

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2019 at 10.00, MUSGRAVE PSNI STATION**

PRESENT:

Mr Mervyn Storey, Chairperson
Prof. Brice Dickson, Vice Chairperson
Mr Keith Buchanan
Mr Philip McGuigan
Dr Tom Frawley
Ms Debbie Watters
1 Dr Paul Nolan

**POLICE SERVICE OF
NORTHERN IRELAND IN
ATTENDANCE:**

2 T/Assistant Chief Constable Tim Mairs
2 Superintendent Robert Murdie
2 Two PSNI Officers
3 ACC Mark Hamilton
3 Chief Superintendent John Roberts
3 Ms Una Williamson
3 1 Custody Nurse Practitioner

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

Ms Jenny Passmore, Director of Performance
Four Board Officials

- (1) Item number : 6.1**
- (2) Item number : 6.2**
- (3) Item number : 6.3**

1.0 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mrs Dolores Kelly, Mrs Joanne Bunting, Mr Alan Chambers and Mr Gerry Kelly.

The Committee agreed the agenda for the meeting.

The Chair asked Members to advise of any issues they wished to raise at Item 9 under “Any Other Business”. No issues were declared.

2.0 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3.0 DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the minutes of the meetings held on the 14 November 2019 and 27 November 2019. The Committee agreed the minutes.

It was therefore:-

RESOLVED:-

That the draft minutes of the Performance Committee meetings held on the 14 November 2019 and 27 November 2019 were agreed.

4.0 UPDATE ON ACTION LOG

The Director of Performance provided an update on the actions listed on the Action Log. Members noted the remaining current open actions and expected timeframes for these matters to be brought back to the Performance Committee. **NOTED.**

4.1 PSNI RESPONSE REGARDING MEASURE 2.1.2 OF POLICING PLAN 2019/20 HATE CRIME (AP 3 OCTOBER)

The Committee considered the PSNI response into issues previously raised in relation to Command and Control System Closing Codes used for hate crime occurrences and the

effectiveness of PSNI hate crime training. Discussion took place around the information received and a number of further questions arose.

It was:–

AGREED: -

To write to PSNI requesting clarification on –

- The rationale for not applying the closing code ‘BRXT’ in the incident which mentioned BREXIT; and
- An example of a hate crime incident by which the closing code ‘BRXT’ would or should be applied. **(AP1)**

4.2 PSNI RESPONSE REGARDING MONITORING PSNI’S COMPLIANCE WITH THE HUMAN RIGHTS ACT (AP 6 OCTOBER)

The Committee considered the PSNI written response in relation to the implementation of a new approach to PSNI’s human rights compliance. The Deputy Chief Constable welcomed the Board’s new oversight approach and gave a commitment to working with the Board’s Human Rights Advisor to develop the new reporting requirements.

5.0 CHAIRPERSON’S BUSINESS

The Chair confirmed that he had no items of business for discussion.

6.0 ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1 PROPOSED REVIEW OF THE PSNI CODE OF ETHICS

A Board Official presented a paper to Members to seek their views on a proposed revision of the PSNI Code of Ethics. Members considered the information provided in the paper and a draft comparison document provided by the PSNI which suggested amendments and updates to the existing 2008 Code of Ethics. The Official informed Members that the Board’s Human Rights Advisor had also scrutinised the draft

comparison document and has documented a number of proposed comments that he would like to take forward to the Committee for consideration.

Following discussion it was:-

AGREED:-

The Committee recommend to the Board that a review of the Code of Ethics should take place. **(AP 2)**

It was also:-

AGREED:-

That the Code of Ethics should be brought back to Committee in January 2020 and that the Board's Human Rights Advisor deliver a paper on his proposed changes to PSNI's draft document. **(AP 3)**

6.2 PSNI BRIEFING ON BODY WORN VIDEO (BWV)

A Board Official delivered a paper asking Members to note the information provided to assist with their discussion with PSNI. Members were reminded that in May 2019 they had considered the PSNI evaluation report on BWV and had since written a number of times to PSNI seeking a clarification on a range of key issues including:-

- Guidance;
- Supervision;
- Stop and Search;
- Domestic Abuse; and
- Covert Surveillance

This meeting would provide Members with an opportunity to meet with PSNI to discuss their concerns and receive a presentation and demonstration of BWV since its completed roll out across the service.

The Chair welcomed T/ACC Tim Mairs, Supt Robert Murdie and two other PSNI officers to the meeting and invited them to brief Members on the use of Body Worn Video to the Committee.

A presentation was delivered to Members led by Supt Murdie which included a demonstration of the use of BWV equipment. The Superintendent explained that the purpose of BWV was supporting and enhancing the quality of evidence provided by PSNI officers. BWV assists with reducing crime, the fear of crime and enables swifter outcomes with early guilty pleas and admissions. PSNI believe that there is potential to improve public confidence through transparent, objective and accountable policing.

It was highlighted that PSNI are now advising other public services including the Ambulance Service, parking enforcement and An Garda Síochána on the use of BWV.

A short video made in partnership with the Public Protection Service (PPS) was viewed by Members, depicting a real-life domestic abuse incident and explained how the use of BWV by the officer had provided PPS with the evidence to secure a conviction.

Members received information on the guidance and training provided to officers, both new recruits at Police College and existing officers, who undertake a compulsory training course before using the equipment. Although initially faced with some resistance from existing officers in introducing BWV, PSNI are now experiencing a change in culture and a new way of thinking as the benefits of BWV become more apparent. One of the benefits is a foreseen reduction in complaints against PSNI officers in carrying out their duties.

PSNI provided an overview of a newly developed computer software which is due to be rolled out in 2020 aiming to improve PSNI's collaboration with the PPS. The Digital Evidence Management System (DEMS) will introduce a cloud-based sharing system to replace DVDs for footage, this is expected to provide a reduction in time spent producing recordings and a reduction in the costs of DVDs including officer extraction.

PSNI have recently made improvements to their supervision system which has made it more straightforward for supervisors to check officer compliance and to identify recordings.

A comprehensive and positive discussion between Members and PSNI followed the presentation. A number of questions were raised by Members with PSNI including a

discussion on officer discretion when dealing with sensitive issues or challenging environments.

The Chairperson thanked PSNI for their attendance and they left the meeting.

6.3 UPDATE ON THE POLICING PLAN 2019/20

- **Mental Health; and**
- **Custody Healthcare Continuous Improvement Project (included a presentation from PSNI and a tour of the Custody Suite)**

The Committee considered a paper on the analysis of work relating to PSNI performance against the Policing Plan 2019/20 measure 2.1.2 in relation Mental Health, highlighting the key issues:

- PSNI's mental health survey 2019;
- PSNI engagement activities;
- Support Hubs in dealing with mental health;
- Detainees with mental health issues; and
- The MATT (mental health triage team) project.

Additionally the Members were briefed on the Continuous Improvement Project for Custody Healthcare to enable them to engage with PSNI. Following this briefing PSNI delivered a presentation to the Committee on the outworking's of the Continuous Improvement Project.

The Chair welcomed ACC Mark Hamilton, Chief Supt John Roberts, Ms Una Williamson and 1 healthcare professional to the meeting and invited them to brief Members on the transformation of custody healthcare.

ACC Hamilton highlighted that custody was an area of significant risk and it is evidenced that there are complex healthcare needs for many people detained and that their welfare was a central part of the custody process.

In October 2018, PSNI in partnership with Belfast Health and Social Care Trust introduced the Pathfinder Custody Nurse Practitioners (CNP) led healthcare model. This was introduced to Musgrave Station as part of the Continuous Improvement Project to

transform healthcare in custody as an alternative to the existing Forensic Medical Officer (FMO) model currently used throughout PSNI.

ACC Hamilton reported that having CNPs in custody results in a more holistic approach for detainees and in many cases defuses potentially challenging situations. From the introduction of CNPs in custody, there has been a 55% reduction of referrals to emergency departments from Musgrave, providing a two-way saving to the Health Trust through reduced admissions and to PSNI in relation to officers' time transporting detainees. There has been a significant reduction in reliance FMOs as CNP's have gained experience in the custody environment and less than 2% of cases are referred to an FMO therefore this has seen a significant reduction in expenditure.

In regards to training received by CNPs, it was outlined that a one week intense course is delivered through the Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine in the Royal College of Physicians. This has enabled CNPs to provide a 24/7 model of forensic medical decisions on fitness for detainees to be interviewed and health assessments to refer detainees for specialist services such as counselling and appointments with addiction clinics.

ACC Hamilton has indicated that having the CNPs on site 24/7 has provided officers with more confidence in dealing with vulnerable detainees and have provided crucial life-saving treatment. Due to the positive outworking's of this project, ACC Hamilton indicated an ambition to have it rolled out across the service if possible and welcomed the Committees support.

Members were supportive of the PSNI presentation and the information provided. They engaged in discussion with PSNI to clarify information on issues including effectiveness of the service for detainees; the savings made not only to PSNI but to the Health Service; and how this could be implemented and funded across all custody suites.

The Chairperson thanked PSNI and their colleagues for their attendance and they left the meeting.

Following discussion it was:-

AGREED:-

That a letter be issued to PSNI to provide a more comprehensive response to the key issues highlighted in the paper for the PSNI performance in relation to mental health.

(AP4)

7.0 QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

Members **noted** the responses to the Chief Constable questions submitted following the November Performance Committee meetings on PSNI's resourcing of their Legacy Investigation Branch

Members **agreed** that they had no questions arising out of the meeting for the Chief Constable.

8.0 COMMUNICATION ISSUES

Members were asked to consider if there were any communications issues arising from the meeting. No communications issued were raised.

9.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on Thursday 16 January 2020 at 10.00am in Waterside Tower.

The meeting closed 4.20pm with the ensuing tour of the Custody Suite ending at 5.00pm.