

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY
17 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 14:00 IN WATERSIDE TOWER AND ZOOM.**

PRESENT:

- Mrs Dolores Kelly (Chair)
- Mr Michael Atkinson
- Mrs Janet Gray
- Ms Liz Kimmins (Zoom)
- Mr Colm McKenna
- Mr Maurice Bradley (Zoom)
- Mr John Blair
- Mrs Joanne Bunting
- Mr Jonathan Buckley

PSNI: (1) ACC Bobby Singleton
C/Supt Wendy Middleton
Supt Kelly Moore

PSNI: (2) ACC Bobby Singleton
C/Supt Muir Clark
Supt Norman Haslett

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- Mrs Sinead Simpson, CEO (Zoom)
- Mrs Dympna Thornton, Director of Partnership
- 4 Board Officials
- 1 Board Official (Zoom)

(1) Present only for Item 6.1

(2) Present only for item 6.2

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Ms Linda Dillon.

The Chair wished to note condolences from all members to Linda Dillon on the recent passing of her mother. The Chair requested that a letter of condolence be sent to Linda Dillon.

It was:-

AGREED:-

- A letter of condolence to be sent by the Chair to Linda Dillon on behalf of the Committee. **(AP 1)**.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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

NOTED

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 16th December 2021.

It was:-

RESOLVED:-

- That the draft minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 16th December 2021 be approved.

4. UPDATE ON ACTION LOG:

The Director of Partnership provided Members with an update on the Committee's rolling action log:

AP 28.7 from November 2021 –Dates suggested by PSNI were not convenient for Members so alternative dates are being sought from PSNI. Members agreed to keep action open.

AP 29.4 – Engagement Webinar with PCSPs has been added to the Engagement Programme of Work 2022 with Members welcome to join. Members agreed to keep action open.

AP 29.1 – Corporate Services Branch will circulate a draft visit schedule for Member's consideration regarding Board Members visits to external venues. Members agreed closure of this action.

AP 29.2 and 29.3 – Letters were issued from Committee Chair to A/ACC Singleton, with response received from PSNI, and included at Item 5.1, with action to Hallmarks linked to presentation given during Item 6.1. Members agreed closure of these actions.

AP 29.5 – PCSP Awards Ceremony to be taken forward, with acknowledgement that this will be dependent on available budget being made available. Members agreed to keep action open.

AP 29.6 – Letter of support in respect of the Road Safety Strategy (NI) to 2030 gained approval by written procedure and was issued to Department for Infrastructure on 6 January 2022, in advance of 10 January 2022 deadline. Members agreed closure of this action.

AP 29.7 – Information on demographic breakdown of the membership of Independent Community Observers (ICOs) was provided to Members on 20 December 2022. Members agreed closure of this action.

AP 29.8 – A copy of the revised Handbook for ICOs was provided to Members on 25 January 2022. Members agreed closure of this action.

Members discussed:

- Recent Committee discussions in respect of lessons learnt from reviewing PCSP Strategic Priorities.

It was:-

AGREED:

- A Letter be sent from the Committee Chair to the Department of Justice regarding agreed approach to future development of PCSP Strategic Priorities **(AP 2)**

5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

5.1 Response from PSNI re Request for information on Hallmarks/Safer Schools/Development of PSNI Children and Young People Strategy

The Chair noted that letters have been issued and drew Members' attention to the correspondence related to Agenda Item 5.1, which contains response from PSNI, regarding information on Hallmarks/Safer Schools/Development of a PSNI Children and Young People Strategy. The Chair noted that a document on Hallmarks had been confirmed internally by PSNI but would need to be ratified before it can be shared with the Board, and also noted that the presentation on the Local Policing Review would also provide updates on Safer Schools.

5.2 Response from PSNI re: Local Policing Plan development

The Chair noted correspondence related to Agenda Item 5.2, which contains response from PSNI, regarding Local Policing Plan development, which provided assurance about the progression and development of Local Policing Plans.

NOTED

6. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1 Report on Policing Plan Measure 3.1.1 – Local Policing Review

The Director of Partnership introduced the item and provided an overview of the paper provided to Members which included an update on the 31 actions which remain open, a high level overview of status, and Board Official's analysis. In providing this, she highlighted a number of areas which Members may wish to consider when discussing the progress report with PSNI representatives.

Chair welcomed ACC Bobby Singleton, C/Supt Wendy Middleton and Supt Kelly Moore to the meeting.

C/Supt Wendy Middleton noted the following:

- Of the Recommendations that remain open, the majority (20) were suggested for closure today, either because they had been completed, could not be completed within the timeframe or an extended timeframe;
- Proposed that 11 Recommendations remain open and request for time extension to complete.

Members discussed:

- Mechanisms for continuing monitoring of various actions after they are closed;
- More consideration of empowerment rather than just focusing on criminal justice and deterrence;
- Engagement of children and young people should go beyond usual youth groups and include views of faith groups, bands and other uniformed organisations across society;
- Pilot of Single Officer Patrol in Ards and North Down;
- The importance of scaled progress throughout the year rather than setting a completion date for year-end;

- Violence directed at frontline health workers.

In addressing Members' comments, PSNI provided the following:

- Hallmarks which are being designed to define the role and purpose of NPTs will be provided to the Committee at its March Meeting;
- A communications strategy to support the Hallmarks is being developed by PSNI to ensure good public awareness;
- Commitment has previously been made by Chief Constable to protect the uplift in numbers of NPT Officers;
- Noted that ACC Todd has considered the role of Schools officers, and a decision has been taken by PSNI that officers will not be dedicated to that role.
- There is a role for NPT Officers to establish greater connections with young people more widely than just the school setting,
- Pilot of virtual platform in 60 Mid Ulster schools to bring in partners and use technology extant in schools to deliver virtual training;
- The Focus groups currently being arranged by the Policing Board in 8 pilot areas as a follow up to an external survey in those same areas will allow for identification of effective methods of interaction between local officers and communities and will provide a platform to enable and empower communities to work in partnership with PSNI to deliver tangible results;
- Single Officer Patrol pilot has gone on longer than planned due to reasons related to Covid-19 and has not been particularly informative. A further pilot is being considered following the Sarah Everard case, and whilst this is regarded as an operational matter, they should be able to report back on this at a future meeting.
- Local Policing Review (LPR) actions which relate to community volunteers in community policing may be better developed under the PSNI People Action Plan which forms part of its People Strategy, and the associated LPR Actions would be better managed through this forum.

- Developments in training within PSNI, with the rollout of Open University modules and an Ulster University programme to support NPT Officers;
- Work being progressed by PSNI with other partner agencies to improve customer service in the custody healthcare arena;
- Plans to bring paper for a future Committee meeting on multi-agency partnership working.

It was:-

AGREED:

- To close 23 actions on the Local Policing Review as noted in Annex A of this paper, including actions 1.9, 1.10 and 2.11 which will now be managed under the PSNI 'People Action Plan' and reported to the Board's Resources Committee.
- To extend the timeline for the 8 remaining actions as noted in Annex A of this paper and PSNI to report to Partnership Committee on the progress towards closure of those 9 actions in Autumn 2022 **(AP 3)**.
- ACC Singleton to provide Committee with sight of the finalised Hallmarks at the March Committee meeting; **(AP 4)**

6.2 South Armagh Review (Recommendations 5, 31, 33, 35, 40, 49)

ACC Singleton was joined by C/Supt Muir Clark and Supt Norman Haslett. Members received a presentation on progress to date in respect of six of the recommendations contained in the South Armagh Policing Review.

Supt Haslett proceeded to provide an overview of progress to date as noted in the PSNI presentation. This included:

- An update noting that 22 of the operational recommendations which PSNI are responsible for progressing have now been completed;

- The update on Recommendation 5 (to increase the diversity of local officer cadre) included the progress made in aligning gender and length of service demographics with those at corporate level and noted the completion of a service wide selection process to fill a range of posts in the area. The successful applicants are due to be in place by the end of the month;
- In line with fulfilling Recommendation 31, each NPT officer has been allocated a specific Ward area, with 4 officers assigned per Ward. Thematic portfolios will be assigned to 3 Sergeants in the area to ensure resilience and information sharing;
- Recommendation 33 is deemed complete, with formal, regular engagement through monthly accountable meetings now in place and a bespoke external communications strategy having been developed for the area.
- An update on Neighbourhood Watch schemes, progress of Farmwatch, and the establishment of cold calling zones all relating to Recommendation 35;
- Recommendation 40 has links to Recommendations 31, 41 and 43. Neighbourhood Policing Teams have a particular focus on vulnerability and host a range of events, particularly regarding Domestic and sexual Violence. The District Commander also noted that he is keen to engage with other service wide initiatives which focus on vulnerability;
- Recommendation 49 - Formal, monthly meetings with An Garda Síochána were hampered by Covid, however these have been established to start from the end of the February. Good operational relationships with An Garda Síochána are in place, particularly regarding ASB, rural crime and dangerous driving.

Members discussed:

- Resilience and the positive impact of the revised style of policing in the areas;

- The importance of partnership working between PSNI and An Garda Síochána to deliver on relevant recommendations;
- Ensuring that momentum and focus remains on those recommendation which are noted as “in progress” and “on track”
- The level of support for progressing the Review recommendations that exists;
- The relationship between PCSPs and PSNI in the local area;
- Acknowledgement of the significant progress and developments as a result of the Review, but the need to ensure similar PSNI commitment to service delivery for all communities in all parts of Northern Ireland, including the PUL community where policing is perceived as 2-tier in its approach;
- The need to ensure that inclusivity and diversity are considered in the processes for communication with communities;
- The need to ensure that Restorative Justice organisations utilised by the PSNI are accredited and that care is taken when using this approach;
- Concern regarding the rationale for signposting at vehicle checkpoints;
- The use of foot patrols and cycle patrols in the local area;
- List of community contacts formed as part of stakeholder analysis;
- Transfer of lessons learnt and good practice examples which could be used more widely across Northern Ireland;

In addressing Members' comments, PSNI noted:

- The importance of community relationships with local neighbourhood teams, and more broadly organisational links with An Garda Síochána ;
- Assurance of organisational and District focus on momentum to deliver all Recommendations in the Review;

- The Commander regularly updates the local PCSP and has a very positive working relationship with Newry Mourne and Down PCSP Manager and Members;
- The work being carried out in South Armagh has intrinsic links to the aims of Neighbourhood Policing more generally as it aims to improve community policing across Northern Ireland and ensure equality of service delivery for all communities regardless of their location;
- A Proactive Engagement Strategy is in development in PSNI;
- Recognition of issues in some communities regarding Confidence in Policing, and the importance of ensuring those views are acknowledged and fed back to PSNI to improve and enhance service provision;
- Communication with communities regarding Vehicle checkpoints is viewed by PSNI as a means to enhance confidence and communication and PSNI are keen to see this approach replicated more widely;
- Foot and cycle patrols are being well received by the local community;
- PSNI will share list of community contacts engaged as part of stakeholder analysis.

ACC Singleton raised a query as part of this presentation in respect of Recommendation 34 (which was discussed as part of the December 2021 Partnership Committee consideration of South Armagh Policing Review Recommendations):

- Recommendation 34 – Independent Advisory Group. PSNI acknowledged that while it is not usual to have political representatives on an Independent Advisory Group, they sought the view of Committee on whether it would be appropriate in this circumstance.

Members discussed:

- Value in an IAG remaining independent and ensuring that an IAG would not duplicate other processes;
- Membership of an IAG should not be restrictive in terms of geography or political view;
- Whether a precedent would be set if Members agreed to this approach;
- The need for Members to understand the scope and membership of the IAG.

In addressing Members' comments, PSNI noted:

- The need to ensure transparency while acknowledging that although establishment of an IAG is an operational issue for PSNI, it needs to reassure communities;
- The role of the IAG is advisory, and the IAG does not have a role in PSNI decision making.

It was:-

AGREED:

- The IAG should proceed without inclusion of elected members to ensure its independence; and
- PSNI will share list of community contacts engaged as part of stakeholder analysis. **(AP 5)**

6.3 Draft Committee Programme of Work – March – June 2022

The Director of Partnership provided Members with information on the proposed work of the Partnership Committee for the period March to June 2022.

A draft Programme of Work has been developed to guide the Committee's work over the coming months. This programme will allow for officials to plan the business of the Committee and invite the appropriate PSNI officers to attend meetings. It was noted that due to the forthcoming elections, no agenda items have been recorded against April and May 2022, however, the programme has been drafted to allow for movement of agenda items if required and allows for scope for the Committee to consider any emerging or urgent issues through this period.

The Director of Partnership requested that Members consider the Committee's Draft Programme of Work for the period March – June 2022 and consider rescheduling the PSNI presentation on Multi Agency Triage Teams to move to delivery at the first Committee meeting following the upcoming Election.

It was:-

AGREED:

- The Draft Programme of work as presented; and
- PSNI presentation on the work of Multi Agency Triage Teams to be moved to May/June Committee meeting **(AP 6)**.

6.4 Paper on Board membership of the Association of Police & Crime Commissioners

The Chair opened discussion on this item to explore whether or not there is merit in the Policing Board re-joining this Association.

Members discussed:

- The benefits and value of full membership versus partial membership;
- The cost during times of budgetary constraints;
- The opportunities which membership might afford in respect of benchmarking and learning best practice from other areas.

It was:-

AGREED:

- The Board should re-join the APCC, taking the option of partial membership and review this arrangement in 12 months **(AP 7)**

Committee Member Liz Kimmins wished to record an objection to this arrangement.

7. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

Responses from Chief Constable was noted, with the observation that Members will need to await the effectiveness of the implementation of the revised Strategic Priorities for PCSPs

NOTED

8. Communications Issues/Opportunities

The Communications Manager, Lorraine Calvert, asked Members to share in their local areas the announcement of the opening of the second call for applications to the Small Grants Scheme of the Police Property Fund.

NOTED

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

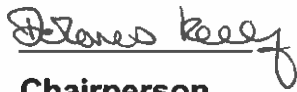
To thank Lyne Black, Police Performance Monitoring Manager, for her valuable contributions to the Partnership Committee.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was agreed as 10 March 2022 at 2pm.
(Meeting closed at 17:15)

PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORATE

February 2022



Chairperson