

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY 22 DECEMBER 2015 AT 9:30 AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

Mrs Anne Connolly, Chairperson
Ms Deborah Watters, Vice-Chairperson
Ms Deirdre Blakely
Mr Jonathan Craig
Prof Brice Dickson
Prof Ryan Feeney
Mrs Dolores Kelly
Mr Gerry Kelly
Mr Trevor Lunn
Ms Roisin McGlone
Mr David McIlveen
Dr Paul Nolan
Mrs Wendy Osborne
Mr Pat Sheehan.

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE

- (1) Mr George Hamilton, Chief Constable
- (1) Mr Drew Harris, Deputy Chief Constable
- (1) Superintendent, Command Secretariat
- (1) One PSNI Official

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

- Mr Edgar Jardine, Interim Chief Executive
- (2) Mrs Siobhan Fisher, T/Director of Partnership
- (2) Mrs Amanda Stewart, Director of Policy
- (2) 1 Board Official
- 1 Board Official

BOARD HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISOR IN ATTENDANCE

- (2) Ms Alyson Kilpatrick

- (1) Part item 2
- (2) Except item 3

1 APOLOGIES, ETC

Apologies were received from Mrs Brenda Hale, Mr Ross Hussey, Mr Robin Newton, Ms Caitríona Ruane and Mrs Catherine Pollock.

The Chairperson asked Members to declare any conflicts of interest arising from the agenda. No conflicts of interests were declared.

Members expressed their condolences to Ms Caitriona Ruane on the death of her mother.

2 PUBLIC STATEMENT BY THE POLICE OMBUDSMAN ON FINDINGS OF THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE BOMB ATTACK ON CONSTABLE PEADAR HEFFRON

The Board discussed a public statement by the Police Ombudsman issued on 18 December 2015 summarising the findings from an investigation into the bomb attack on Constable Peadar Heffron on 8 January 2010. Members agreed issues to be raised with PSNI later in the meeting.

In response to a query from a Member, the Board's Human Rights Advisor undertook to provide the Board with information in writing in relation to whether the Police Ombudsman's recommendations were legally binding on the PSNI.

The Board noted details of an article which had been published in the Irish News on 22 December 2015 regarding the bomb attack on Constable Peadar Heffron. The article stated that the Constable was ineligible for compensation because the Officer had been injured whilst travelling to work. Members agreed that the Irish News should be advised that this was incorrect.

The Chairperson welcomed the Chief Constable and the Deputy Chief Constable to the meeting.

The Chief Constable briefed the Board on the investigative processes which had been carried out by the PSNI into the bomb attack on Constable Heffron and commented on the findings in the Police Ombudsman's report. The report which had been published by the Ombudsman had highlighted delays in providing information to detectives within C3 of PSNI which had affected the momentum of the investigation and had proven to be publically and professionally embarrassing for PSNI.

During discussion Members outlined their views on the findings in the Police Ombudsman's investigation.

The following main points were discussed with the Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable:-

- The findings in the report which Members considered had a very negative impact on community confidence in the PSNI.
- The investigative processes and internal arrangements for the handling of intelligence material in the investigation into the bomb attack on Constable Peadar Heffron.
- The disciplinary sanctions which had been recommended by the Police Ombudsman and the PSNI's decision to reduce the sanctions in the case of two Detective Superintendents.
- A report which had been published in the Irish News relating to Constable Peadar Heffron which would be corrected by the Board.
- Communication with Constable Peadar Heffron in relation to the report findings.
- Protocols and timeliness of the provision of information in investigating major crime investigations in PSNI.
- Any further measures which could be taken following the report by the Police Ombudsman.

In conclusion the Board were pleased that Peadar Heffron had received an apology from the PSNI and asked the Chief Constable to consider measures that needed to be taken following the report by the Police Ombudsman. The Board also asked the Human Rights Advisor to conduct a review of the report to identify failings and lessons learnt.

The Chairperson thanked the Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable for attending the meeting and they left.

3 REVIEW OF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES FOR SENIOR POSTS

The Board noted a report which had been prepared by the Board's Sub Group on

Selection and Recruitment for Senior Posts.

An official sensitive note on this matter is attached at Appendix "A".

4 EQUALITY SCREENING OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR POLICING IN NORTHERN IRELAND 2016-20

The Board considered a paper which provided a summary of the process and outcome of the equality screening of the strategic objectives for Policing in Northern Ireland 2016-20 document. NOTED.

5 CONSULTATION ON THE BOARD'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR POLICING 2016 – 2020 DOCUMENT AND EQUALITY SCREENING

The Board considered a paper in relation to consultation which had taken place on the Board's Strategic Objectives for Policing 2016-2020 Document and Equality Screening.

In response to a comment from a Member regarding strategic objective 3.3 entitled "To work in partnership to address paramilitary activity", Officials referred to the establishment of a new Cross Border Task Force to tackle paramilitarism and organised crime. Members were provided with detail of the structures created under the Task Force.

AGREED:

- That details in respect of objectives 3.2 and 3.3 should be inserted in the strategic objectives for Policing document in relation to arrangements in place for the Boards accountability for all operational decisions taken by the Chief Constable in relation to tackling paramilitarism and organised crime.
(Details of the wording of these objectives were circulated to Members later in the meeting)
- To give delegated authority to the Chair of the Board to consider and agree on behalf of the Board the following documents in order that a consultation exercise could be progressed from 23 December 2015:-

- The Board's Strategic Objectives for Policing 2016 – 2020.
- The equality screening of the Board's Strategic Objectives for Policing 2016 – 2020 document.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was conducted.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was arranged for 7 January 2016 at 10.00am.

Board Support

December 2015

_____ **Chairperson**