

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE HELD ON
THURSDAY 20 JUNE 2019 at 09.30, WATERSIDE TOWER**

PRESENT:

Mrs Dolores Kelly (Chair)
Mr Colm McKenna (Vice Chair)
Mr John Blair
Mrs Linda Dillon
Mr Philip McGuigan
Mr Gary Middleton
Mr Mervyn Storey
(1) Ms Debbie Watters

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

Mrs Amanda Stewart - Chief Executive
4 Board Officials

PSNI IN ATTENDANCE: (2)

(2) ACC Mark Hamilton
(2) Supt. Alywin Barton

(1) Item numbers 1-5.4 (09.30am-11.10am)

(2) Item number 5.1 (09.30am-10.15am)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for the meeting were received from Professor Brice Dickson and Mrs Wendy Osborne.

The Chair wished to record the Committee's good wishes to Adrian McNamee during his time of absence.

The Committee agreed the agenda for the meeting and due to time constraints for ACC Hamilton; the Chair advised that the Committee would move directly to agenda Item 5.1.

5.1 Local Policing Review 2018 - Independent Analysis Report

The Chair noted that following the last meeting, and in light of Member's comments and views and the updates provided from T/DCC Martin, a revised and reformatted Action Plan, which incorporated all the feedback, had been developed. She welcomed ACC Hamilton to discuss this further.

ACC Hamilton thanked the Chair for facilitating the early start. He noted that the plan was moving in the right direction but, given the upcoming change of PSNI Chief Constable, the new Chief Constable Mr Simon Byrne had requested a few weeks grace to enable him the opportunity to consider the draft closely. Members agreed this and in the interim ACC Hamilton highlighted the following areas:

- The 190 additional posts from EU exit funding will proceed with other developments still being worked through and the new Chief Constable has requested further information from ACC Hamilton including (i) how the proposed additional officers (initially 166) sit within the overall PSNI policing model (ii) how the Neighbourhood Policing Teams operate, with the potential to explore an officer in every ward (iii) considerations in relation to the potential for Police Community Safety Officers and Special Constabulary.
- The draft Neighbourhood Policing model will be more than an engagement tool. Neighbourhood Policing Teams will potentially incorporate the Reducing Offending Team (ROT) and District Support Team (DST) - who respectively currently work with the top 10 reoffenders in their area and provide local proactive support work.
- The review of 101 that C/Supt Walls is leading on has a large number of recommendations which are currently with ACC Hamilton for review. This includes consideration of whether the UK single online hub (a digital reporting mechanism) can be brought to Northern Ireland faster than the scheduled period within the UK rollout programme and the potential for Community Practitioner Nurses (CPN) acting as triage for mental health calls.

- The proposal for a Neighbourhood Policing Team Board which would act as an implementation group within PSNI to drive performance and provide accountability for policing.

Gary Middleton entered the meeting (09.40am).

Superintendent Barton gave an update on the Action Plan which included:

- Following the recent launch of the Policing with the Community manual, PSNI recognised the importance of this across all of policing, including Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) and he highlighted that it sits within the PSNI's corporate performance management framework (NPTs);
- The current draft Action Plan captures "what we are going to do" and the next stage will be incorporating "how well we do it"; and
- Content that Headline Action 7 could be surplus to requirements given proactive work is ongoing with section 75 groups always a priority across PSNI work.

The Chair invited Member's comments for discussion. A member advised that a central digital hub team within the Civil Service was already in operation that PSNI may consider looking into in relation to the single online hub. Another Member sought clarity that the Neighbourhood Policing Team Board would be about delivery and future Terms of Reference would be shared with the Committee, ACC Hamilton confirmed this was accurate.

The Committee once again reinforced the importance of clear expectations and targets within the plan. A member asked for a sense of timeframes for 101 and ACC Hamilton advised that 6 months work had already been undertaken to review this area with some of the draft recommendations, if accepted, being very swift to deliver and others having to take a bit longer.

Philip McGuigan and Linda Dillon entered the meeting (09.55am).

A member noted his appreciation for the Brexit issues, need to resource border areas and areas of high crime rates was noted his concern that this could negatively impact on other areas, in particular where there is a low crime rate, and highlighted the need for ongoing PSNI awareness of this.

In relation to Action Points 1.9 and 1.10 a Member requested that considerations to be given to how they are going to do it and how does the Board practically support that. Supt Barton noted the potentially strategic support and influence of the Board would be one method.

The Board Vice Chair queried the integrated approach of the Reducing Offending Team (ROT) and District Support Team (DST). She asked if there are other areas within PSNI that are stand alone, and sitting in isolation of the District, that could be considered for integration into Neighbourhood Policing? ACC Hamilton advised that yes there likely was but requested to come back to the Committee with further information.

ACC Hamilton thanked Members for their comments and advised that he does not anticipate any major changes of direction to the draft Action Plan and would therefore envisage finalised within the next 4-8 weeks.

Members discussed the next steps and agreed that following further PSNI input and Board official work on the draft, a workshop, potentially mid-August, should be held to progress the draft to a final version pending PSNI and Board approval.

It was:-

AGREED:

- The new Chief Constable will be given time to consider the draft Action Plan; and
- A workshop will be held in mid-August to further develop the draft Action Plan for recommendation to the Board **(AP5.1)**

The Chair thanked ACC Hamilton and Superintendent Barton for their attendance and they left the meeting (10.15am).

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 Chair asked Members consider the draft minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2019 and noted an amendment in relation to 5.1 (page 4), “NPT in Outer East Belfast” as opposed to “NPT in East Belfast”.

The Committee considered the draft minutes, and the suggested amendment, of the Committee meeting held on 16 May 2019.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That the draft minutes of the Committee meeting held on 16 May 2019 with the amendment be approved.

4. UPDATE ON ACTION LOG:

The Engagement Manager provided Members with an update on the Committee’s rolling action log. Members noted the update from the action log from the Committee meeting held on 16 May 2019. NOTED.

5. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS:

5.2 Engagement Strategy Development

The Chair introduced the item with the Engagement Manager advising Members that the paper was a consequence to the Committee’s discussion at the May 2019 meeting and it aimed to provide Members with work-to-date on the development of the Engagement Strategy.

The Chair invited comments and discussion ensued with:

- Clarity provided in relation to the overall aim of the Strategy as a programme of work to be proactive to community needs in respect of independent oversight of policing, be seen to add value to policing and raise the Board's profile;
- Agreement from Members that the Strategy was an overall Board document which was integrated across the organisation but sits within the Partnership Committee's remit;
- A request for timeframes to be included as applicable;
- The importance of utilising existing partnerships and proactively engaging with disengaged groups being reinforced;
- The importance for the Board to be visible and this included exploring opportunities to hold Board and Committee meetings across Northern Ireland;
- A disconnect between the Board and PCSPs and vital that all communities are involved and engaged with through PCSPs;
- Confirmation that while the Strategy was being developed continued engagement would be ongoing for the Board; and
- The current breadth of the Strategy across the Board and external, including Human Rights, PCSPs, councils and government departments being highlighted.

Members were supportive of the draft Strategy and the importance of considering not only the work of Partnership Committee, but opportunities for engagement linking to other Committees programme of work. Taking this into account it was agreed for the Chair's report to the June Board to highlight the Strategy to all Members. In the meantime officials will further develop the strategy as no amendments were formally proposed.

It was:-

AGREED:

- The Engagement Strategy will be further developed and be brought to a future meeting, inclusive of timeframes as applicable **(AP5.2)**

5.3 Evaluation of Communications Activity in support of the PCSP

Independent Member Recruitment Campaign

The Chair introduced the item with the Partnership Manager providing an update on the current recruitment campaign informing Members that following a recent report completed by the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland (CPANI), legal advice is currently being sought by DoJ on Stage 3 of the process as set out in the Code of Practice.

The Committee Chair asked for officials to request DOJ to confirm the position regarding Stage 3 of the process in writing.

Eligibility checks have been completed and Board officials are in the process of contracting the HR Service provider to work with the Councils for Stage 2.

Training for Council panels is due to take place in late August and early September with Shortlisting/Interviews taking place in October and November through Councils.

The Communications Manager presented an evaluation paper on the communications activity in support of the PCSP independent member recruitment campaign. This included costs and impacts around the advertising plan, highlighting social media as the most effective forum, which also increased traffic to the Board's website and resulted in growth of awareness around PCSP's. She noted the report would also be sent to the Impartial Assessor.

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.

Members noted that of the 365 applicants who had completed the 'heard about the vacancy 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'**.

Member's discussion included the future review and use of newspaper advertising in recruitment campaigns and the incomplete online applications and whether reasons for this had been captured.

It was:-

AGREED:

- To seek written confirmation from DOJ of the guidance in relation to Stage 3 of the process. **(AP5.3)**

5.4 Independent Custody Visiting Scheme - 2019/20 Recruitment Campaign

The Engagement Manager advised of the legislative requirement of the Board, to make and keep under review arrangements for designated places of detention to be visited by lay visitors was outlined. She noted that the Board do this through the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme and a recruitment exercise for new Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) would be required, of which the paper presented outlined the stages and communications and engagement opportunities.

Members discussed the potential engagement opportunities that could run alongside the campaign. Universities were highlighted as a key target audience, in light of the Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) number being slightly lower for younger people, and Members were updated on recent initial engagement work undertaken with QUB and UU. It was Members view that the promotion of the Scheme and recruitment opportunities on the Board's social media platforms was paramount. Members requested further information on the roles and responsibilities within an ICV visit and this was provided.

It was:-

AGREED:

- Visiting forms used by ICV's would be made available to all Members on SharePoint in the generic documents folder **(AP5.4)**

5.5 HMICFRS PEEL Inspection 2019/20

The Engagement Manager noted that following the early June Board meeting it was agreed for each Committee to consider incorporating the Legitimacy pillar in the inspection of PSNI through HMICFRS PEEL.

The Chair invited Member's views and they were particularly focused on whether, in relation to Partnership Committee's key focus areas, the Effectiveness pillar would be more appropriate. In discussing further Members recognised that in understanding the need to avoid duplication and ensure value for money, inspecting PSNI through the Legitimacy pillar would inform public perception of police as well as facilitate effective monitoring of police performance.

They agreed that while the inspection would move away from the Effectiveness and Efficiency pillars these would remain as central threads throughout the inspection. Members also established that the Board should not lose sight of the possibility of conducting focussed inspections using CJINI in particular areas which are beyond the more established aspects of policing that are currently inspected.

It was agreed to:-

RECOMMEND:

To the Board:-

- That the focus of the 2019/20 PEEL inspection should be on the legitimacy pillar;
- That the efficiency and effectiveness pillars should remain the central threads throughout the inspection; and

- That the Board should not lose sight of the possibility of conducting focused inspections using CJINI in particular areas which are beyond the more established aspects of policing that are currently being examined.

5.6 Partnership Committee - Programme of Work

The Engagement Manager explained that there have been 5 meetings of Partnership Committee to date and Members may wish to revisit the draft Programme of Work which was agreed in February.

The Committee Vice Chair noted that at the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) meeting of 17 June 2019 a report from Internal Audit was presented that raised governance concerns and the potential for the Board to be exposed in relation to the policy and governance arrangements for the Police Property Fund (PPF).

It was noted that the policy and governance issues raised within the report must inform any future implementation plans. Members agreed that effective governance arrangements and the identification of implementation structures were a priority for this work area. The Vice Chair proposed that work on the Police Property Fund, scheduled for September, would be accelerated. This was agreed for mid-August, potentially in line with the Local Policing Action Plan workshop.

It was:-

AGREED:

- The Internal Audit Report on the PPF would be made available to all Members on SharePoint in the generic documents folder **(AP5.5)**;
- Officials would develop a paper on delivery options addressing issues raised in the Internal Audit Report for a workshop scheduled for mid-August **(AP5.6)**; and
- Members to liaise with Board officials in developing a paper on delivery options **(AP5.7)**

5.7 Research Recommendations Report

The Chair informed Members that all tracked changes to the Research Recommendations Report, as agreed at the last Committee meeting had been made. The Committee noted that no further work was required on this item.

NOTED

6. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

Members noted the response to the Chief Constable questions submitted following the May Committee meeting. The Chair asked Members to consider any upcoming questions. No upcoming questions were proposed.

7. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES/OPPORTUNITIES

The Communications Manager advised that she will be contacting Members for their availability for potential visits to the Police Estate.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Support Hubs

The Chair raised an item in relation to Support Hubs and suggested that Members liaise with PCSP Managers in their areas for an update on their level of input to the hubs. The Partnership Manager advised that she had recently completed an exercise to identify the level of involvement of each PCSP in Support Hubs and this would provide the information requested.

It was:-

AGREED:

- The recent paper on PCSP involvement in Support Hubs would be made available to all Members on SharePoint in the generic documents folder **(AP5.8)**

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting will take place on Thursday 19 September 2019.

(Meeting closed at 12.45pm)

PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORATE

Date: June 2019


Chair