

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD
HELD ON THURSDAY 7 OCTOBER 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
(2) Mr Maurice Bradley MLA
(3) Mr Tom Buchanan MLA
Ms Joanne Bunting MLA*
(4) Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Dr Janet Gray*
Mr Edgar Jardine
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA*
Mr Gerry Kelly MLA
Ms Liz Kimmins MLA*
Mrs Linda Dillon MLA
(5) Mr Frank McManus
Ms Carmel McKinney
(6) Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA
Ms Deirdre Toner*

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

- (7) Mr Simon Byrne, Chief Constable
(7) Mr Mark Hamilton, Deputy Chief Constable
(7) Ms Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating
Officer
(7) Mr Alan Todd, Assistant Chief Constable
(7) Ms Melanie Jones, A/Assistant Chief
Constable
(7) Mr Will Young, T/Assistant Chief Officer
(7) 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:**

Mrs Amanda Stewart
Mr John Wadham, Human Rights Advisor

*Attended meeting by video conference facility

- (1) From 11.15am
- (2) From 9.50am
- (3) From 10.15am
- (4) From 10.15am
- (5) From 9.45am
- (6) From 9.45am
- (7) Item 10 only

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Colm McKenna.

The Chair welcomed the new Chief Executive Mrs Sinead Simpson, to her first monthly Board meeting. Mrs Simpson took up her position on Monday 4 October and replaces Mrs Amanda Stewart. The Chair thanked Mrs Stewart for all her support to Members during her time as Chief Executive and wished her every success for the future.

The Board agreed the Agenda for the meeting.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

A Member raised a query regarding access to papers on Decision Time. No other Members reported similar issues. Member's Ipad to be checked the next time they are in Waterside Tower.

3. **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 2 SEPTEMBER 2021**

It was **RESOLVED**:-

- That the minutes of the Board meeting held on 2 September 2021 be approved.

4 **BOARD ACTION LOG**

Updates as detailed within the Action Log from the Board meeting held on **2 September 2021** were noted in addition to the following verbal updates provided by the Chief Executive.

Action Point 2

The OPONI Spit and Bite Guards report has been published today. The Police Ombudsman has been invited to attend the Performance Committee meeting on 14th October 2021 and all Board Members are invited to attend from 1:30 to 3:00pm. The report will be issued on Decision Time later today alongside the papers for Performance Committee.

Action Point 3

Briefing paper on cost savings regarding the move to James House to be presented to the next Resources Committee meeting on 28 October 2021.

Action Point 7

The PSNI have written to the Chair and advised of the governance arrangements regarding the implementation plan for the recommendations in the South Armagh review. The detail of this is included in the correspondence section of the Chair's report at Item 5 on today's agenda. Progress of the implementation of the recommendations will be overseen by the relevant committees.

Action Point 8

This action regarding an action plan from the Board Development Day is to remain open – the new Chief Executive will take this forward with the Director of Partnership.

Action Point 10

The Chief Executive advised she will be meeting with Members individually over the next several weeks. She will discuss the format of the Chief Constable's report with them and then collectively take any issues forward.

Action Points 1, 4, 5 and 9 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 1

In relation to Operation Kenova, this item will remain open until the written report on the investigation is available.

Members noted the Board's Vice Chair visited the Operation Kenova Headquarters in London with Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) Hamilton last month and the Vice Chair provided an overview of the visit. The Vice Chair noted it was a worthwhile visit; with himself and the DCC getting a detailed insight into the work of the Kenova team and they were impressed with the work achieved to date. The Vice Chair noted the Terms of Reference (ToR) relating to the review of the Governance arrangements for Operation Kenova have been opened and this will be led by the Chief Operating Officer on behalf of the Chief Constable. It is hoped that the review will commence before the end of this year. Once the investigation is complete the Board will receive a copy of the report in due course.

The Vice Chair noted the recent death of Sir John Chilcot.

Action Point 3

In relation to the Lessons Learned report on Operation Yurta, this item will remain open – a timeline for the report is still awaited. Members expressed their dissatisfaction with the delay in providing the report and noted their preference for a schedule of update reports rather than one final report at the end of the investigation. The Board requested that the Chair continues to discuss the timeframe for completion with the Chief Constable seeking a resolution to this matter.

Updates as detailed within the Action Log from the Board meeting held on **6 May 2021** were noted in addition to the following verbal updates provided by the Chief Executive:

Action Point 2

The Chief Executive advised she will circulate the last assessment by the Oversight Commissioner and will use her one to one meetings with Members over the coming weeks to explore thoughts on whether this meets Members' needs.

4.1 Correspondence to DOJ re Belfast Harbour Police

Members discussed the correspondence dated 30 September 2021 issued by the Chief Executive to Department of Justice in relation to the role of the Belfast Harbour Police (BHP) and their desire to formalise a policy position on the ability of BHP to operate in certain circumstances outside of their jurisdiction. It was noted this is still at an early stage and more detail would be required and there would be multiple issues to be resolved before any final decision is reached.

5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

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 7 September 2021 and 7 October 2021.
- A list of correspondence received by the Chair during the period between 1 September 2021 and 27 September 2021.
- A list of correspondence issued by the Chair during the period between 15 September 2021 and 25 September 2021.

The Chair updated Members on his recent engagements including:

- Visit to the National Crime Agency (NCA) HQ in London in September
- Meeting with the Chair of the Justice Committee
- Meeting with the four officers attending the Strategic Command Course (SCC), and advised he will be speaking at an event organised by the SCC later this month.

The Chair noted that Dame Lynne Owens, Director General (DG) of the NCA had decided to retire from the position due to health reasons. The Chair thanked Lynne for her contribution and input during her time as DG and wished her well for the future. A meeting should be arranged with the Interim DG Graeme Biggar in advance of the December 2021 Board meeting which he would be due to attend. **(AP1)**

The Chair noted the Police Ombudsman would be coming to brief the Performance Committee regarding the Spit and Bite guards report next Thursday 14 October 2021 and encouraged all Members to attend if possible.

A Member raised a query regarding receiving a breakdown of referrals from the Police Ombudsman's office to the Public Prosecution Service and the Professional Standards department of the PSNI – the Director of Performance agreed to check the figures and revert to the Member. **(AP2)**

6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

The new Chief Executive introduced herself to the meeting and expressed her delight at being appointed to the role. She advised she plans to meet with Members on a one to one basis over the coming weeks in order to understand the operating environment and Members' perspectives on the issues to be addressed.

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

A Member raised a query regarding correspondence contained in the report confirming the Department of Justice's intention to establish a new Hate Crime Legislation Steering Group and asked for confirmation of the remit of the steering group and if the community and voluntary sector are represented in the membership of the group - the Director of Performance agreed to check and revert to the Member. **(AP3)**

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

7.1 Performance Committee 9 September 2021

The Board Chair congratulated Mr Trevor Clarke MLA on his appointment to the role of Chair of the Performance Committee. The Board noted the Performance Committee Chair's Report and draft minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2021. The Committee Chair also provided a verbal update on matters considered at the meeting which included a Review of the PSNI Code of Ethics, the Draft Human Rights Annual Report 2020/21, PSNI Serious and Organised Crime report and quarterly update report on complaints from the Office of the Police Ombudsman.

7.2 Partnership Committee 16 September 2021

The Board noted the Partnership Committee Chair's Report and draft minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2021. The Committee Chair also provided a verbal update on matters considered at the meeting which included a presentation from T/ACC Bobby Singleton on Policing Plan Measure 2.2.1 – Victim Satisfaction, a presentation from the Northern Ireland Children's

Commissioner (NICCY) on the Child Rights Impact Assessments & Framework, Proposed amendments to PCSP Strategic Priorities and an update on the Police Property Fund which would be considered later in the meeting. The Committee Chair noted NICCY training may be available to both Board Members and staff to increase knowledge and build capacity for this work and all Members were encouraged to attend when it is provided (details yet to be confirmed).

The Committee Chair reported the Committee had agreed for officials to accept the invitation to meet with Crossmaglen Rangers GFC to discuss local policing issues and a suitable date is to be confirmed. All Members will be invited to attend. Members also agreed for officials to arrange a visit to Crossmaglen Police Station as part of the visit.

A Member noted they had 1 amendment to the Action Log and 1 amendment to be made to the minutes of the Committee meeting. The Director of Partnership noted the details and these will be updated and presented to Partnership Committee at its next meeting on 21 October 2021.

In the context of the discussion about PCSP Strategic Priorities, a Member commented that it would be useful if Members knew in advance of any deadlines that were coming up that required a decision so that Members could allocate sufficient time for scrutiny of the subject matter.

7.3 Resources Committee 23 September 2021

The Board noted the Resource Committee Chair's Report and draft minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2021. The Committee Chair also provided a verbal update on matters considered at the meeting which included an update on research undertaken by external consultants on PSNI Police Officer Sick Absence, position re Recruitment of PSNI Assistant Chief Officers (ACO), the Report Card in respect of the Policing Plan measure on Representativeness and an update on the NIAO Report on Reducing Costs in the PSNI.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- On the recommendation of the Resources Committee, the Board approved the recommendation that the three ACO posts would be advertised using a Spot Salary. As the terms and conditions of PSNI Senior Officers and Staff are subject to approval from DoJ, as outlined in the Police(NI) Act 2000, a response has been sought in that regard.

7.4 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee 30 September 2021.

The Board noted the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Chair's Report and draft minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2021. The Committee Vice-Chair also provided a verbal update on matters considered at the meeting which included the Final Report to those Charged with Governance, the Boards' Corporate Risk Register and the Chief Executive's Draft Mid-Year Stewardship Statement.

8. BOARD BUSINESS

8.1 Police Property Fund – request for ratification of assessment panel decisions

The Director of Partnership presented a paper which sought Members' ratification of assessment panel decisions to approve the funding of projects for the first call of the Small Grants Scheme as recommended by the Partnership Committee. In addition, approval to extend the call value to enable funding of 18 further projects as recommended by the Partnership Committee was also sought.

The Director of Partnership explained the evaluation process and how the applicants were selected. A Member asked for a copy of the evaluation process – Director of Partnership to forward the document for information.

(AP4)

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED**:

- To ratify the decisions to fund 15 projects as recommended by the Partnership Committee and;
- To approve the Partnership Committee's recommendation to extend the value of the first call to just over £200,000 to enable funding of an additional 18 projects.

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, Deputy Chief Constable Mark Hamilton, Chief Operating Officer Pamela McCreedy, Assistant Chief Constable Alan Todd, A/Assistant Chief Constable Melanie Jones and T/Assistant Chief Officer Will Young to the meeting.

The Chair acknowledged a newspaper article that had been published in the press this morning relating to an interview he did several weeks ago and noted the headline comments relate to the geo-political situation here in Northern Ireland; not the Chief Constable's job performance.

The Chief Constable made introductory remarks on a number of topics including the recent Sarah Everard murder trial in London and the detention of a serving police officer for the crime, the ongoing Lyra McKee murder investigation, Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour in the Holylands Area, Violence and Intimidation against Women and Girls and the PSNI's preventative and enforcement action on drug crime.

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

- The Sarah Everard murder case and Violence against Women and Girls. The CC noted the horrific events in London and the subsequent consideration and thought for policing here and the impact on women and girls. The CC advised Violence against Women and Girls remains a top priority for the PSNI and he is committed to improving public confidence in policing and developing bespoke strategies to address this issue. Work is ongoing in developing the strategies and it is hoped to publish the strategy and Action Plan in December 2021. The CC advised he has instigated a thorough review of the PSNI internal processes in order to provide a level of reassurance to the public and this review will be jointly led by the DCC and COO.
- The recent report into the historical abuse suffered in Mother and Baby homes throughout Northern Ireland. The CC noted this is currently in the early stages but will become a significant investigation. The report was conducted on the basis of anonymity however it has revealed criminal activity. The DCC added that a generic email account and dedicated telephone helpline has been set up to encourage victims to reach out and come forward. Members noted it was imperative that PSNI ensure the protection of any records pertaining to the investigation.
- Processes relating to PSNI internal disciplinary policies and recent figures of cases of PSNI misconduct. The DCC explained the processes involved with various levels of disciplinary proceedings and the limitations of his and the CC's involvement in them. The DCC noted the PSNI are carrying out a review of the Regulations to ensure they are sufficiently robust.
- Representativeness and Recruitment - the CC advised the next Police Officer Recruitment campaign begins on 2 November 2021. Specific

targeting and outreach to under-represented communities is integral to the new campaign. T/ACO Will Young advised the PSNI have increased their media campaign, more work is being done on their website and on community outreach. The community outreach work is being driven by the Neighbourhood Policing Teams and the District Commanders will be a visible presence in the communities over the next several weeks in an attempt to inspire and positively influence people into applying for a career in policing. T/ACO Young noted the Administrative Support Officer recruitment competition closed last week and there was a significant volume of applications, which it is hoped will be a basis for new “talent” into the organisation.

In response to a Member’s question regarding plans for a cultural audit the COO noted this is one of the key actions of the People Strategy Action Plan as part of the PSNI’s plans to understand and address representativeness issues.

Members also provided feedback of the layout of the PSNI OBA report card on representativeness and how best to present the information to enable the reader to easily assess progress against objectives going forward.

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

11. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

11.1 Issues Arising from Committees

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

11.2 Committee Written Questions and Responses

The Board noted responses from two written questions which had been submitted to the Chief Constable from the Committees.

11.3 Individual Members' Written Questions and Responses

Two questions from an individual member were addressed during the meeting.

12. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

Publicity to be arranged regarding the Police Property Fund decisions. **(AP5)**

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was conducted.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Board Meeting was scheduled for Thursday 4 November 2021 at 9.30am.

The meeting closed at 12.45pm.

The private meeting closed and the Board moved into public session at 12.45pm 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: October 2021

Chair