

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY
17 JUNE 2021 AT 14:00 IN WATERSIDE TOWER AND ZOOM.**

PRESENT: Mrs Dolores Kelly (Chair)
Mr Michael Atkinson
Ms Liz Kimmins
Mrs Janet Gray
Mr Seán Lynch
Ms Carmel McKinney
Mr John Blair

PSNI: (1) DCC Hamilton
ACC Todd
Chief Supt Wendy Middleton
Supt Kelly Moore

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:** Mrs Amanda Stewart, CEO
Mrs Dympna Thornton, Director of Partnership
(2) Mr Adrian McNamee, Director of Performance
4 Board Officials

- (1) Present only for Item 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3
(2) Present only for item 6.8

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mervyn Storey and Joanne Bunting.

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 20th May 2021, as well as the draft minutes for meeting held on 22 April 2021 due to some Members not having access to these on Decision Time at the May 2021 Partnership Committee meeting.

It was:-

RESOLVED:-

- That the draft minutes of the Partnership Committee meetings held on the 22 April 2021 and 20 May 2021 be approved.

4. UPDATE ON ACTION LOG:

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

AP17.5 – Board Officials are due to meet with Department of Justice Officials in late June 2021 and Members will be provided with an update at the Partnership Committee in September.

AP24.1 – The Independent Custody Visiting Report for 2020/21 was approved at the Board meeting of 3rd June to be published on the Board's website.

NOTED

5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

The Chair welcomed all Members to the meeting and advised that 2 items of correspondence would be included under this agenda item and invited the Director of Partnership to provide further details.

5.1 Response from PSNI re: Additional information requested following May 2021 meeting

An update has been received from T/ACC Singleton following a request for further information on The Community Curator Programme, Small Grant support distribution, the Repeat Victimisation Pilot Programme and Organisation Chart of the PSNI's Crime Prevention and Early Intervention Branch. Members were provided with this update in papers. **NOTED**

5.2 Communication from T/ACC Singleton re: PSNI Community Relations Task Force

A comprehensive update on the Community Relations Task Force was received from T/ACC Singleton in response to the letter issued from the Chair on 10/05/21. A further update can be provided to Partnership Committee in October. **NOTED**

6. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1 Report on Policing Plan Measure 3.1.1 – Local Policing Review (LPR) update.

The Chair welcomed the Deputy Chief Constable, ACC Todd, Chief Supt Middleton and Supt. Moore to the meeting. ACC Todd provided an update on the Local Policing Review actions and conversation opened with reference to the Neighbourhood Policing Team's (NPTs) visibility and advised that there are now almost 700 NPT Officers in post, with shift patterns for those Officers being 16 hours per day, 7 days per week. ACC Todd also provided Members with:

- An Acknowledgment that there are gaps in NPT provision in D District;
- Completion dates for a number of actions which remain open in the Local Policing Review (LPR) Action Implementation Plan and how PSNI will progress these towards completion;
- An explanation on staff gaps and resourcing pressures; and
- The new completion dates as noted in the PSNI update paper being reflective of the most likely end dates for those LPR actions remaining open.

Members discussed:

- The proposed closure of action 5.4 in the LPR Implementation Plan was raised by a Committee Member, the Committee Chair however indicated that the action could be closed on condition that it can be re-opened if Members believe this is necessary;
- Multi Agency Triage Teams (MATT) and the current status of those;
- Role profiles for NPT Officers;
- Action 6.4 in respect of work with PCSPs and local communities to improve the development of Local Policing Plans; and
- The Open University course which NPT Officers are required to complete.

In addressing Member's comments, PSNI provided the following:

- Acknowledgement of Member's concerns around LPR action 5.4 however there is recognition that community planning is a function which extends beyond PSNI, with PSNI having taken forward those elements which they have responsibility for;
- An appreciation of the work being done by other partners in this area and acceptance that this action may be re-opened by members if this is deemed necessary;
- Multi Agency Triage Teams (MATT) operate in Belfast and in the Ards and North Down areas at weekends and core times, however

this had to be suspended but it is hoped that the vetting exercise currently underway will enable staff to begin this work again;

- In addition the MATT working in Castlereagh can deal with calls for service from the North and South area;
- The Chair agreed that an evaluation paper will be brought to a future meeting;
- PSNI indicated that they will share the NPT role profiles;
- An update was provided by a Board official to explain the work being taken forward by the Board and PSNI to develop Local Policing Plans and PCSP Action Plans;
- PCSP meeting dates would be useful to Members to enable them to join in with local meetings;
- Training, including the Open University (OU) Collaborative Problem Solving modules , are to be completed by all NPT Officers, and significant progress is being made with over 1,500 Officers having completed that training and additional OU modules being developed as part of Officer's Continuing Professional Development.

It was:-

AGREED

- NPT role profiles will be provided by PSNI **(AP1)**;
- PSNI will provide a report on the work of the Multi-Agency Triage Teams **(AP2)**
- PCSP meeting dates will be circulated by Officials **(AP3)**;
and
- PSNI will provide an update in respect of progress being made on training for all NPT Officers **(AP4)**.

6.2 PSNI update on Contact Management

ACC Todd provided Members with an update on Contact Management using the PowerPoint presentation which was included in Member's papers. He advised that Contact Management is a key area of business, and one which it

is critical to get right. ACC Todd also outlined the number of 999 calls being received by British Telecom (BT) (approximately 130,000 per day of which 46% are directed to Police Services). This number does not include 101 calls, which when considered in total represents a significant scale of demand on Police. ACC Todd recommended that Members visit one of PSNI's Call Management Centres (CMC) to see first-hand the work being carried out.

ACC Todd also made reference to:

- An increase in the volume and complexity of calls;
- Other areas of business carried out by the CMC which includes a telephone resolution unit and crime management support; and
- A number of significant pieces of work carried out in 2020 were also highlighted.

Members discussed:

- Acknowledgement that this is a "good news story" however, were keen to understand how "red flags" might be picked up in the CMCs.
- Fraud Line and its engagement with Northern Ireland;
- PSNI management of the volume of calls and their complexity;
- Recognition schemes for Call Handlers;
- Stress levels of staff working in such roles; and
- The range of skills required to work in this area.

PSNI responded with:

- Record keeping of flags against individuals and addresses is contained within PSNI's "Control Works" system;
- Exploration of partnering with NI Direct to offer a broader range of services in NI;
- Action Fraud is operated by City of London Police, however it is possible that alternatives may be considered for roll out in NI. PSNI will revert to the Board with a proposal if this is considered to be a viable option;

- A number of Staff Recommendation Schemes are available to recognise the good work of staff and officers.
- Acknowledgement that the mental health demands on PSNI are considerable and the nature of calls taken is recognised by PSNI, therefore there is a duty of care to staff who work in that environment;
- Acknowledgement that although the PSNI call handler is usually the “first on the scene”, a call handler may not always be the right person to deal with these issues, therefore, mental health experts located in call handing teams (similar to a MATT arrangement) would be the best option;
- PSNI advised that they have taken the lead on “outside hours work” (when other services are not providing services, for example at weekends) which leads to increased pressure on PSNI; and
- PSNI’s approach to risk is different to the approach taken by others, such as those in the medical profession and PSNI will deploy a range of resources for critical incidents albeit the model of such intensive resource to deal with those issues may not always be appropriate.

It was:-

AGREED

- Local Policing Review Action 4.2 can be closed, but may be re-opened should this be deemed necessary;
- Officials will arrange for Members to visit a CMC **(AP5)**

6.3 PSNI update on the development of Local Policing Plans (LPPs) with PCSPs

ACC Todd provided Members with an update on the development of Local Policing Plans which included:

- COVID-19 resulted in many LPPs being carried forward into the current year with work on the Policing Plan’s Outcome 3 being the next iteration to inform LPPs; and

- Whilst consultation to decide priorities occurred, it was acknowledged that the Local Policing Review provided each area with detailed information which can be used to inform the LPP.

Members discussed:

- Correspondence received from particular councils;
- The South Armagh Review;
- How current issues such as Anti-Social Behaviour and dissident republicans are being addressed in LPPs;
- PSNI's commitment to brief the local community in respect of matters arising from the South Armagh Review; and
- The need for LPPs to reflect activity in 2020.

PSNI replied with:

- An acknowledgement of the issues noted in correspondence received by the Board in respect of particular council areas;
- PSNI are responsive to local community concerns around ASB and dissident republican activity;
- Acknowledged that the South Armagh Review will raise multiple issues and they have identified a number of recommendations to be taken forward by PSNI. The Chief Constable will brief the local community of South Armagh and has previously committed to this; and
- Acknowledged that LPPs need to reflect local issues.

The Chair thanked PSNI representatives and they left the meeting.

6.4 Police Property Fund – update on Small Grants Scheme

The Partnership Manager provided Members with an update on the PPF which included:

- The closing date for Small Grant applications is 8 July 2021;

- As of today there have been a total of 36 applications received by Officials totalling £241,000 which means the Small Grant scheme is already heavily oversubscribed with £100,000 funding available for this call for applications;
- Officials will manage an initial basic eligibility sift before applications are considered by the panel; and
- Sought nominations from Members for the panel bearing in mind that work will commence during the July and August.

Members discussed:

- Whether there has been a geographical spread in applications;
- Nominations were received from three Members to sit on the panel;
- With the absence of Unionist Members from today's meeting, officials need to seek interest from the DUP representatives before finalising the panel.

The Partnership Manager advised that geographical spread of applications has been monitored throughout the application process and this has been shared with PCSP Managers to ensure increased promotion of the Scheme.

It was:-

AGREED

- Officials will contact DUP Committee Members to seek a fourth panel Member **(AP6)**.

6.5 Board's Engagement Strategy – Annual Programme of Work (2021/22)

The Engagement Manager provided Members with an update on the Programme of Work 2021/22 to support delivery of the Engagement Strategy 2020-2023 which included:

- Reference to Annex A which sets out a number of new engagement opportunities for members' consideration;

- Details of a Volunteers' Recognition Event which is planned for 24th June in a local Hotel which Members are invited to attend;
- Proposal for a Public Session of the Board to be organised outside Belfast before the end of this year;
- The Board's 20th Anniversary celebration as being a suitable engagement opportunity and a chance to explore the possibility of establishing a NI version of the National Tilley Awards, or something similar, to celebrate the work of PSNI's Neighbourhood and Local Policing Teams in introducing problem orientated initiatives to create long term solutions to issues faced by PSNI, partners and communities;
- Exploring the creation of Independent Advisory Groups/Reference Groups to engage with relevant individuals and groups within communities; and
- Researching the feasibility of introducing a Shadow Youth Policing Board to allow young people a voice on issues in their areas and create a better mutual understanding between young people and PSNI.

Members discussed:

- The possibility of using Derry/Londonderry as a location for a public session - this would allow engagement with the Mayor and Senior Council Officials;
- Suggestion to provide a separate paper on the IAG and Shadow Youth Policing Board for consideration at a future meeting;
- Noted that the Strategy is an evolving document;
- A need for more information to be added to each of the areas contained within the document;
- Involvement of the Board is crucial and thought should be given to engaging with PCSPs when they begin to meet in person again;
- A small number of members were reluctant to approve the programme of Work, and felt that due consideration should be given by Members to the Programme of Work

- The Chair reminded members that the Strategy is a proposal and further supporting papers will follow on specific opportunities.

It was:-

AGREED

- Officials will arrange supporting papers and the Programme of Work and Engagement Strategy will be brought to Committee in September **(AP7)**.

6.6 Independent Community Observer (ICO) Recruitment Update

The Engagement Manager provided Members with an update on the ICO Recruitment Campaign 2021, this included:

- A reminder of the purpose of the ICO Scheme and aspects of the role and duties;
- An update on the current pool of ICOs and that all 7 currently in the role are due to leave in June 2021 having completed 7 years in the post;
- Details of the number of applications received and following a sift 11 candidates (from a total of 13) will be interviewed W/C 21 June 2021; and
- Following interviews successful candidates will be informed and will have to be Access NI cleared and attend Induction Training before commencing in the role in time for the next PSNI Recruitment campaign (anticipated for Autumn)

Members were content to note. **NOTED**

6.7 Paper on proposed activities for the Board's 20th Anniversary

The Director of Partnership provided Members with information on the suggestions for marking and celebrating the Board's 20th anniversary. There are three broad objectives for the anniversary which include:

- Re-affirming the Board's current position;
- Marking the Board's key achievements of the last 20 years; and
- Marking the occasion by way of a number of possible events.

Members discussed:

- The need for the Board to progress its own plans to mark the anniversary and the ;
- Further discussion on particular options and what they might look like;
- Recognised that with the absence of Unionist Members from today's meeting, not all Members are present to consider the proposals;
- Taking the view of the Board in respect of proposed options.
- Sean Lynch wished to record his opposition to Option 3 of the Engagement Plan for the anniversary. **NOTED**

It was:-

AGREED

- To recommend to the Board that Option 1 (Communications Activity) and Option 2 (Stakeholder event following the Public meeting of the Board on 4th November) be progressed by Officials **(AP 8)**
- To seek the view of the Board on the feasibility of additional proposed options to mark the Anniversary.

6.8 NISRA Survey Work – Policing Plan Measure 3.1.2

The Performance Director joined the meeting and provided Members with an update on Policing Plan measure 3.1.2 and the development of a survey in respect of the Northern Ireland Policing Plan 2020-2025. This included:

- Draft questions to be used in the survey;
- The Tender Specification Methodology to be used when procuring a research contractor to conduct the survey and collect representative data for the NI population and produce official statistics of the findings;
- Allocation of £50k for the survey work in the 2021/2022 financial year;
- Provided a timeline for delivery of the Policing Plan Survey; and
- Sought Members approval to commence procurement through Central Procurement Division, who currently have a backlog.

Members agreed with the proposed questions, however, requested that the final agreed questions be shared with Members prior to the commencement of procurement. Members also requested that if possible results would be broken down by council wards. **AGREED**

7. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

7.1 NONE

8. Communications Issues/Opportunities

8.1 NONE

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 NONE

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was agreed as 16 September 2021 at 2pm.

(Meeting closed at 5pm)

PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORATE

June 2021

Dolores Kelly

Chairperson