

**NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 30 JUNE 2021 AT 10.00 AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER,  
CLARENDON DOCK**

**PRESENT:**

- Mr Doug Garrett Chair  
Dr Tom Frawley Vice-Chair  
Mr Michael Atkinson  
(2) Mr Tom Buchanan MLA  
Ms Joanne Bunting MLA  
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA  
Dr Janet Gray  
Mr Edgar Jardine  
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA  
(3) Mr Gerry Kelly MLA  
Mr Colm McKenna  
Mr Frank McManus  
Ms Carmel McKinney  
Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA  
Mr Maurice Bradley MLA  
Mr John Blair MLA  
Mr Seán Lynch MLA

**DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
IN ATTENDANCE**

- (1) Ms Naomi Long MLA (Minister of Justice)  
(1) Dr. Julie Harrison, Director, Safer  
(1) Communities  
(1) Ms Maura Campbell, Head of Policing Policy  
(1) and Strategy Division  
Ms Lisa Boal, Policing Policy and Strategy  
Division.  
Mr Tim Logan (Private Secretary to the  
Minister)

**NORTHERN IRELAND  
POLICING BOARD HUMAN  
RIGHTS ADVISOR IN  
ATTENDANCE:**

Mr John Wadham, Human Rights Advisor

**NORTHERN IRELAND  
POLICING BOARD**

Mrs Amanda Stewart, Chief Executive  
Ms Aislinn McGuckin, T/Director of Police  
Administration

**OFFICIALS IN  
ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Adrian McNamee, Director of Performance  
Ms Jenny Passmore, Director of Resources  
Ms Dympna Thornton, Director of Partnership  
Three Board Officials

- (1) Agenda items**
- (2) Arrived 10.10am**
- (3) Left the meeting at 12.04pm**

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Ms Liz Kimmins MLA and Ms Deirdre Toner.

The Chair welcomed new Board Member, Mr Maurice Bradley MLA, to the Board advising that Mr Bradley had taken over the position recently vacated by DUP MLA, Mr Mervyn Storey. The Chair also extended thanks on the Board's behalf to Mr Seán Lynch MLA who advised this morning that he is stepping down from his posts as an MLA and subsequently from the Policing Board, effective 1 July 2021. The Chair thanked Mr Lynch for his service as a Board Member and noted that the Board would be advised in due course the details of the Sinn Féin member who will take over Mr Lynch's position on the Board.

The Board agreed the Agenda for the meeting.

Following a request from the Chair for Members to advise of any additional items to raise under 'Any Other Business', no one declared any items they wished to raise.

At this point the Chair advised Members that he had one other item to bring to their attention. He advised Members that, following a recent recruitment competition, the Board's Chief Executive, Amanda Stewart, had been successful in securing the post of Chief Executive of the Probation Board Northern Ireland (PBNI). The Chair congratulated Mrs Stewart on her

appointment and advised Members that it is anticipated she will leave her post with the Board at the end of September 2021.

## 2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

## 3. PRIVATE SESSION WITH MEMBERS

The Chief Executive Officer briefed Members on the paper provided to them to inform the Board's engagement with the Minister of Justice (**the Minister**). The paper outlined the issues contained in the Minister's stocktake of policing oversight and accountability arrangements.

Members were advised of the original timeline for the stocktake and noted that this timeline had slipped due to the ongoing pressures within the Department and the COVID-19 global pandemic. Members noted that no legislative change is planned for the current mandate as consultation would take place later in 2021 and into early 2022. The CEO also advised Members that, following her engagement with the DoJ around this issue, she is assured that this exercise is not intended as a fundamental review of PSNI accountability arrangements that would lead to widespread reform but rather a timely opportunity to review arrangements 20 years on from the establishment of the PSNI and the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

Areas highlighted that Members may wish to discuss with the Minister included:

- Subject to agreement, the possible areas to be put forward by the Board in its submission to the formal consultation, due in Autumn 2021;
- The absence of any references to PCSPs or the Injury on Duty (IOD) award scheme in the Minister's stocktake; and,

- Clarity on the interfaces between the NIPB, the Justice Committee, the PSNI Chief Constable and the Department of Justice.

Ahead of the Minister and her team joining the meeting Members also discussed a number of issues including:

- The need to reduce duplication of work across the various bodies in the Policing/Justice arena;
- The implications for the Board should a view be reached that the Board should seek to take on the statutory duty to both set and approve a budget for policing which is similar to arrangements in Scotland, England and Wales;
- The work of the Strategic Partnership Forum and whether it would be beneficial for this body to be given a more formal role;
- While acknowledging that this review may not be the vehicle used by to the DoJ to progress issues pertaining to the IOD award scheme, Members discussed and were keen that the Minister is made aware of, Board Members' views of making progress towards ownership of this area of work moving to the PSNI.

The meeting was adjourned for a short comfort break at 10:55am.

#### **4 UPDATE AND DISCUSSION WITH MINISTER OF JUSTICE ON STOCKTAKE OF POLICING OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY ARRANGEMENTS**

The meeting resumed at approximately 11.15am.

The Chair welcomed the Minister of Justice and DoJ officials to the meeting and invited the Minister to provide some introductory comments ahead of Members' questions.

The Minister thanked the Board for the invitation and welcomed the fact that she was able to meet with the Board in person. She also recorded her thanks to Mr Seán Lynch MLA for his service as an MLA and Board Member and her congratulations to Amanda Stewart on her appointment as CEO of the PBNI

The Minister advised the Board that she was seeking to meet with all the key stakeholders ahead of going out with any formal consultation in the Autumn and stated that the goal was not any radical change in the structure of current arrangements but rather, she considered this to be a timely review which could improve public understanding of current structures, reduce duplication of work and improve interactions between the various bodies.

The Minister added that she would intend to take forward those proposals on which a broad degree of consensus can be achieved. The Minister concluded by confirming that any proposed legislative changes will be subject to the normal process of consultation and scrutiny by the Assembly and that it is likely to be the next Assembly mandate before draft legislation can be brought forward.

The Chair then invited questions from Board Members and the issues detailed below were raised by Members and discussed with the Minister.

- How duplication of work could be reduced and any lessons which could be learned from other policing jurisdictions such as Police Scotland or An Garda Síochána;
- The Injury on Duty (IOD) award process and ongoing work in relation to this area. The Minister updated Members on the work of the steering and sub-groups taking forward the recommendations included in the March 2020 Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) report on Injury on Duty Schemes for officers in the PSNI and Northern Ireland Prison Service.

- The scope for and implications of any changes to the current budget management arrangements for the PSNI, for example should we move to a similar model to GB police services. The Minister acknowledged current challenges in terms of the Board's role to scrutinise policing while having no authority over the budget.
- Direct Award Contracts (DACs) where the PSNI has worked directly with the DoJ. Members expressed concern that these are areas in the past where the Board has not been consulted however are responsible for monitoring the outcome and success of such contracts. The Minister acknowledged Members' concerns in this area and advised that the role of the DoJ in these circumstances is primarily to work with the PSNI to ensure a robust business case is prepared for consideration by the Department of Finance. Members also advised the Minister that in many cases the information received by the Board regarding these contracts is retrospective and that they would be keen to have these made available at an earlier stage. The Minister noted Members' concerns around accountability in this area and indicated that she would support the Board having more visibility around these matters, acknowledging the importance of the Board having the opportunity to adequately scrutinise such DACs.
- The personality of people in various positions and how this can influence the quality of relationships between the respective bodies. Members discussed with the Minister the merits of putting protocols in place which would mitigate against the reliance on good personal relationships.
- How/if assurance can be provided that the various bodies in the policing and justice arena are working towards collective priorities, how the Strategic Partnership Forum may support that work and the extent to which there can be cross co-ordination while each body rightly retains their independence of each other.

- The headcount within the PSNI, the commitments outlined in the New Decade, New Approach Agreement in relation to this and the funding challenges associated with retaining officer numbers at this level.
- The number of recommendations made to the PSNI from various oversight bodies and how the volume of recommendations can impinge on the capacity for operational work.

In conclusion the Chair thanked the Minister for meeting with the Board and noted that the Board would work with and fully engage with the Minister on this process with a view to seeking positive change going forward.

The Minister welcomed the Chair's comments, reiterated her support for the Board's role and the importance of the Board's independence in not being accountable to a Minister from any political party. She also thanked the Board for its work during the pandemic and noted the value of the Board's work in the area of Human Rights while COVID-19 restrictions have been in place.

## **5. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES**

The Chair noted that communication would be issued confirming a meeting with the Minister of Justice had taken place, no other substantive communications issues were discussed.

## **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was considered.

## **7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members noted the date of the next full meeting of the Board would take place of 1 July 2021.

The meeting closed at 12.25pm

**Corporate Services**

**Date:** July 2021

**Chair**