summary Sheet provided sufficient comments to explain the panel decision. They failed in this role and allowed forms to be completed to a very poor standard at times.

Recommendations:

- Councils, when selecting Councillor panellists, should endeavour to select those who have the necessary skills and experience.
- Training should be completed close to the start date of the recruitment process to ensure that the learning is still fresh in the minds of the trainees.
- Notetaking by all panel members should have a strong emphasis on detail and annotation where scores are amended. The HR provider should ensure that all paperwork is completed to the required standard by all panel members to ensure that effective feedback can be provided to unsuccessful candidates.

34) STAGE 3 BOARD APPOINTMENTS

34.1 The process in Stage 3 is where the NIPB are responsible for making the appointments of all Independent Members. The process for making these appointments is set out within the Board's Policy on the Appointment by the Policing Board of Independent Members to Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) and District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (DPCSPs). This policy is based on the legislation contained within the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the guidance contained within the Department's Code of Practice.

34.2 Following the findings from the Commissioner for Public Appointments Northern Ireland (CPANI) Audit of the Public Appointments Competition for a Chair and Independent Members of the Probation Board Northern Ireland (PBNI) raised a number of "serious flaws" in the competition process.

34.3 In light of the report's findings, Board officials wrote to the DOJ to seek assurances on the Code of Practice's approach to Stage 3 in May 2019. In October 2019, DOJ officials advised that they were not minded to update the Code and that the Board should satisfy itself that its processes to appoint Independent PCSP Members will withstand challenge and not be in breach of Employment or EU law. Following this response, officials sought legal advice in relation to these matters from the Crown Solicitor's office.

Legal Advice

34.4 The legal advice received examined a number of areas including employment Law, EU law and the potential for judicial review. The legal opinion indicated-

“The use of community background has a basis in law which is supported by previous case law. The use of age and gender is less clearly founded. “

34.5 The Policing Board considered three options as presented by NIPB officials.

- **Option 1** – Proceed with the current policy for appointing, following the Department’s Code of Practice and using the criteria set out in section 6 of the current policy to achieve a representative PCSP;
- **Option 2** – Amend section 6 of the current policy for appointment to retain community background and geographical location only within the second bullet point. (This would result in removing age, gender, sexual orientation, race, marital status, occupation and whether the candidate has a disability or dependents from section 6 of the current policy selection process to achieve a representative PCSP); or
- **Option 3** – Await the Departmental response on the request for further clarification

34.6 The Board agreed to proceed with Option 1: To proceed with the current policy for appointing following the Department’s Code of Practice and using the criteria set out in section 6 of the current policy to achieve a representative PCSP. Members took this decision based on:

- Following the existing Code of Practice and the current policy gave Members the best opportunity to appoint as representative a PCSP as possible
- Members did not agree with making changes to the current policy in the middle of the process, particularly as the Code of Practice had not been amended.

35) APPOINTMENT PANEL TRAINING SESSIONS

- 35.1 The Policing Board officers conducted training sessions for appointment panel members. These were well attended and very informative. The panel members were well prepared for their role in the appointment of independent members to the PCSPs. Part of the training session also included a session provided by a contracted expert in recruitment best practice.
- 35.2 The Code of Practice states at 3.61 that the Policing Board's panels should comprise at least two Policing Board members and an independent panel member appointed by the Policing Board. The Impartial Assessor is required to oversee the appointment process and to ensure that the Board's panel(s) is representative, so far as is practicable, in terms of gender and community background. Appointment panels were supported by a team of Policing Board officers.
- 35.3 Policing Board officers provided to the panel members the lists of candidates who had passed Stage 2 and who were deemed suitable for appointment as independent members to PCSPs. These lists were anonymised, and candidates were referred to by their unique reference number.
- 35.4 Copies of section 2 (responses to the criteria) of each candidates' application form were also made available to the panels to assist in their decision making. Criterion 1 asked candidates to provide evidence that would 'Demonstrate effective engagement in their Community, Local Policing or Community Safety Issues'.
- 35.5 For each Council area, the panel was advised of the community breakdown, gender and age to ensure that, as far as practicable, appointed independent members would be representative of the community in the district Council area.
- 35.6 As recommended in the Impartial Assessor's 2012 report, panel members had access to scores when there were two or more candidates in the same category and there was a difficulty in deciding the most suitable candidate. Skills and experience were taken into consideration as it is important to create an effective PCSP. Access to scores assisted in the decision making, although other factors, such as geography were taken into consideration. Having access to scores greatly assisted the panel and should be continued in future recruitment processes.
- 35.7 It is important to record that appointment panel members took their responsibilities very seriously. Long and detailed discussions took place before final decisions are agreed.

35.8 Policing Board officers recorded all decisions and panel members signed the documentation.

35.9 In a change from the previous competitions, Policing Board officers requested Basic AccessNI checks from all applicants selected for appointment. As AccessNI requests can only be made once a candidate is to be appointed, this added an extra step to the process, prior to letters of offer being issued.

35.10 When AccessNI certificates had been returned, the Policing Board issued appointment letters to successful applicants and provided feedback if requested.

35.11 The Policing Board must publish the composition of each PCSP and DPCSP through a press release. (Paragraph 3.76 of the Code of Practice). This was adhered to.

36) INDEPENDENT COMPLAINTS MONITOR

36.1 There were no Complaints forwarded to the complaints monitor.

37) RECRUITMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE

37.1 It has to be noted that young people have made 14 applications (young people are classified as those 25 and under). Of these applications, 7 were appointed out of 118 overall.

38) CONCLUSION

38.1 I am pleased to report that the process to appoint independent members to the PCSPs and DPCSPs has been conducted in a manner that is fair, robust, open and transparent and complies with the Code of Practice issued by the Department of Justice in March 2015.

38.2 Policing Board members, Policing Board officers, the training provider and HR provider, together with Councillor panellists and independent assessors have all contributed to the successful conclusion of this large scale and complicated recruitment process. The majority of participants were new to the process and experienced a steep learning curve. They are to be commended for their diligence and patience.

39) MEETING WITH APPLICANT

39.1 A request was made from one applicant to meet directly with me in relation to the process. I agreed to meet with the candidate after the process had concluded on 03 July 2020 at NIPB HQ. This applicant raised three issues relating to his experience in the process.

- The length of the process
- Reference to correspondence to the individual by Candidate number
- Not permitted to use notes during the interview

39.2 I explained the mitigating reasons for the perceived delay which were not within the control of the NIPB. I explained the requirement for standardisation during the interview process and that the use of notes was not permitted for any individual during the interviews. The issue of using a Candidate's number solely when corresponding with them will be given consideration within the next recruitment programme in line with best practice in this area.

40) RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE 2015 REPORT

40.1 The recommendations in the 2015 report were successfully implemented in the 2019/20 campaign and should be continued in future competitions.

40.2 Finally I would like to thank the Policing Board for giving me the opportunity, to act as the Impartial Assessor. I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience and it was a privilege to work with the Policing Board members, Policing Board officers and all others involved in the recruitment process.

APPENDIX 1

Determined Size of Partnership

PCSP / DPCSP Member Posts	Political	Independent	Total
Antrim and Newtownabbey	10	9	19
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	10	9	19
Belfast Principal	9	8	17
North Belfast	6	5	11
South Belfast	6	5	11
East Belfast	6	5	11
West Belfast	6	5	11
Causeway Coast and Glens	10	9	19
Derry City and Strabane	10	9	19
Fermanagh and Omagh	10	9	19
Lisburn and Castlereagh	10	9	19
Mid and East Antrim	10	9	19
Mid Ulster	10	9	19
Newry, Mourne and Down	10	9	19
North Down and Ards	10	9	19
Total Number of Posts	133	118	251

APPENDIX 2

Evaluation Report on Communications Activity

1. Purpose

This paper sets out an evaluation of communications activity to support the appointment of PCSP independent members.

2. Background

The local elections in May 2019 triggered the requirement for all 11 PCSPs to be reconstituted. The reconstitution process is a large scale complex exercise to fill up to 119 independent positions and put together a reserve list of at least the same amount. The appointment of independent members of each PCSP is formally made by the Policing Board, from those recruited and nominated by the Council. The Board is required to ensure, as far as is practicable, that the overall membership of each PCSP is representative of the community in the Council area. The communications approach was designed to inform and attract applicants to the role so that there is a sufficient representation of all sections of the community.

3. Communications Activity

At the Committee on 21 March 2019, Members were provided with a detailed presentation on the communications and outreach activity to promote the independent member campaign across a range of platforms which included:

- Use of social media content, graphics and series of promotional videos developed and scheduled with boosted postings.
- Briefing packs developed for PCSPs to promote locally.
- Dedicated recruitment page on the PCSP website.
- Paid advertising in local and regional papers.
- Networking and direct mail awareness raising with key stakeholders/ registered interests.
- Leafleting and promotion at key engagement events.

The campaign was launched on 12 March 2019 and closed on 12 April 2019. Application levels were monitored during the course of the recruitment process. Additional support was required for four PCSPs who were not attracting a sufficient number of applications as the campaign was progressing: social media boosts were progressed for Newry, Mourne & Down, Fermanagh & Omagh and Lisburn & Castlereagh.

As Mid Ulster failed to reach the required number of applicants, the deadline was extended by two weeks. Additional online promotional activity was undertaken to local sites by Communications staff and posted directly onto the corporate Mid Ulster, the Mid Ulster Council and the Mid Ulster PSNI platforms. By the end of the extension, the required numbers of applications were reached for all PCSPs.

4. Costs and impact

Platform	Reach / Circulation	Views	Engagements	Likes	New Followers	Page Visits	Impressions	Cost
Board Facebook	72767	946	6588	83	86			£436.42
Board Twitter					80	2326	123k	£0
PCSP Facebook	50417	966	3185	109	111			£485.10
PCSP Twitter					26	806	20.3k	£0
Local Papers x2 runs	241,446							£19114.93
Regional papers	78,765							£5489.28
PCSP website						7665		£0
You Tube Videos	3875							£0
								£25525.73

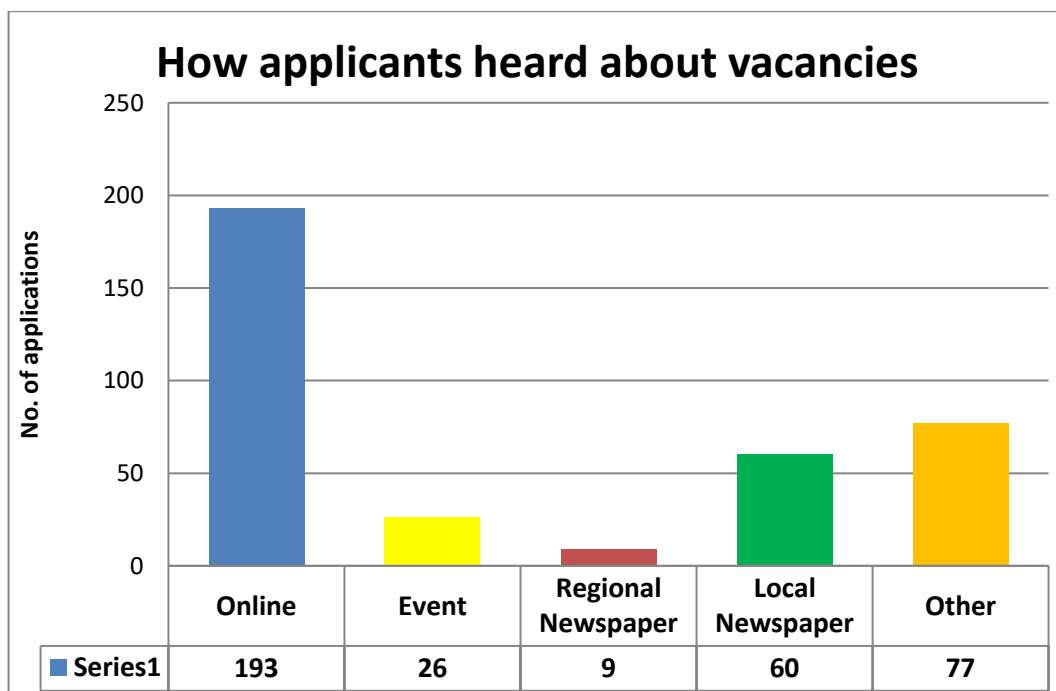
The table above sets out the impact of the activity and cost. By way of explanation, post reach is the number of people who saw a specific post in their news feed on Facebook. Facebook Engagement is **when people perform actions on the page** which means they may like a **post, click on a link or comment on an image for example**. Circulation is the count of how many copies are distributed. Twitter impressions are the delivery of a post or tweet to an account.

In all activity, traffic was being driven from activity to the PCSP website recruitment page which contained detailed information on the campaign. 7665 page visits were made during the campaign which compares to 969 visits to the homepage. Of the 7665 visits there were 4733 unique users which suggests that a large number of people viewed the role but did not progress to application.

The number of applications received was 423 which is a slight increase on the previous appointment process on 414. A further 223 incomplete applications were recorded.

Of the 365 applicants who completed this section on the application form, nearly 53% (193) had heard about the vacancy via **Online** (Social Media). Just over 16% (60) heard about the vacancy through a **Local Newspaper**, whilst just over 2% (9) heard via a **Regional Newspaper**. Nearly 7% (26) heard about the vacancy at an **Event** with the remaining 21% (77) recorded '**Other**'.

Table 1 below shows this breakdown:



5. Evaluation

Just under £1k was spent on boosting posts on social media which, along with scheduled unpaid social media activity resulted in a huge increase in engagement, reach and impressions.

A more detailed overview of this can be found at **Annex 1**. It is worth noting the additional growth of followers and interactions during this period of time. Not only was social media successful in promoting the recruitment, it resulted in a 368% growth in likes across the Facebook pages and a 13% increase across the Twitter accounts.

£25k was budgeted within the PCSP reconstitution business plan for advertising with 4 regional and 35 local newspaper advertisements. With an overall circulation of 320,211 this remains an important channel which makes the advert accessible to those who may not be online. However, it is clear from the responses that more applicants found out about the opportunities on social media (53%) than newspapers (23%).

The number of social media engagement and reach detailed in Annex 1 was significant and illustrates the impact and influence of these channels. The impact was significant not only for recruitment but for the social medias platforms in general in engaging the public with the work of the PCSPs.

Communications Branch has developed a short film which details all the key steps and dates of the continuing appointment process. This will continue to feature on social media to provide up to date information on each stage.

ANNEX 1

Overview of Social Media impact



PAID POSTS

£92.15

Average spend per post

£951.52

Total spend across posts



75p

Average spend per link click

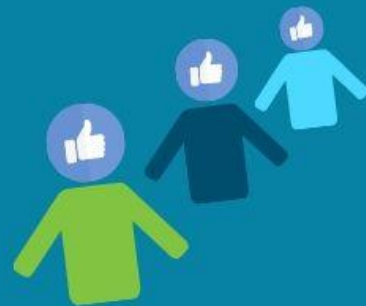
21p

Average spend per engagement

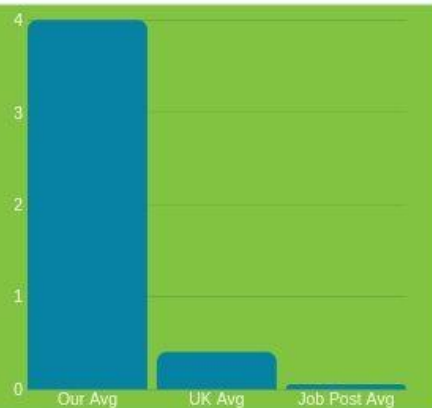
815

 page engagements from sponsored posts

784

 post engagements from sponsored posts

Click Through Rate



This means:
Click through rate is the number of people who saw the post and clicked the link attached.

FREE GROWTH



13

Average posts per week

5%

Average post engagement

22,019

Total post reach

1,129

Total post engagement

368%

Increase in **likes** across Board & PCSP Facebook pages

53%

Of applicants for PCSP Independent Membership heard about the role through social media

80%

Increase in **engagement** across Board & PCSP Facebook pages

76%

Increase in **video views** across Board & PCSP Facebook pages

80%

Increase in **followers** across Board & PCSP Facebook pages

17%

Increase in **impressions** across Board & PCSP Twitter pages

28%

Increase in **mentions** across Board & PCSP Twitter pages

13%

Increase in **followers** across Board & PCSP Twitter pages

ANNEX 2

PCSP Newspaper advertisement placement



The advertisement is a rectangular flyer with a blue and white color scheme. At the top left is the PCSP logo (Policing & Community Safety Partnerships) with the tagline 'making our community safer'. At the top right is the Northern Ireland Policing Board logo. The main heading is 'Appointment of INDEPENDENT MEMBERS' in large, bold, white letters on a dark blue background. Below this, the text is organized into two columns. The left column contains introductory text about PCSPs and a 'Who can apply?' section with a bulleted list of criteria. The right column contains a 'How can I apply?' section with contact information and application details. At the bottom, there are social media icons for the website, Twitter, and Facebook.

PCSP Policing & Community Safety Partnerships
making our community safer

Northern Ireland Policing Board

Appointment of INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

The Policing Board is seeking to appoint independent members to the 11 Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs).

PCSPs are statutory bodies established under the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. There are 11 PCSPs – one for each of the council areas in Northern Ireland.

Who can apply?

We are looking for people who can represent their community and convey local opinion on the policing issues and concerns most affecting their area. To be considered you must:

- live in, or be able to show you have a close connection with the PCSP area;
- be able to demonstrate effective engagement and an active interest in your community; or local policing; or community safety issues;
- be able to work as part of a team to meet the PCSP objectives; and
- be able to communicate effectively.

A meeting expense payment of £60 per meeting is available to all Members of a PCSP. In addition Members will be able to claim travel.

How can I apply?

www.pcsp.org/recruitment
(028) 9040 8553
pcsp@nipolicingboard.org.uk

Write to:
PCSP Recruitment
Northern Ireland Policing Board
Waterside Tower
31 Clarendon Road
Clarendon Dock
Belfast
BT1 3BG

Please provide details of your name, postal address and a contact number.

Application forms can be provided in a range of accessible formats and candidates who require assistance will be facilitated on request.

Completed application forms must be returned no later than **12 noon** on **Friday 12 April 2019**.

www.pcsp.org [@pcsp_s](https://twitter.com/pcsp_s) [/pcsp](https://facebook.com/pcsp)

Belfast Telegraph, Irish News, News Letter, Daily Mirror
Andersonstown News
Antrim/Ballymena
Times/Ballymena/Antrim Guardian
Banbridge Chronicle
Belfast Tel (North West)
Coleraine Chronicle
Coleraine Times
Crossmaglen Examiner
Derry Journal/ Derry News
Down Recorder
Dromore Leader
Dungannon Herald
East Antrim Times
Fermanagh Herald
Impartial Reporter
Londonderry Sentinel
Lurgan Mail
Mid Ulster Mail
Mourne Observer
Newry Democrat /Newry Reporter
Newtownards Chronicle
North Belfast News
Outlook Press
Portadown Times
South Belfast News
Spectator
Strabane Chronicle
Strabane Weekly
Tyrone Constitution
Tyrone Courier
Tyrone Times
Ulster Gazette
Ulster Herald

ANNEX 3

You Tube Video Views

The total views on the Policing Board account for all videos was 3327, the total for the PCSP account was 548 – across both it was 3875.

Policing Board

PCSPs: Who they are and what they do: 1275 views

Individuals: 560 views

Policing Board chair urges you to be part of it: 399 views

PCSPs: How does recruitment work?: 853 views

PCSPs

PCSPs: Who they are and what they do: 173 views

Individuals: 21

Policing Board chair urges you to be part of it: 32 views

PCSPs: How does recruitment work?: 320

Total:

PCSPs: Who they are and what they do: 1448

Individuals: 581

Policing Board chair urges you to be part of it: 431

PCSPs: How does recruitment work?: 1173

Appendix 3

PCSPs/DPCSPs - Analysis of Independent Member appointments by Policing Board 2020																										
PCSP/ DPCSP	Determined size of Partnership				Community Background								Gender				Age (25 and under)		Age (26 - 40)		Age (41 - 60)		Age (61 and over)		Political Activity	
	Political member posts	Independent member posts	Total political and independent posts	Appointable Candidates	Appointable Candidates				Appointments made by Board				Appointable candidates		Appointments made by NIPB		Appointable candidates	Appointments made by NIPB	Appointable candidates	Appointments made by NIPB	Appointable candidates	Appointments made by NIPB	Appointable candidates	Appointments made by NIPB		
					Protestant	Catholic	Other	Did not answer	Protestant	Catholic	Other	Male	Female	Male	Female	Appointable candidates									Appointments made by NIPB	
Antrim and Newtownabbey	10	9	19	14	7	5	2	0	4	3	2	8	6	4	5	0	0	3	2	6	5	5	2	7	2	
Ards and North Down	10	9	19	12	10	1	1	0	7	1	1	6	6	4	5	0	0	4	3	5	3	3	3	3	2	
Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon	10	9	19	27	13	13	1	0	4	4	1	16	11	3	6	2	2	5	2	12	3	8	2	18	5	
Belfast	33	28	61	47	20	15	11	1	13	12	3	31	16	17	11	3	1	7	4	22	12	15	11	17	12	
Causeway Coast and Glens	10	9	19	10	6	3	1	0	5	3	1	5	5	4	5	0	0	2	1	6	6	2	2	6	5	
Derry City and Strabane	10	9	19	21	7	12	2	0	2	7	0	14	7	4	5	2	1	2	2	8	3	9	3	8	6	
Fermanagh and Omagh	10	9	19	14	3	9	2	0	2	5	2	6	8	1	8	0	0	3	1	7	4	4	4	4	1	
Lisburn and Castlereagh	10	9	19	16	9	4	3	0	6	2	1	8	8	3	6	1	1	2	2	9	4	4	2	5	3	
Mid and East Antrim	10	9	19	14	11	1	2	0	6	1	2	7	7	2	7	0	0	1	1	6	3	7	5	4	2	
Mid Ulster	10	9	19	15	8	4	3	0	3	4	2	9	6	4	5	2	1	6	4	3	1	4	3	6	3	
Newry Mourne and Down	10	9	19	12	3	9	0	0	3	6	0	6	6	3	6	1	1	1	1	8	6	2	1	5	4	
Total number of posts	133	118	251	202	97	76	28	1	55	48	15	116	86	49	69	11	7	36	23	92	50	63	38	83	45	

Northern Ireland Policing Board

Waterside Tower
31 Clarendon Road
Clarendon Dock
Belfast BT1 3BG

 028 9040 8500

 information@nipolicingboard.org.uk

 www.nipolicingboard.org.uk

 [policingboard](https://www.facebook.com/policingboard)

 [@nipolicingboard](https://twitter.com/nipolicingboard)

 [nipolicingboard](https://www.youtube.com/nipolicingboard)

 [Northernirelandpolicingboard](https://www.linkedin.com/company/northernirelandpolicingboard)

DOCUMENT TITLE

**Appointment of Independent Members to PCSPs:
Report of the Impartial Assessor to the
Northern Ireland Policing Board
Published December 2020**

ONLINE FORMAT

This document is available in PDF format from our website. This document may also be made available upon request in alternative formats or languages. Requests should be made to the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

DISCLAIMER

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this document, the Northern Ireland Policing Board will not be held liable for any inaccuracies that may be contained within.