

**NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY  
22 APRIL 2021 AT 14:00 on Zoom.**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Mrs Dolores Kelly (Chair) Mr Michael Atkinson Ms Liz Kimmins Mr Tom Buchanan Mr Mervyn Storey Mrs Joanne Bunting Mrs Janet Gray Mr Sean Lynch Ms Carmel McKinney Mr John Blair (2) Mr Tom Frawley - Ex Officio
<b>PSNI:</b>	(1) DCC Hamilton T/ACC Bobby Singleton Supt Gordon McCalmont
<b>OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Mrs Amanda Stewart, CEO Mrs Dympna Thornton, Director of Partnership 2 Board Officials

(1) Present only for Item 6.1

(2) Present only for Item 6.3

#### **1. APOLOGIES**

No apologies were received.

#### **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 18 March 2021.

It was:-

##### **RESOLVED:-**

- That the draft minutes of Partnership Committee meetings held on the 18 March 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 17.5** – Review of PCSPs from October 2020 meeting, item remains open, DOJ meeting to be arranged to progress.

**AP 22.2 and 22.3** – (Letters to PSNI from March meeting) Item 5.2 in today's agenda. Members agreed that these actions could now be closed.

**AP 22.4** – (PSNI Communications and Engagement Strategy) PSNI will update officials when amendments have been included. Members agreed that this action could now be closed.

**AP 22.8** – (Support Hub funding) Item 5.3 of today's agenda. Members agreed that this action could now be closed.

**NOTED**

## **5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS**

The Chair welcomed all Members to the meeting and advised that 3 items of correspondence would be included under this agenda item and invited the Director of Partnership to provide further details.

### **5.1 Letter issued to DCC regarding requested insert into PSNI Communications and Engagement Strategy**

The Director of Partnership informed Members that following the March Meeting of Partnership Committee a letter had been sent to PSNI regarding an update of the PSNI Strategic Communications and Engagement Strategy. PSNI have advised that the when completed this will be shared with the Committee. Officials will inform Members when received. **NOTED**

### **5.2 Letter issued to PSNI re: NPT leadership**

The Director of Partnership provided Members with a reply received from ACC Todd confirming details of the NPT leadership team for the Neighbourhood Policing Delivery Programme and also advised that a presentation on the Performance Management Framework for Contact Management will be provided for Members at the June's Partnership Committee meeting as part of the LPR Implementation Plan update.

**NOTED**

### **5.3 Letter issued to DOJ regarding Support Hub engagement**

The Director of Partnership advised that a response has been provided on Decision Time for Member's information. Meetings have been held with PCSP Managers as Support Hub Chairs, and the Board's CEO has also received correspondence from the Justice Committee which advises that they will write to the Department regarding concerns which are similar to the concerns of Partnership Committee Members. Officials to update Members in due course.

**NOTED**

## **6. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

### **6.1 PSNI presentation on Policing with the Community (PwC)**

The Director of Partnership provided Members with background information on PwC and the presentation which PSNI will provide. The Chair then welcomed DCC Hamilton, T/ACC Bobby Singleton along with Supt. Gordon McCalmont to the meeting. The Chair congratulated T/ACC Singleton on his new role and wished to record the Committee's condemnation on the recent attack on a PSNI employee.

Supt. McCalmont then provided an outline and aims of the PwC work and a Number of key projects which are ongoing. This included:

- Establishment of IAGs in November 2020 and their importance as a critical friend. This group have met seven times to date and have 30 Members;
- Youth Engagement and investment in building partnerships with the Education Authority;
- Made particular reference to the SPARK Project which engaged 240 young people in a six week programme to deliver social projects in communities;
- Emergency Department intervention was referenced as an exciting piece of work which has an agile funding stream and is available to respond to community issues;
- Victim focus is a key part of the PSNI's Prevention First Strategy;
- Multi Agency Support Hubs were referenced, focussing on the importance of partnership working and PSNI advised that the Belfast Support Hub will go live on 14 May 2021; and
- Areas where this initiative dovetails with Policing Plan measures were highlighted by PSNI.

Members discussed:

- The effectiveness of the Prevention First approach;
- Merit in having flexibility to allocate funding to intervene in areas where issues are dynamic and fast-moving;
- The level of support for PSNI from partners involved in the Prevention First work;
- Engagement with schools and the benefit of small grants as a means for promoting engagement with PSNI;
- The need to consider "looked after children" in youth engagement arrangements;
- The impact of this work on the culture of lawfulness;
- Current challenges and the perception of PSNI in the protestant, unionist and loyalist community;
- Opportunities which might exist to mirror the work which PSNI are doing with the Black, and Minority Ethnic Community (BAME) across other communities;
- The recent attack on a PSNI employee; and
- The need for further consideration in relation to part time officer recruitment and the need to address the challenges which are creating tension in the protestant, unionist, and loyalist community.

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

- Recognition that some crime types are under reported therefore Prevention First is focussed on encouraging reporting;
- Shifting the focus to the "how" i.e. how this will make a difference to Communities through liaison with Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs);
- A recognition of the merits of agile funding which allows a more rapid and effective response to emerging issues;
- Benefits of the Support Hubs concept and further work being done to enhance engagement with partners;

- The impact of the pandemic has meant limited engagement opportunities in the education arena;
- Small grants are focused on communities where it is important to build relationships, however it is recognised that measuring prevention can be difficult;
- PSNI Public Protection Unit and their role and focus on children who are “looked after” other than in their own homes;
- Acknowledgement that trust and confidence is “on loan” to the PSNI and PwC is constantly evolving and requires concerted commitment;
- The importance of collaborative problem solving to deliver solutions for communities;
- Acknowledgement of communities in crisis at this time and an awareness of the depth of feeling in communities and senior levels of PSNI;
- Reference to work in relation to part time officer recruitment being considered through the Neighbourhood Policing Delivery Programme;
- A willingness to engage and create a platform to allow discussion with communities; and
- The Chief Constable is keen to formally launch the Prevention First Strategy which now sets the direction for policing with communities.

A Member requested an update on the Community Relations Task Force in relation to its remit, role and scope.

It was:-

**AGREED**

- PSNI will provide this to Officials **(AP1)**

The Chair thanked the PSNI representatives for attending the meeting.

## **6.2 Partnership Committee Review for 2020/21**

The Director of Partnership provided Members with details on the work of the Partnership Committee as captured in the Committee Review 2020/21 and sought Members' approval for its inclusion in the Board's Annual Report.

**NOTED**

## **6.3 Committee Annual Effectiveness Review**

The Director of Partnership provided information to Members of the requirement for a Committee Annual Effectiveness Review, the Board's Vice Chair joined the meeting to provide an overview of the Committee Effectiveness Review which members had been asked to complete, and advised Members that an analysis of this work will be presented to Board Members to facilitate consideration on how Board Committees can be more efficient and effective. The Director of Partnership provided a verbal update on the responses from Partnership Committee Members which reflected that 60% of the Committee's Membership had provided responses to the Effectiveness Review for Partnership Committee.

Members discussed:

- The need to understand how this exercise fits into the bigger piece of work for the Board;
- The need to consider Committee objectives; and
- Background contextual information if available would help new Members in the consideration of this piece of work; and
- An assurance that recurring themes identified in external reports will be captured in the final paper.

Members discussed the level of responses and agreed that in line with other Committees, it would be beneficial to re-open the survey to allow maximum responses. It was also recognised that it would be important for them to see a paper on the responses received as it would assist the Committee in reviewing the objectives within the Committee's Terms of Reference.

It was:-

**AGREED**

- The online self-assessment will be re-opened for Members until Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021 **(AP2)**;
- The responses will be consolidated by Officials and brought as a paper to the May Committee meeting. **(AP3)**.

#### **6.4 PWC Research Proposal**

The Director of Partnership provided further information on the proposal to establish an external panel to carry out an evaluation on the implementation of PwC. The proposal presented to members was to establish a task and finish Subgroup which would comprise Partnership Committee Members to draft a TOR to take this work forward, Two options were presented, setting out membership of the group to ensure that representation should be established. In explaining the options, the Director of Partnership noted that officials would recommend Option 1 as it allowed full representation of elected Members as well as including independent Members.

Members discussed:

- That the use of an external group is unnecessary;
- A rationale for progressing the work of PwC; and
- Membership of the panel.
- Committee member Sean Lynch stated his opposition to the research proposal outlined.



It was:-

**Agreed**

- Option 1 was accepted by members, therefore the group will be made up of 6 members of Partnership Committee (4 Political and 2 Independents) and a sub group will be established to draft the TOR which is due to return to Committee for consideration in May 2021. **(AP4)**

### **6.5 Proposed Committee Programme of work – Apr – Sept 2021**

The Director of Partnership provided Members with an overview of the proposed programme of work for Partnership Committee from April to September 2021 and sought Members views.

Members discussed:

- Adding Joint Committee to the Agenda for the May meeting; and
- Making reference to the PwC Research panel.

The Chair asked Members to note that it is unlikely that Joint Committee will be meeting over the next month and therefore it would be added to the Committee's Programme of Work as required. In respect of the PwC work, members were advised that, if approved by the Board, this would be added to the Programme of work.

Members are content to note at this stage **NOTED**

### **6.6 Support Hub Evaluation**

The Partnership Manager provided Members with the final Support Hub Evaluation, which was carried out by the DOJ Analytical Services Group (ASG) seconded from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). She explained that the report contained a good level of both qualitative and quantitative information gained from Members which would be used to improve the Hubs and ensure a consistent approach. She also noted that whilst it is appreciated that the remit of the evaluation was to consider the mechanics of the Hubs, future evaluations would benefit from 'client' perceptions of the service.

Members were asked to note the findings and recommendations as provided.

Members discussed:

- The report as being a solid executive level report;
- Support Hubs are a great strategic tool and a transforming service for the vulnerable in communities;
- Qualitative and quantitative evidence which shows a high level impact on families and communities.

Members also discussed the impact of the Hubs on demand for emergency services' resources and in particular what impact they are having on the PSNI.

It was:-

**Agreed**

- The Committee will issue a question to the Chief Constable to ask if there is evidence to show a reduction in demand on PSNI due to the involvement of PSNI in Support Hub arrangements.

**(AP5).**

## **7. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE**

To ask the Chief Constable to provide evidence that demand on PSNI has been reduced as a result of PSNI's involvement in Support Hub arrangements.

## **8. Communications Issues/Opportunities**

### **8.1 Report on Board's Communications Activity**

The Communications Manager provided Members with an update on the work of Communications Branch across all Board Directorates during a very challenging year with COVID restrictions and reduced resources.

Members wished to record their appreciation for all the work carried out by Communications Branch during such adverse times. **NOTED**

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **9.1 ICV Article in "The Writ"**

The Director of Partnership advised members that following a recent review of the Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) role with the Board's Human Rights Adviser and the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation concerning visits made to Terrorist Detainees, an article was published in the Spring edition of The Writ. This is a magazine issued by the NI Law Society and circulated to those in the legal profession in Northern Ireland. This article will raise awareness with legal representatives across NI and it is hoped it will increase awareness of the ICV role, which provides independent oversight of the treatment of TACT detainees whilst in custody. **NOTED**

## **10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was agreed as 20 May 2021 at 2pm.

(Meeting closed at 4.20pm)

**PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORATE**

**APRIL 2021**

*Donna Keel*  
Chairperson