



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Please note the text of this request has been reproduced exactly as received.

FOI Reference number: FOI 57/2024

Date: 10 July 2024

Request: Board Meetings

I am writing to you to ask for the following information which I believe is held by the Northern Ireland Policing Board (Board)

After speaking to members of the Board I am informed that prior to any public /televised /streamed meeting there is a meeting prior to it where items that are important and should be released to the public are discussed.

After watching, a publicly broadcast meeting, (one of the very few who seems to view them, going by the figures released by you tube), I realise that the public meetings are rehearsed prior to their happening.

- Are there meeting(s) prior to the main public meeting
- I wish to view the minutes of the last ten 'previous prior meetings' of the Board. (These are the meetings held prior to the public/streamed meeting)
- What are the costings of holding one of the public/streamed meetings? in today's climate every penny must be accounted for, so I am sure you have this information. If not, I wish to know why it is not costed, as you hold a public purse
- Are they value for money
- Is an outside company used to provide the streaming service and camerawork, sound work etc.
- Is the broadcasting work carried out using staff from within Board staff
- How can all the questions and answers asked at the meeting be available on the Boards website prior to them being asked at the meeting and before its completion?

If there are no 'prior meetings' held, I wish to know how the questions and answers are available prior to the first questions asked at the real time publicly broadcast meeting.

- I wish to see the policy/standing orders that allow for the above to happen

If the Board is holding the Police Service of Northern Ireland to account how can this be done by prearranging and picking and choosing the questions put to them.

- I wish to see the Policy/Document showing members of the public are to be excluded from meetings
- Any document showing members of the public are to be excluded

Answer:

Answers are provided in bullet point format in the order asked within the query.

- It is normal procedure that prior to and after the public Board meeting Members and officials meet in private to discuss Board business.
- Minutes from the meetings are published monthly on our website:
<https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/publications-search/type/Policing%20Board%20minutes>
- The cost of livestreaming a public session is on average £1508.50. There were **7,253** views of published footage of the **7** sessions of the Board in the 23/24 financial year. On average **64** people watched the livestream footage of these **7** Board meetings
- In securing value for money, the NI Policing Board (NIPB) procures all goods and services in accordance with the [NI Public Procurement Policy](#) adopted by the Northern Ireland Executive in May 2002 (reissued August 2014).
- Yes, a contract is in place following procurement.
- Board officials assist the AV providers where necessary.
- The responses to written questions published on the Board's website during the public session are those which have been submitted by Members through committees or correspondence throughout the prior month. Members notify questions to be asked at the public session including those on topical issues on the day of the meeting. Questions asked during the public session of the Board are posted to the Board's Twitter/X account and published on the website following the meeting.
- As stated in an answer to a previous question, the Board meets in private prior to and after the meeting in public..
- Schedule 1 Section 19 of the Police Act (NI) 2000 deals with meetings of the Board in public. It notes that the purpose of the public meeting is the "receiving and considering a report on policing from the Chief Constable prepared for the meeting." This section also notes circumstances where Members of the public can be excluded from a public meeting – Section 19(6) – "But that does not prevent the Board from excluding the public, or particular members of the public, from a meeting, or from part of a meeting, in order to prevent or suppress disorderly conduct or other misbehaviour at, or a disturbance of, the meeting."

Section 15 of the Board's Standing Orders provide details regarding the admission of members of the public and others to Board meetings. This states that any member of the public in attendance at a private meeting of the Board must be permitted to do so by the Chair:

(c) A member of the public or other person permitted by the Chairperson to be present at a private meeting of the Board may not address that meeting without the permission of the Chairperson. A member of the public attending a public

meeting of the Board may not address that meeting without the permission of the Chairperson.

(d) While any member of the public or other person is present, the Chairperson may direct that any business be not then commenced or proceeded with and he/she may intervene in any debate to give such a direction.

(e) A Member may move that a member of the public or other person be required to withdraw from the meeting and if such motion is seconded, it shall be put to the vote provided that the Chairperson may, and his/her decision on this shall not be open to discussion, allow a debate on the motion before it is put to the vote. If such a debate is allowed, the Chairperson may require any visitor present to withdraw pending a decision.

The standing orders can be found on our website:

https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/files/nipolicingboard/2024-05/policing-board-standing-orders-april-2024_0.pdf

If you have queries about this request or the decision please contact the Board quoting the reference number above. If you are unhappy with the service you have received and wish to make a complaint or request a review you should contact the Board's Chief Executive -

Via Email: foi@nipolicingboard.org.uk

Or in writing at the following address:

Northern Ireland Policing Board
James House
Block D
2 – 4 Cromac Avenue
The Gasworks
Belfast
BT7 2JA

You should contact the Board within 40 working days of this response.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner. Generally, the Information Commissioner's Office cannot investigate or make a decision on a case unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Board. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at the following web link –

www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints

or in writing at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
SK9 5AF

Telephone: - 0303 1231114
Email: - ni@ico.org.uk

Please be advised that Policing Board replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ www.nipolicingboard.org.uk.

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.