

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 23
SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 2PM AT THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD,
WATERSIDE TOWER AND VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE**

PRESENT:

- Mr Gerry Kelly MLA (Chair)
- Dr Janet Gray (Vice-Chair)*
- Mr Trevor Clarke
- Mrs Linda Dillon*
- Ms Carmel McKinney *
- (1) Mr John Blair MLA*
- Mr Tom Buchanan MLA*
- (2) Mr Mike Nesbitt
- Mr Colm McKenna
- (3) Mr Frank McManus
- (4) Ms Deirdre Toner

**EXTERNAL ADVISORS
ATTENDANCE**

- IN(5) Mrs Joanne Kane*
- Angela Barratt*
- Cherith Biggerstaff*

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

- (6) Mrs Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating Officer
- (7) Mr Mark McNaughten, T/Executive Director of
Corporate Services
- (8) Ms Louise Crothers, Director of Human Resources
- (9) Mr Will Young

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- (10) Mrs Amanda Stewart, Chief Executive*
- Ms Jenny Passmore, Director of Resources
- (11) Ms Aislinn McGuckin, T/Director of Police
Administration
- Four Board Officials

* Attended the meeting via Video Conference

- (1) Item 1 to part 6.5 (left meeting at 4.40pm)
- (2) Item 1 to end of item 6.4 (Left meeting at 4.25pm)
- (3) Item 1 to 6.6 (Left meeting at 5.15pm)
- (4) Item 1 to part 6.6 (left meeting at 5pm)

- (5) Items 5.1 and 6.1
- (6) Items 6.4 to 6.6
- (7) Item 6.4 only
- (8) Items 6.5 and 6.6
- (9) Items 6.5 and 6.6
- (10) Item 1 to 6.5
- (11) Item 6.2 only

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received for the meeting.

The Chair welcomed new Committee Members Mrs Linda Dillon and Mrs Carmel McKinney to the meeting.

The Committee agreed the Agenda for the meeting and no one raised any business that they wanted to consider further under 'Any Other Business'.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Carmel McKinney advised she is currently Chair of the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) which was one of the organisations the External Advisors used as a benchmark in the PSNI sickness absence report at item 6.1 on today's agenda. This was noted and it was agreed that it was a Register of Interest but was not a conflict.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2021

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the Committee meeting held on 16 June 2021. It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 16 June 2021 be approved.

4. UPDATE ON ACTION LOG

The Committee noted the updates detailed within the Action Log and the related verbal overview provided. The Director of Resources highlighted that there was one action from the meeting on 16 June 2021 that had been completed. In relation to AP4 from the 19 May 2021 meeting a briefing is being arranged for the November committee meeting from the Head of the Police College on the current governance arrangements at the College, the meeting is scheduled to take place in Garnerville. In respect of AP6 from the meeting on 20 February 2020 a protocol has been drawn up between the Board and PSNI in relation to the police estate and this will be brought to the October committee meeting. The Director of Resources further noted that correspondence in relation to two actions had been received.

A Member asked for officials to provide a paper outlining any deadlines that a decision would be needed on over the next 12 month period in order that Members could allocate sufficient time for scrutiny of the subject matter.

4.1 Correspondence from PSNI re OHW Staff Pay Scales

The Director of Resources presented a letter the Chair had received from the PSNI's T/Executive Director of Corporate Services in response to the Chair's letter of 4th June 2021 requesting an update on matters relating to the terms and conditions of Occupational Health and Wellbeing (OHW) staff in PSNI. The Committee had asked for further information on if or when there would be further transition to Agenda for Change pay scales and also asked for details of actions taken to address recruitment difficulties in the branch. During discussion Members expressed their disappointment that the letter did not clearly detail the recruitment issues previously highlighted by the Head of Branch and did not contain details of a plan or a timeframe for a solution.

It was **AGREED** that:

- The Committee would write to the PSNI to provide clear details of the recruitment issues within OHW and provide an implementation plan, including a timeline, to address the issue. **(AP1)**

4.2 Correspondence from PSNI re EU Funded research Projects

The Director of Resources presented a letter and a report the Chair had received from the office of the Deputy Chief Constable in response to the Chair's letter of 25 May 2021 requesting an update on EU Funded Research Projects and International Assistance.

The Director of Resources outlined some key information from the report on the Roxanne project which commenced in September 2019 and is due to end in December 2022. This includes details of the other 24 partners from across Europe of which 11 are Law Enforcement Agencies of which PSNI is one. The report also outlines information on the EU's focus on ethical compliance and relevant legislation. Also included in the report were details of the 16 other EU funded projects and the partners involved in each project.

Members discussed some of the individual projects and noted the report.

5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

5.1 Assistant Chief Officer Terms and Conditions

The Director of Resources presented a letter from the Chief Executive to the Department of Justice (DoJ) requesting approval for the terms and conditions in respect of the substantive appointment of three PSNI Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) posts prior to the Board progressing these appointments.

Member noted that the posts had been evaluated independently and a number of options had been provided. These were as follows:

- A. Create a pay range, recruit low in range and manage progression over time based on performance and contribution;
- B. Pay a spot rate to be reviewed annually, taking account of the salary movement of other officers but also the performance and contribution;
- C. Set a spot salary and adjust in subsequent years based on the increase applied to other chief officers;
- D. Pay a market rate and offer a bonus for excellent performance.

It was noted that options A, B, and D require a local system of pay governance for these new roles which the Policing Board as the employer does not have the capacity or resources to create. Members also noted that private sector salaries are generally higher and tend to offer performance related bonuses that are not a feature of public sector. Members also discussed:

- The Board's wish to hire from as broad a talent pool as possible across the public and private sector and the UK and Ireland.
- The preference to align with the public sector base salary range of £90k - £123k for the ACO People and Organisational Development and Strategic Planning and Transformation posts and the public sector base salary range of £106 - £142 for the Corporate Services post.
- The desire, given the wider PSNI Service Executive Team structure, of internal relatives between the ACO salaries and the quantum of the Assistant Chief Constable salary scale of £106k - £119k, but also the need to underline the difference between the two posts in that the ACO posts have a different market for candidates which is much broader than policing.

After discussion Members **AGREED** to recommend to the Board that ACO posts should be advertised at a spot salary of £113k for ACO People & Organisational Development and Strategic Planning and Transformation posts, and a spot salary of £119k for the ACO Corporate Services post and that the salaries would be adjusted in subsequent years based on the increase applied

to the Assistant Chief Constable salary.

6. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1 Review of Police Officer Sickness Absence

Representatives from Headstogether Consulting presented their final report on the PSNI Officer Sickness Absence. This review was agreed by the Board in February 2021. The Review team met with a number of key PSNI stakeholders and compared the PSNI Attendance Management Process with other most similar Police Services as well as the NI Fire and Rescue Service and the NI Prison Service. The report makes nine (9) recommendations in respect of the Attendance Management policy and procedure, roles and responsibilities of line Managers and Human Resources Branch, Training, and the process for facilitating adjusted duties.

Discussion focused around training, benchmarking against other Police Forces, reasons for absence and current PSNI targets in relation to sickness absence. Members were keen to understand how the current PSNI target figure for absence of Police Officers of 11.2 days was calculated and the impact on this figure if the recommendations outlined in the report were implemented.

After discussion it was **AGREED**:

- That the report should be shared with the PSNI for accuracy and a response to the recommendations:
- Obtain details of how the sickness absence target figure of 11.20 days was identified **(AP2)**

6.2 Police Administration Cases for Committee Decision

The Committee considered a paper requesting Members review and make decisions on the eligibility of awards under Injury on Duty and Police Pensions Regulations further to assessments undertaken by Selected Medical

Practitioners (SMPs) and Independent Medical Referees (IMRs).

With regard to Case number 38-20/21 the T/Director of Police Administration explained the Officer involved has applied for Ill Health Retirement (IHR) whilst simultaneously being involved in potential criminal proceedings. Whilst the SMP recommended that the officer should be ill-health retired the Deputy Chief Constable asked that the Board consider this matter under Regulation 80(3) of the 2015 Regulations and refuse this application. The PSNI and Applicant's legal representatives have now served submissions in this case. The Committee is asked to nominate 3 Members to convene a sub-group to consider this case further so that a fulsome discussion can be had at a future Resources Committee, where a final decision on eligibility will be made by the full committee.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that:

- The medical recommendations of the Selected Medical Practitioners in 11 cases assessed between 28 July 2021 and 7 September 2021 be approved.
- The medical recommendations of the Independent Medical Referees in six cases assessed between 17 August 2021 and 3 September 2021 be approved.
- One anonymised case (RECON SMP 8-21/22) to progress to reconsideration by a Selected Medical Practitioner.
- The sub-group Members were confirmed as Mrs Carmel McKinney, Mr Frank McManus and Dr Janet Gray.
- Regarding case 80-21/22 further information to be provided to Members in relation to the breach of Data Protection to allow Members to make a

final decision in relation to this officer's eligibility for ill health retirement.

(AP3)

- Members ratified the decisions taken by written procedure during July and August 2021.

6.3 NIPB Management Accounts

The Committee noted a paper which provided an update on NIPB Management Accounts and Financial Information to 31 August 2021. A Board Official provided an overview of the Board's expenditure against its 2021-22 budget and outlined the current underspend position of £40k.

6.4 PSNI Finance Report - August 2021

The Committee noted the PSNI's monthly Finance Report and Board officials provided a summary of the PSNI's financial position as at 31 August 2021.

The Chair welcomed PSNI Chief Operating Officer (COO) Mrs Pamela McCreedy and PSNI T/Executive Director of Corporate Services Mr Mark McNaughten to the meeting and invited the T/Executive Director of Corporate Services to present the paper.

The T/Executive Director of Corporate Services presented an overview of the monthly Finance Report including a summary of the PSNI's financial position to 31 August 2021 including:

- The financial position approximately halfway through the financial year is that the PSNI are reporting an underspend of £0.9m and a projected full year pressure of £9.1M. The T/Executive Director of Corporate Services advised that additional funding had been sought as part of the October monitoring bid and PSNI are confident they will receive some additional

funding to ease the pressures, however it is likely to be the end of the year before the outcome is known.

- An update on in year Capital spending noting there was a small underspend but the Capital Programme remained on track, subject to securing business case approval for the acquisition of a site for the new Police College.
- An update on the Department of Justice's (DoJ) information gathering exercise on Resource Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL) requirements for Budget 2022-25 which included the potential impact of year on year budget cuts of 2%, 4% and 8%. T/Executive Director of Corporate Services noted that the opening baseline budget for the exercise excluded the additional £12.3m provided in-year.
- An updated 10 year capital plan was submitted to DoJ on 8 September.
- An update on the progress of PSNI Business Case for the Police College.

During the briefing Members raised a number of questions with both the COO and T/Executive Director of Corporate Services including:

- PSNI overtime pressures – largely due to front line delivery teams still operating in Covid bubbles – in the event of staff absences PSNI are unable to backfill among teams; overtime is therefore restricted to members of individual teams only;
- The overspend on transport and telecoms – partly due to the rollout of the ruggedised laptops – it is anticipated that 4000 laptops will be rolled out to front line officers in this financial year with the remainder to follow in the next financial year. It is hoped that all laptops will be issued 12 months from initial rollout;
- The Business case and site for a new Police College – the COO advised that PSNI are viewing several potential sites for the new Police College; this will be narrowed down over the next few months. The COO reported that the business case is not fully

complete as yet. Once it is completed and has been through the PSNI internal governance procedures and been ratified by the Strategic Management Board the business case will be presented to the Board for review and discussion.

The Committee thanked the Chief Operating Officer and T/Executive Director of Corporate Services for the update provided they both left the meeting.

6.5 Policing Plan Measure of 2.3.1 – Representativeness

The Committee noted a paper which provided an analysis of work relating to PSNI against Performance Plan 2021/22 Measure specific to the representativeness of the Police Service. The Director of Resources noted this is the first report on this Measure to be considered by the Resources Committee within the 2021/22 Performance Plan with the second report due in February next year. Following initial discussion, the Chair welcomed back the PSNI Chief Operating Officer, PSNI Head of Recruitment Louise Crothers and T/Assistant Chief Officer People and Organisational Development Will Young to the meeting.

The T/Assistant Chief Officer People and Organisational Development presented the PSNI OBA report card and provided commentary on:

- Applicant statistics from the 2020 recruitment campaign such as an increase in applicants from the female, LGBT and ethnic minority communities;
- 2021 People Strategy Action Plan;
- Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs), established from across a range of community groups designed to enhance community engagement via Strategic Community Engagement teams;
- Dedicated mentoring scheme for female applicants and bespoke training sessions for Women's Police Association members;

- Springboard program, a collaborative initiative with Police Scotland;
- Equality, Diversity and Good Relations Action Plan;
- Current live recruitment competitions and the next recruitment campaign due to begin in Autumn 2021- focus on recruitment of police staff posts;
- The expansion of the 'Join PSNI' Website to encourage applications in underrepresented areas.

Following the presentation, Members raised a number of questions with both the Head of Recruitment and T/Assistant Chief Officer People and Organisational Development including:

- Measures taken to redress the underrepresented groups across all Police Staff grades and opportunities on the Police staff side;
- Succession planning ;
- How the IAG's are made up and what evidence there is to support they are reaching their target audience/how their success is measured;
- The emphasis placed, during the recruitment campaign, on engaging those from a protestant working class background when data showed that there was low engagement among all working class communities.

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

The Chair thanked the T/Assistant Chief Officer People and Organisational Development and Head of Recruitment for the briefing and they both left the meeting.

6.6 NIAO Report Reducing Costs within the PSNI

The Chief Operating Officer provided the committee with an update on the five recommendations contained in the NI Audit Office report on 'Reducing Costs in

PSNI' which was published in April 2020 and which focused on the PSNI's implementation of a business transformation methodology called Priority Based Resourcing.

The COO advised that the PSNI had decided to utilise a model used by HMICFRS – a "Force Management Statement" which is designed to quantify demand for capacity across the organisation and will inform the reform programme going forward. The COO noted that this will be a somewhat lengthy process, however it will determine the focus on what the priorities will be. The COO advised she was content that the current approach was in line with what the Audit Office have recommended and that the appropriate level of governance was in place.

During discussion Members raised issues regarding the Strategic Partner and the mechanism for reporting progress of the reform to the Board. The COO confirmed that it had been decided not to engage an external Strategic Partner, rather this work would be progressed internally. The COO added she is content to report progress to the Board at regular intervals as appropriate.

Members also noted that some current operational PSNI stations and buildings are in very close proximity to one another and commented that some services /buildings could be centralised in order to make cost savings. The COO confirmed the PSNI will be considering rationalising the PSNI Estate in order to achieve efficiencies.

The Chair thanked the COO for the briefing and the left the meeting.

6.7 Committee Programme of Work

The Director of Resources tabled a draft programme of work for the period September – December 2021. During discussion and in response to a Member's question the Director of Resources advised that the People Strategy

Action Plan is due to be tabled at the December 2021 meeting, however acknowledged that this is a significant piece of work and will review this with a view to separating different elements of work to be considered by the Committee between now and the end of the financial year. **(AP4)**

7. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

The Committee did not raise any questions for submission to the Chief Constable.

8. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES /OPPORTUNITIES

No communication issues were raised.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was conducted.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 28 October 2021 at 2pm.

The meeting ended at 5.30pm

CHAIR

RESOURCES DIRECTORATE
September 2021