

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7 APRIL 2021 AT 2.00PM 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*
Ms Joanne Bunting MLA*
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA*
Dr Janet Gray*
Mr Edgar Jardine*
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA*
Mr Gerry Kelly MLA*
Mr Seán Lynch MLA*
Mr Colm McKenna*
Ms Carmel McKinney*
Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA*
Mr Mervyn Storey MLA*
Ms Deirdre Toner*

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

(2) Mr Simon Byrne, Chief Constable*
(2) Mr Mark Hamilton, Deputy Chief Constable*

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

Mrs Amanda Stewart, Chief Executive
Ms Aislinn McGuckin, T/Director of Police Administration*
Ms Jenny Passmore, Director of Resources*
Ms Dympna Thornton, Director of Partnership*
Two Board Officials

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

Mr John Wadham, Human Rights Advisor*

*Attended meeting by video conference facility

(1) Item 1 to Part item 3 (Departed meeting at 3.15pm)

(2) Item 3 only.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Tom Buchanan MLA, Liz Kimmins MLA and Frank McManus.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Mr Gerry Kelly MLA declared an interest as an attendee at the funeral of Mr Bobby Storey in June 2020.

3. PRIVATE BRIEFING WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

The Chair welcomed the Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) to the meeting and invited them to provide an update on the unrest and disorder in Northern Ireland since 29 March 2021.

The Chief Constable noted that a written update had been provided to the Board in advance of the meeting which provided a broad overview of matters including locations where the unrest and disorder had occurred, and the number of police officers injured. The Chief Constable noted that the unrest may have been caused by a number of factors including the Public Prosecution Service's decision not to prosecute any attendees of Bobby Storey's funeral in June 2020 for alleged breaches of COVID-19 Regulations, perceived two tier policing, recent PSNI operational activity in Derry/Londonderry and opposition to the Northern Ireland Protocol. The Chief Constable also provided an update on the PSNI's engagement with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services in regards to their thematic inspection of the PSNI's handling of the funeral of Bobby Storey in June 2020.

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

- The Board's position as the Chief Constable's accountability body and oversight body for policing in Northern Ireland.
- The PSNI's assessment of who was responsible for organising the unrest and violence. The Chief Constable noted that an assessment was ongoing to identify any pattern or trend, and to assess the potential for future unrest in the days and weeks with protests and parades being organised via social media.
- Pastoral care and support offered to officers who were involved in the policing of unrest. The DCC noted that all officers could avail of the support and services of the PSNI's Occupational Health and Wellbeing (OHW) Branch.
- The PSNI's planning for and community impact assessment of events over the summer period including the parading season and a number of commemorations.
- The potential for unrest to move toward interface areas in Belfast and the DCC noted that the situation was being continually monitored.
- The availability of mutual-aid if required. The Chief Constable noted that he had updated the National Police Chiefs Council on recent events and while mutual-aid was available there was no financial provision for it in the PSNI's 2021-22 Resource Plan.

Members also spoke with the Chief Constable about engagement with the Protestant Unionist Loyalist (PUL) communities to understand the root cause of issues and the Chair noted that it was incumbent on the Board to support political Members in their engagement with the community.

A number of political Board Members raised issues outside specific Board related business and the PSNI undertook to revert to these Members directly in respect of these issues.

4. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

Members noted that the Chair would be undertaking media interviews and that a public statement would be issued following the meeting.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was conducted.

The meeting closed at 3.35pm.

Corporate Services

Date: April 2021

Chair