

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY 2 APRIL 2020 AT 10.30AM VIA TELECONFERENCE FACILITY

PRESENT:

Mr Michael Atkinson
Mr John Blair
Mr Tom Buchanan
Mrs Joanne Bunting
Mr Alan Chambers
Mr Trevor Clarke
Mr Doug Garrett
Dr Janet Gray
Mr Tom Frawley
Dr Edgar Jardine
Mrs Dolores Kelly
Mr Gerry Kelly
Ms Liz Kimmins
Mr Sean Lynch
Mr Colm McKenna
Mrs Carmel McKinney
Mr Frank McManus
Mr Mervyn Storey
Ms Deirdre Toner

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Simon Byrne, Chief Constable
Mr Mark Hamilton, Deputy Chief Constable
Supt. John McCaughan, Command Secretariat

BOARD OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs Amanda Stewart, Chief Executive
Mr Adrian McNamee, Director of Partnership
Ms Jenny Passmore, Director of Performance
Ms Aislinn McGuckin, T/Director of Police Administration
Three Board Officials

The Chief Executive took the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES

The Chief Executive opened the meeting welcoming the new independent Members who had been appointed to the Northern Ireland Policing Board with effect from 1 April 2020. The Chief Executive noted that because of the Covid-19 pandemic the Board was meeting via teleconference facilities.

The Board agreed the agenda for the meeting. There were no additional items to be added to the agenda. There were no apologies.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR THE BOARD

The Chief Executive referred Members to the paper that had been circulated on the appointment process governing the election of the Board Chair and Vice-Chair and Members confirmed they were content with the process outlined within the document. As 18 Members were present, the statutory requirement in respect of a quorum for the meeting to which an appointment is to be made was satisfied.

Mr Trevor Clarke joined the meeting at 10.43am.

The Chief Executive noted that one nomination for the position of Chair had been received. Mr Mervyn Storey proposed that Mr Doug Garrett be appointed Chair of the Policing Board. The proposal was seconded by Mr Gerry Kelly.

Mr Sean Lynch left the meeting at 10.45am.

Mr Sean Lynch re-joined the meeting at 10.47am.

Mr Doug Garrett accepted the nomination and outlined his reasons for accepting the nomination. The Chief Executive confirmed that as Doug Garrett had accepted the nomination it was valid. She also confirmed that there were no further nominations. A vote took place and Members voted unanimously in favour of Mr Doug Garrett being appointed Chair of the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- That Mr Doug Garrett be appointed Chair of the Northern Ireland Policing Board for a period of two years from 2 April 2020.

Mr Alan Chambers left the meeting at 10.48am.

The Chief Executive stated that one nomination for the position of Vice-Chair had been received. Mr Gerry Kelly proposed that Mr Tom Frawley be appointed Vice-Chair of the Policing Board. The proposal was seconded by Mr Mervyn Storey. Mr Tom Frawley accepted the nomination and outlined his reasons for accepting the nomination. The Chief Executive confirmed that as Tom Frawley had accepted the nomination it was valid. She also confirmed there were no further nominations. A vote took place and Members voted unanimously in favour of Mr Tom Frawley being appointed Vice-Chair of the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- That Mr Tom Frawley be appointed Vice-Chair of the Northern Ireland Policing Board for a period of two years from 2 April 2020.

Members congratulated the new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board. The Chief Executive confirmed that she would organise for the signing of various formal documents with the Chair and Vice-Chair after the meeting.

4. PRIVATE SESSION WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE ON THE PSNI RESPONSE TO COVID-19

The Chief Constable, Deputy Chief Constable and Superintendent McCaughan joined the meeting.

The Chief Constable welcomed new Members to the Board and congratulated the new Chair and Vice-Chair on their appointments. He provided Members with an update on PSNI's response to Covid-19 including:

- The robust command and control process in place with Assistant Chief Constable Alan Todd having been appointed as Gold Commander.
- An overview of the Platinum Protocol including Platinum meetings being chaired by the Chief Constable or Deputy Chief Constable. The purpose of the Platinum Protocol is to provide assurance and challenge and support the Gold Commander in making decisions.
- Confirmation that it was four weeks since this structure had been implemented and that DCC Hamilton would be undertaking a 28 day review of Gold and Silver command to ensure that it was meeting policing's current needs.
- Preparations underway in planning for a loss of staff due to self-isolation, illness or bereavement.
- Renewed confirmation that the agreed four stage approach of engaging, explaining, encouraging and enforcing is being used. He confirmed that it was PSNI's objective, insofar as it is able, to remain at the first end of this continuum.
- More officers being deployed around areas where people are likely to be, for example, supermarkets.
- Each policing district having two COVID cars (with Belfast having an additional two) specifically equipped with officers who can access full Personal protective Equipment.
- Changes to officers and staffs' working environment including home working where possible and measures actioned to ensure social distancing within the workplace. 12 hour working days had also been implemented for all police officers with affect from 1 April 2020.
- Personal Protective Equipment available to frontline staff and custody suite staff.
- The importance of implementing Covid-19 testing to front line staff, once it was available. It was noted that testing kits were a matter for the Government in Westminster and were not being dealt with on a local basis.
- The decision to pause the work of the Legacy Investigations Branch (LIB) to enable LIB officers and staff to be transferred to other areas of the organisation.

- The changing pattern of crime and reports of crime following the outbreak of Covid-19.
- Appropriate Personal Protection Measures are in place within Custody Suites for detainees and their legal representatives.
- Measures put in place within Custody Suites to ensure detainees had access to solicitors.
- Changes made to the PSNI's part-time reservists including changing the number of hours they are allowed to work.
- Weekly calls in place with An Garda Síochána and Police Scotland to share information.
- Suspension of processing Freedom of Information Requests to free up capacity to deliver core services.
- PSNI's ongoing work in dealing with domestic abuse victims particularly as domestic abuse incidents had risen by a fifth in recent weeks.

Mr Sean Lynch left the meeting at 11.31am.

The Deputy Chief Constable also updated Members on the PSNI's 2020/2021 Budget noting that further information was expected from the Department of Justice. The Deputy Chief Constable also updated Members on changes to the PSNI's governance structures to enable faster decisions to be taken and the signing of a number of Direct Award Contracts.

5. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

Officials updated Members on the planned public communications following the Board meeting and election of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was conducted.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chief Executive noted that she would discuss future Board meeting arrangements with the Chair and Vice-Chair and the details would be communicated to all Members in due course.

The meeting concluded at 11.50 am.

Corporate Services
Date: April 2020

Chair/Chief Executive