

**NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD  
HELD ON THURSDAY 2 DECEMBER 2021 AT 9.30AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER,  
CLARENDON DOCK AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE FACILITY**

**PRESENT:**

- Mr Doug Garrett Chair  
Dr Tom Frawley Vice-Chair  
Mr Michael Atkinson  
(1) Mr John Blair MLA\*  
Mr Maurice Bradley MLA  
Mr Jonathan Buckley MLA  
(2) Ms Joanne Bunting MLA\*  
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA  
Dr Janet Gray  
Mr Edgar Jardine  
(3) Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA  
Mr Gerry Kelly MLA  
Ms Liz Kimmins MLA\*  
Mrs Linda Dillon MLA  
Mr Frank McManus  
(4) Ms Carmel McKinney\*  
Ms Deirdre Toner  
Mr Colm McKenna \*

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

- (5) Mr Simon Byrne, Chief Constable  
(5) Ms Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating Officer  
(5) Mr Alan Todd, Assistant Chief Constable  
(5) Mr Sam Donaldson, A/Assistant Chief  
(5) Constable  
(5) Ms Melanie Jones, A/Assistant Chief Constable  
(5) Mr Will Young, T/Assistant Chief Officer  
(5) Mr Mark McNaughten T/Assistant Chief Officer  
Ms Finola Dornan, A/ Superintendent

**NORTHERN IRELAND  
POLICING BOARD  
OFFICIALS IN  
ATTENDANCE:**

Mrs Sinead Simpson , Chief Executive  
Mr Adrian McNamee, Director of Performance  
Ms Dympna Thornton, Director of Partnership  
Ms Jenny Passmore, Director of Resources  
Ms Aislinn McGuckin, T/Director of Police  
Administration  
Three Board Officials

**OTHER OFFICIALS IN  
ATTENDANCE:**

Mr John Wadham, Human Rights Advisor

\*Attended meeting by video conference facility

- (1) **Zoom for the public meeting only**
- (2) **Zoom from 9.30/in person from 11:50**
- (3) **From 10am**
- (4) **Zoom from 9.30 to 10.30 only**
- (5) **Item 10 only**

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA for the full meeting and from Mr John Blair for the private meeting. Mrs Carmel McKinney was available for the first hour of the meeting and offered an apology for the remainder of the meeting.

The Board agreed the Agenda for the meeting.

**2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**3. DRAFT MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 4 NOVEMBER 2021**

It was **RESOLVED:-**

- That the minutes of the Board meeting held on 4 November 2021 be approved.

**4 BOARD ACTION LOG**

Updates as detailed within the Action Log from the Board meeting held on 4 November 2021 were noted in addition to the following verbal updates provided by the Chief Executive.

### **Action Point 3**

With regard to PSNI misconduct and the handling of inappropriate behaviour complaints, the Chief Executive noted that correspondence to the Chief Constable has been included in the Chair's report and the PSNI's Professional Standards Department will be providing a detailed briefing at the Performance Committee meeting on 27 January 2022 to which all Board Members will be invited.

### **Action Point 6**

In respect of Members' concerns regarding the timeliness of information provided to the Board and Committees, correspondence has issued from the Chair to PSNI (in Chair's correspondence) regarding engagement and consultation with the Board on strategies, decisions being late or delayed and a meeting is being arranged between the Chair and the Chief Operating Officer to emphasise Members frustration that this continues to be an issue.

Action points 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8 were closed.

Updates as detailed within the Action Log from the Board meeting held on 7 October 2021 were noted in addition to the following verbal updates provided.

### **Action Point 5**

With regard to the Police Property Fund publicity, the Director of Partnership confirmed that the letters of offer have been issued to the successful applicants and the acceptance confirmations are due to be received in the near future. A publicity event will be arranged in early 2022 to coincide with the launch of the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the small grant scheme.

Action Points 1 and 3 were closed.

Updates as detailed within the Action Log from the Board meeting held on **1 July 2021** were noted in addition to the following verbal updates provided by the Chief Executive.

### **Action Point 3**

In relation to the Lessons Learned report on Operation Yurta, the Chief Executive noted there is detailed correspondence received from the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) in the Chair's report on this matter.

### **Action Point 4**

The Chief Executive noted that Chair, Vice-Chair and herself met with the CJINI Chief Inspector last week and were advised that the Inspection of Leadership Development has been delayed due to COVID-19, but that the lead Inspector will be getting in touch soon to arrange to meet Chair and Vice-Chair of Resources.

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

### **5.1 Chair's Report**

The Board noted a Report from the Chair who advised Members of:

- The Chair's engagements, including meetings held by teleconference and video conference facilities, during the period between 3 November 2021 and 30 November 2021.
- A list of correspondence received by the Chair during the period between 3 November 2021 and 30 November 2021.
- A list of correspondence issued by the Chair during the period between 3 November 2021 and 30 November 2021.

The Chair updated Members on his recent engagements including:

- Attendance at several meetings in relation to the ongoing senior staff recruitment processes and the forthcoming Assistant Chief Constable competition
- Meeting with Peter May on 17 November 2021 at which the following was discussed:
  - Recruitment exercise for Independent Members;
  - Senior PSNI staff recruitment

- Impact of forthcoming elections on Board business;
- The oversight stocktake;
- Budget;
- Police staff pay remits; and
- Members' comments in relation to the proposals for Belfast Harbour Police.

In relation to correspondence, the Chair highlighted the following items:

- Correspondence from the Deputy Chief Constable regarding the introduction and award criteria for a PSNI Service Medal / Medallion.
- Correspondence from the Deputy Chief Constable providing a detailed update on Operation Yurta and a further update is expected for the February 2022 Board meeting .
- Correspondence from the COO on 19 November 2021 in relation to a civil action – this will be discussed in more detail when the Chair of Resources Committee reports on the November Resources Committee meeting.

A Member raised a query regarding correspondence issued to the Chief Operating Officer which refers to the Board's role in the approval of PSNI Strategies. During discussion it was acknowledged that there is a lack of clarity and the Board's position is somewhat ambiguous. It was **AGREED** to bring a paper to a future Board meeting regarding the role of the Board in the approval of PSNI Strategies. **(AP1)**

Several Members raised concerns regarding the forthcoming new COVID Regulations that had recently been approved in the Assembly. Members were concerned at the speed at which these regulations have been brought into legislation and as such there has been insufficient time to allow due process (such as the relevant impact assessments) to be completed. Members cautioned the reputational risk to the PSNI and the Board regarding the enforcement of these regulations and it was **AGREED** the Chair would issue a further letter to the Health Minister reiterating the Board's support for the Chief

Constable regarding COVID enforcement issues and the importance of PSNI early involvement when Health Regulations are being updated. **(AP2)**

## **5.2 Updated Committee Membership**

The Chair advised that in line with the Board's Standing Orders, Members were being asked to approve the appointment of the Board Members listed to each of the Board's Standing Committees as indicated within the paper. Members **AGREED** the updates as outlined in the paper.

The Chair noted the Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARAC) is now an entirely male Committee and advised he will engage with female Board members over the coming weeks regarding membership of ARAC and seek expressions of interest to ensure gender equality on the Committee. **(AP3)**

## **6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

The Board noted a Report from the Chief Executive which provided an update on various items of business.

The Chief Executive highlighted the following items:

- With regard to PSNI Senior Officer Recruitment, the recruitment competitions for the Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) Corporate Services and ACO Strategic Planning and Transformation roles are underway and interviews for both positions are due to take place on 14/15 December.
- Following the previous Board meeting the Chief Executive was notified by DoF representatives that, due to supply chain issues being experienced by the contractor, there would be a delay in the Board's move to James House and the building would not be ready by mid-January 2022 as originally anticipated. The CEO advised that discussions are being conducted on our behalf by LPS with the landlord. It has been concluded that a 6 month "extension" to the current lease at Waterside Tower would be appropriate and SMT will now consider when, within that period, the Board should move to its new premises.

- The launch of NIPB Human Rights Annual Report will take place on 10 December 2021.
- The completion of NIPB Policing Plan 2022 survey in March 2022.
- Work ongoing to fill NIPB internal vacancies.

## **7. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **7.1 Performance Committee 11 November 2021**

The Board noted the Performance Committee Chair's Report and draft minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2021. The Chair also provided a verbal update on matters considered at the meeting which included an update on the work relating to PSNI Performance against Policing Plan Measure 1.2.2 on Organised Crime Gangs, National Crime Agency (NCA)/Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) Q1 Reports, Annual Report of the Independent Reviewer of JSA, Review of the Code of Ethics: Police Federation Engagement, Human Rights Advisor 3 year programme and Human Rights Advisor update report.

### **7.2 Partnership Committee 18 November 2021**

The Board noted the Partnership Committee Chair's Report and draft minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2021. The Chair also provided a verbal update on matters considered at the meeting which included an update on PCSP Strategic Priorities, a PSNI presentation on Domestic and Sexual Abuse, updates on Policing Plan Measures 1.3.1- Feeling Safe in local area, high street town or home, and 1.3.2 – Rate of Places repeatedly victimised, a complaint made against a PCSP Member and an update on arrangements for Member's visit to Crossmaglen in January 2022.

### **7.3 Resources Committee 25 November 2021**

The Board noted the Resource Committee Chair's Report and draft minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2021. The Chair also provided a verbal update on matters considered at the meeting which included a presentation from the PSNI regarding the Governance Arrangements for the Police Training

College and an Above Delegated Limit request for Grants payments for 3 organisations who provide a Hate Crime Advocacy Service.

The Committee Chair also provided a verbal update to the board on an Above Delegated Limits compensation payment request from the PSNI. A confidential annex was provided to Members in hard copy in relation to this item.

Resources Committee Members offered some context on the nature of discussion which had taken place at Resources Committee, the concerns expressed by Members in terms of process, the complexity of the financial considerations in this case and their acknowledgement and consideration of the victims in reaching their conclusion.

After discussion and a vote from Members, the Board **APPROVED** the recommendation of the Committee regarding the Above Delegated Limits compensation payment request from the PSNI. This was approved by majority, not unanimous, vote.

## **8. BOARD BUSINESS**

### **8.1 National Crime Agency Report (including Serious and Organised Crime Reports)**

The Director of Performance presented a paper which provided Members with a summary report of the NCA's and the PSNI's performance and activity in Northern Ireland in respect of Serious and Organised Crime covering the Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 periods of April to September 2021. The Director of Performance noted the key issues that Members may wish to consider and discuss with the NCA Director General Graeme Biggar and the PSNI Chief Constable Simon Byrne later in this Meeting. Members **NOTED** the report.

### **8.2 HMICFRS Proposed 2022/23 Inspection Programme**

The Director of Performance noted that at the November Board meeting a paper was tabled outlining the proposal from HMICFRS for a Draft Terms of Reference (**ToR**) and a number of options in relation to the next PEEL Inspection for the



2022/23 year were identified. At that time Members requested HMICFRS consider their feedback and propose further draft ToR.

HMICFRS subsequently submitted updated ToR, which included an additional third inspection option for consideration. Members were asked to consider these options and agree a preferred option for HMICFRS to proceed with the 2022/23 inspection. The Board considered:

- An option to adopt the terms of reference previously agreed for the 2020/2021 inspection;
- An option to adapt these terms of reference to take account of other inspection activity commissioned by the NIPB and also inspection activity in England and Wales, and,
- An option to blend elements of the above 2 proposals to ensure the inspection meets the requirements to inspect and report on matters of efficiency and effectiveness but will also provide an examination of standards and culture in the PSNI.

Following discussion it was **AGREED** to proceed with the third option outlined above.

### **8.3 Update on Assistant Chief Constable Recruitment Process**

The Director of Resources presented a paper which provided an update to Members on the current position of the Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) recruitment process. The Director of Resources noted the process is due to launch on the 13 December 2021 and incorporates the majority of findings and recommendations arising from the recent research report into Barriers to ACC Recruitment. The selection process is expected to take 6 weeks, following which the panel will make a recommendation to the Board.

## **9. KEY ISSUES OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

The Board noted a paper which detailed recent issues of public interest which were relevant to the Board's areas of work.

## **10. PRIVATE SESSION WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE INCLUDING CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT**

The Chair welcomed the Chief Constable, Pamela McCreedy, COO, Assistant Chief Constable Alan Todd, A/Assistant Chief Constable Sam Donaldson, A/Assistant Chief Constable Melanie Jones, T/Assistant Chief Officer Mark McNaughten and T/Assistant Chief Officer Will Young to the meeting.

The Chief Constable made introductory remarks on a number of topics including the current public safety campaign "Seasons Greetings" which commenced on 26 November, the recent recruitment campaign, violence and intimidation against Women and Girls and an exploration of the potential to make misogyny a hate crime, the budget for the next financial year(s), Serious and Organised Crime update, the enforcement of the forthcoming new Health Protection Regulations and a brief update on the postponement of the inquest into the death of Noah Donohoe.

During the meeting Members discussed a number of issues with the Chief Constable including:

- Recruitment – the Chief Constable advised the new Police Officer Recruitment campaign closed on 19 November 2021. The Chief Constable advised the recruitment competition generated over 5300 applications, a quarter of which were received through the PSNI website, and over 1000 were received directly from social media platforms. The Chief Constable noted the characteristics of the applicants is unchanged from previous recruitment competitions.
- Budget – The Chief Constable noted that he and the Chief Operating Officer have been heavily engaged with Department of Justice (DoJ) officials regarding the budget position for the next 3 years. The Chief Constable advised that PSNI have been scenario planning for staff reductions and as such may not proceed with the March intake of new staff as this would only add to the pressure already on next year's budget. The Chief Constable acknowledged that ultimately this will have a regrettable impact on public service delivery, and will require a very

Careful balancing of resources between visible police officers and the impact on other “behind the scenes” services. The Chief Constable encouraged all Members to, where possible, exert their influence in support of a positive budget settlement for PSNI in their negotiations with DoJ and The Executive Office (TEO).

- New COVID/Health Protection Regulations – in response to Members’ questions regarding the speed of the implementation of these regulations, their subsequent enforcement and risk of reputational damage to the PSNI, ACC Todd advised the PSNI have been liaising with DoJ and Department of Health (DoH) officials and have voiced the PSNI’s concerns regarding the practical issues and operational difficulties associated with implementing enforcement mechanisms. The PSNI welcomes a collaborative cross-sector approach to the enforcement of Public Health Regulations. ACC Todd advised that sole responsibility for the enforcement of these regulations does not fall to the PSNI, but that there is an onus on, for example, public transport providers, large retail outlets and business owners to encourage compliance and enforce the regulations in their areas of responsibility. ACC Todd acknowledged that there are still some areas of uncertainty and discussions are ongoing with DoJ, TEO and the Attorney General to provide clarity on the PSNI’s role.
- Violence and Intimidation against Women and Girls – The Chief Constable advised the PSNI remain on track to launch the first Violence and Intimidation against Women and Girls Strategy for policing in Northern Ireland. Initial consultation on the draft strategy is scheduled for December 2021. The Chief Constable advised that the PSNI is working at UK level to explore the potential for misogyny to be officially recognised as a hate crime, in line with national developments. The Chief Constable noted the PSNI are supporting the Women’s Aid’s campaign of 16 days of action against Gender Based Violence.

In addition to the above the Chief Constable addressed a range of questions from Members concerning:

- The British Government's Legacy Bill.
- Legacy Compensation cases.
- The People Strategy Action Plan.
- Engagement with unionist communities within certain PCSP areas.
- Timeframes for Facebook to respond to the PSNI/Telecommunications Liaison Unit when it seeks information in respect of router or IP addresses related to an ongoing investigation.
- Training for Officers in the use of the Criminal Finance Act.

The Chair thanked the Chief Constable, COO, ACC Todd, T/ACC Donaldson, T/ACC Jones, T/ACO Mark McNaughten and T/ACO Will Young for their private briefing to the Board.

#### **11. PRIVATE SESSION WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE AND NATIONAL CRIME AGENCY DIRECTOR GENERAL**

The Chair welcomed Mr Graeme Biggar, Director General of the National Crime Agency (NCA) to the meeting.

The Director General acknowledged the positive visit that several Board Members and officials had to the NCA Headquarters in London in September 2021 to view the work undertaken there and advised he is content to host another visit in the future if other Members would like to avail of it.

The Director General noted that following a National Strategic Assessment of Serious and Organised Crime the UK is returning to pre-COVID volumes, particularly with regard to organised immigration crime. The Director General advised that a large resource has been allocated to addressing this. The Director General updated Members on the NCA's recent work, in particular current threat levels, EU Transition (following Brexit) and the Criminal Finances Act.

During the meeting Members discussed various issues with the Director General including:

- Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation - The Director General provided their analysis of the numbers of people within the UK who are likely to pose varying degrees of risk to children. He advised Members that these figures also apply proportionately to Northern Ireland and is a reflection of a global problem due to increased cyber activity and the prevalence of social media type platforms. The Director General advised the NCA have established relationships with the technology companies and are working hard to make it more difficult to access inappropriate images online and to have the material removed altogether.

Members expressed concerns at these statistics and the Director General discussed the importance of society as a whole taking ownership to educate children on the dangers and risks of this type of activity. He noted that currently children can be more at risk in their bedrooms than on the streets and commented that this issue affects children of all age groups and community backgrounds.

The Director General advised there is educational material available on the NCA website for parents and to date approximately 500,000 people have downloaded and made use of it. The Director General advised the NCA is liaising with schools too to reinforce the education process and noted that early intervention is key.

- EU Exit – The Director General advised the NCA continue to be of the view that there no significant impact on how the Serious and Organised Crime Gangs operate as a result of our EU exit. The NCA is working in close conjunction with Europol and a treaty was signed in September 2021 which ensures that operational co-operation between UK law enforcement agencies and most EU Member states has continued effectively and without interruption. The Director General added the NCA

have agreements with the majority of countries, however there are still some that do not accept or permit extradition.

- Criminal Finances Act – the Chief Constable noted that this legislation came into effect in Northern Ireland in June 2020. The DoJ are currently working with the magistrates courts in Northern Ireland and it is hoped that this work will be complete by January 2022 in order that the PSNI can make use of these new powers. The Chief Constable advised the NCA have been training PSNI officers in the use of this legislation and going forward the PSNI are keen to implement and use these powers where appropriate.

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

### **12.1 Issues Arising from Committees**

There were no issues arising from recent Committee meetings for the Board's attention.

### **12.2 Committee Written Questions and Responses**

Members noted the responses received from the Chief Constable in relation to questions raised by the Performance Committee.

### **12.3 Individual Members' Written Questions and Responses**

Members noted responses received from the Chief Constable in relation to Members' recent questions.

### **13.0 Schedule of Meetings for 2022**

Members noted the schedule of meetings for the period January – March 2022.

## **14. COMMUNICATION ISSUES**

None raised.

## **15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was conducted.

**16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Board Meeting was scheduled for Thursday 3 February 2022 at 9.30am.

The meeting closed at 13.50.

*The private meeting closed and the Board moved into public session at 12.50pm which was held by a video conference facility and livestreamed. A verbatim recording of the Board meeting in public is available on the Board's YouTube page @nipolicingboard*

**Corporate Services**

**Date:** December 2021

**Chair**