

## **NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 9.45AM IN NIPB HQ, JAMES HOUSE, BELFAST**

#### **PRESENT:**

- Mr Mukesh Sharma (Chair)
- (1) Mr Brendan Mullan (Vice Chair)
- (2) Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
- (3) Mr Peter McReynolds MLA
- (3) Mr Gerry Kelly MLA
- Mrs Linda Dillon MLA
- (2) Mrs Cheryl Brownlee MLA
- Ms Nuala McAllister MLA
- (3) Mr Peter Osborne
- Mr Les Allamby
- (4) Dr Kate Laverty
- (5) Mr Frank McManus
- (6) Ms Marian Cree
- Mr Tommy O'Reilly
- Mr Patrick Nelson
- (7) Mr Alan Chambers MLA
- (2) Mr Keith Buchanan MLA
- (2) Mr Mark H Durkan MLA
- (2) Mr Trevor Clarke MLA

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

- (8) Mr Jon Boutcher, Chief Constable
- (9) Mr Chris Todd, T/Deputy Chief Constable
- (9) Ms Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating Officer
- (9) Mr Bobby Singleton, Assistant Chief Constable
- (9) Mr Mark McNaughten, Assistant Chief Officer  
Corporate Services
- (9) Ms Clare Duffield, Assistant Chief Officer  
People & Organisational Development
- (9) Ms Melanie Jones, T/Assistant Chief  
Constable
- (9) Mr Davy Beck, T/Assistant Chief Constable
- (9) Mr Ryan Henderson, T/Assistant Chief  
Constable
- (9) Three Officials

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

Mrs Sinead Simpson, Chief Executive  
Mr Sam Hagen, Senior Director of Resources  
Mr Adrian McNamee, Director of Performance  
Mrs Natalia McMahon, T/Director of Police  
Pensions & Injury Benefits  
Four Officials

**OTHER OFFICIALS IN  
ATTENDANCE:**

Mr John Wadham, Human Rights Advisor

- (1) Left at 3.30pm
- (2) Left after public session
- (3) Left at 2.40pm
- (4) Left at 3.25pm
- (5) Left at 3.15pm
- (6) Left at 3pm
- (7) Left at 2.15pm
- (8) Item 10 only
- (9) Items 8.5 & 10

**1. APOLOGIES**

No Apologies were received for the meeting.

**2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No conflicts of interest were declared and Members did not indicate any items they wished to raise under 'Any Other Business' at agenda item 13.

**3. DRAFT MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETINGS HELD ON:**

**3.1 Thursday 6 June 2024**

It was **RESOLVED** that: -

- The minutes of the Board meeting held on Thursday 6 June 2024 be approved for publication.

### **3.2 Thursday 1 August 2024**

It was **RESOLVED** that: -

- The minutes of the Board meeting held on Thursday 1 August 2024 be approved for publication.

#### **3.2.1 Confidential Annex**

It was **RESOLVED** that: -

- The confidential annex of the minutes of the Board meeting held on Thursday 1 August 2024 be approved as a correct record and will not be published at this time.

## **4. BOARD ACTION LOG**

Members **NOTED** the action log and verbal update provided by the Chief Executive in respect of the Board meetings held on 1 August 2024, 6 June 2024, 11 April 2024 and 7 March 2024.

In relation to the action points from the meeting on 1 August 2024, the Chief Executive provided the following updates:

- Action point 1 – the weblink to access the Members code of conduct has been sent to all Members, this action is now closed and Members were reminded to ensure they have read and understood the requirements of the code.

- Action point 2 – the Board discussion on Violence against Women and Girls will be considered later in the meeting and this action can now be closed.
- Action point 3 - the action in relation to Senior Officer HR matters has been closed as the process is nearing completion.
- Action point 4 – this action relates to the McCullough Review and a response has been sent from the Board Chair to the Chief Constable including matters raised by Members, and plans are in place to invite key stakeholders to the Board meeting in October 2024 for a progress update.

In relation to the action points from the meeting on 6 June 2024, the Chief Executive provided the following updates:

- Action point 1 – provision of Election Guidance from The Executive Office and communication from the Head of the Civil Service regarding same have been provided to Members and the action has been closed.
- Action point 2 – the action relating to the potential amalgamation of the Special Purposes and Chairs Advisory Group has been closed, and Members were advised this option was unavailable given the specific remit laid out for the Special Purposes Committee in Legislation.
- Action point 3 – the action relating to the membership of the Policing Plan Development Group has been resolved and the action has been closed.
- Action point 4 – a request for His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) to build into their programme work ‘How good the Force’s (PSNI) services is for victims of crime’ has been actioned, and the action has been closed.

- Action point 5 – this relates to the review of PSNI Senior Executive Team (SET) and correspondence has been issued to the Chief Constable on the outcomes, and the action has been closed.
- Action point 6 – this relates to actions following the Board Members' development session earlier in the year, the action will remain open as work is ongoing in this area.

In relation to action point 3 from the meeting on 11 April 2024, the action can be closed as a meeting has now taken place with the Justice Committee Chair and Board Vice-Chair. The action also refers to the Justice Minister attending a future Board meeting, and options are being explored to schedule this meeting in the near future.

In relation to action point 6 from the meeting on 7 March 2024, a meeting with key stakeholders from Operation Kenova has been confirmed for the Board meeting in November 2024 and this action can now be closed.

## **5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS**

### **5.1 Chair's Report**

The Chair asked the Board to **NOTE** the Chair's report and associated addendum which advised Members of:

- The Chair's engagements carried out during the period 7 June 2024 to 3 September 2024.
- A full list of correspondence issued and received by the Chair during the period 7 June 2024 to 3 September 2024.

The Chair did not highlight any specific engagements and advised Members of an appendix to the report providing further details of specific meetings that may be of particular interest.

In relation to correspondence the Chair referred Members to the items of correspondence at agenda item 5.2 in relation to PSNI Funding which have recently been discussed in the media.

The Chair advised Members of correspondence received about consultation on the revised Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Codes of Practice. Due to the large volume of information involved with this consultation Members agreed to delegate the preparation and submission of a response to the Performance Committee and were advised to submit any views or comments to the Director of Performance to be included in the draft response. The draft response will be discussed at the Performance Committee meeting in October 2024 prior to being submitted by the consultation closing date of 16 October 2024. Members agreed to this approach. **(AP1)**

The Chair highlighted correspondence copied to the Board from HMICFRS to the NI Secretary of State highlighting concerns in relation to resourcing levels and the current legislation governing their work. Members were advised that Board Officials will keep a watching brief on this matter and bring the issue back to the Board or a specified Committee if necessary.

Members were advised of correspondence received from the T/Deputy Chief Constable in relation to Op Sanukite and implementation of the recommendations from the PSNI Data Breach Report.

Following a previous request for Members to continue to support and attend Board events the Chair thanked Members for the positive response and continued efforts to engage with these events.

The Chair, on behalf of the Board, thanked the outgoing Director of Police Pensions & Injury Benefits (PPIB) for the contribution made to the work of the Board in this area for the past six years and wished her continued success for the future.

Members also placed on record their thanks and gratitude to the Director of PPIB and recognised the difficulties faced in this area of work, including negative comments in the public domain, and readily acknowledged the progress which has been made. Members discussed options to recognise these contributions and Officials agreed to explore further. **(AP2)**

The Chair advised that an official response has not been received from the Justice Minister in respect of the proposed independent review of the Board, and that work is taking place to expedite the process due to the time elapsed and potential reputational damage to the Board.

The Chair advised that further complaints have been received in relation to comments made by a Member on the BBC Spotlight programme 'Katie: Coerced and Killed'. The process to address these complaints continues and Members were advised that an update will be provided to the Board when it concludes.

Members raised the following matters with the Chair:

- Status of Angiolini Inquiry Recommendations and it was advised they will be considered at the Performance Committee at this month's meeting, and it was agreed to issue the relevant paper to the Member not on this Committee. **(AP3)**
- Board response to correspondence received from Blue Lights NI and options available to engage with the group and discuss concerns raised.

It was agreed to consider invitation to meet with Board Chair and Members and for a meeting with Blue Lighst NI to be arranged. (AP4)

- In relation to recent items of correspondence on the PSNI funding and Resourcing crisis, Members asked about the status of the working relationship between the Chief Constable and Department of Justice (DoJ) Permanent Secretary, and noted that there was a strong and positive relationship, respectful of each other's roles and responsibilities.

In this context members also discussed the circulation of the items of correspondence and ways in which it could have been managed differently; the Chief Constables role in highlighting Resourcing issues and the process for doing so, alongside the role of DoJ and the Department of Finance (DoF); the proposed Business Case for additional funding to highlight the operational impact of a shortfall in resources; proposals to enhance the capacity of the training college to increase officer numbers over the next 3 to 5 years; and opportunities in respect of direct recruitment out with the Policing College.

- Whether recruitment plans in the aforementioned Business Case were sufficient to increase officer numbers to the target level given current labour turnover, and the need to have confidence in the proposed Business Case to adequately address resourcing concerns.
- Role of UK in providing Additional Security Funding (ASF) and concerns in relation to a funding shortfall, and an overall reduction in ASF, in real terms, and extent to which the funding is diluted and used in other areas.
- Role of the Board in showing support publicly for additional policing resources, and concerns regarding timelines and need to expedite process to deliver measurable outcomes.
- Board view on the endorsement of the PSNI Resource plan 2024-25 given the budget shortfall highlighted by the Chief Constable in his Accountability report. Members were advised that the PSNI budget



situation will be considered further by the Resources Committee and options available in respect of improving the budget settlement will be explored.

- Clarity regarding the Committees of the Board responsible for the oversight and assessment of the recommendations of the PSNI Data Breach implementation plan (Op Sanukite). Members also highlighted ongoing concerns regarding cultural issues and the role of PSNI leadership in managing cultural change, the need to ensure clear accountability structures are in place as part of Committee oversight, and the Chief Executive advised that a response is awaited from PSNI on the accountability structures at senior level for the Data Breach report recommendations. **(AP5)**

Members **NOTED** the update provided.

## 6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

The Board **NOTED** a report from the Chief Executive which provided an overview of governance and other organisational matters and to inform the Board of key items of correspondence relating to Board business.

The Chief Executive updated Members on the matter relating to the BBC Spotlight programme, as previously mentioned in the Chair's report, and advised that the Board had received a request to underwrite the costs associated with bringing defamation proceedings and based on legal advice have responded to advise that doing so would be out-with the remit of the Board.

Members were asked to note that the NIPB budget allocation for 2024-25 and the related NIPB Resource Plan 2024-25 was considered and agreed by Resources Committee at its meeting in June 2024. In relation to the NIPB

Management accounts an underspend was reported at the end of July 2024, but this can be accounted for and senior officials will continue to monitor.

In respect of governance matters Members noted the decisions taken by written procedure over the summer period and were advised that further details were available in the Chief Executive's report.

Members were advised of two governance issues, the first of which related to the current process of reviewing the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Board's Standing Committees on an annual basis, and the proposal to change the annual TOR review to once every two years to be more proportionate.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** to review and amend the Standing Orders of the Board's Committees to reflect that the Terms of Reference for all Committees will be reviewed every two years (at the beginning of the financial year). **(AP6)**

The second issue related to the membership of the Board's Special Purposes Committee and to review the membership of the Committee to allow for an additional Member and therefore increase membership from six to seven, in accordance with the legislation. Following discussion Members agreed that officials will seek a seventh Member of the Committee and amended Committee membership will be brought to a future Board meeting for approval. **(AP7)**

The Chief Executive updated Members on the following Board related matters:

- Further information has been provided in the report on Delegated Authorities that some Committees have been given by the Board, and a summary for each of the Committees was provided and full details were available as part of the Committee TOR.
- In relation to Strategic planning matters the Corporate and Business plan performance report has been provided as an annex to the Chief

Executive report to provide a summary of the progress made against the Annual Business Plan 2024-25 actions during Quarter 1 (April – June 2024).

- In relation to Information Management the Board is experiencing a significant increase in Data Protection Act (DPA) and Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and these continue to have a significant impact on resources, specifically on the PPIB and Resources Directorates of the Board.
- Update on progress made in PPIB Directorate to address the backlog of cases relating to currently serving officers and offered thanks to Board staff for providing additional support to PPIB over the summer period to address the backlog.

Members raised the following matters with the Chief Executive:

- Consideration given to publicising the work taking place in PPIB Directorate to show progress being made, and it was agreed to consider options in this regard. **(AP8)**
- Status of this year's police pay award and timelines, and it was agreed to issue correspondence to the Department of Justice to request an update. **(AP9)**

Members **NOTED** the update provided.

## 7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### 7.1 Performance Committee – 13 June 2024

The Board **NOTED** the Performance Committee Chair's report and draft minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2024.

## 7.2 Partnership Committee – 20 June 2024

The Board **NOTED** the Partnership Committee Chair's report and draft minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2024.

The Committee Chair advised of the recommendation from the Committee that the Board approves the Independent Custody Visitors (ICV) Annual Report 2023-24, and it subsequently was **AGREED** by Members to:

- **APPROVE** the publication of the Independent Custody Visitors Annual Report 2023-24 on the Board's website.

## 7.3 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) – 20 June 2024

The Board **NOTED** the ARAC Chair's report and draft minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2024.

## 7.4 Resources Committee – 27 June 2024

The Board **NOTED** the Resources Committee Chair's report and draft minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2024.

The Committee Chair updated Members on the decisions taken by written procedure over the summer period, and included the following:

- The Committee approved the applications for an extension to a General Authorisation submitted by the PSNI for Fermanagh District Recreational Club.
- The Committee noted the outcome of the decisions made by Selected Medical Practitioners (SMP) and Independent Medical Referee's (IMR),

confirmed the implementation and reassessment dates, and agreed the proposals for the anonymised submissions for the cases submitted by PPIB Directorate in July 2024 and August 2024.

- The Committee recommended the NIPB Resource Plan 2024-25 to the Board and this was subsequently approved by the Board by written procedure.
- The Committee recommended four PSNI Above Delegated Authority requests to the Board and these were approved by written procedure.

## **8. BOARD BUSINESS**

### **8.1 Policing Plan Development Group – New Policing Plan 2025-30**

The Director of Performance presented a paper setting out the progress made by the Policing Plan Development Group (PPDG) on the development of a new Policing Plan for the period 2025-30.

The Board established a PPDG of six Board Members and four PSNI Members and they met on three occasions over the summer period to take forward the Board's statutory requirements to publish a new Policing Plan.

The PPDG agreed the foundations of the new Policing Plan including the timeframe and a proposed 5 year plan from 2025-30, agreement of the Vision, Purpose and Values, three draft Strategic Outcomes focused on Victims, Community and Workforce, and the indicators which sit alongside each of the three Strategic Outcomes.

Members were advised the next stage of the process was to carry out a 12-week public consultation and an Equality Screening exercise.

Members raised the following matters with the Director of Performance:

- Requested amendments actioned in relation to the draft consultation document and Officials agreed to implement the changes requested. **(AP10)**
- Positive feedback on the detail provided as part of the proposed 5-year Policing Plan but expressed concerns regarding the limited number of consultation events planned and lack of full geographical coverage across NI. Officials agreed to revisit the proposed plan and options available, acknowledging the limited resources available, and to explore the potential use of the Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) network or online. **(AP10)**
- Consultation document should clearly indicate specific actions to make a real difference to Policing in NI over the 5-year period of the plan and the measures of success will be the extent to which improvements have been made resulting in a real and positive difference in Policing.

Following discussion Members:

- **NOTED** the progress made to date by the Policing Plan Development Group;
- **AGREED** the draft Vision, Purpose, Values, Outcomes and Indicators are used as the basis to go forward with a 12-week public consultation;
- Subject to the amendments outlined above **APPROVED** the draft Consultation document and **AGREED** for the Board to launch a public consultation on 17 September 2024 to 10 December 2024 on the draft Policing Plan; and
- **APPROVED** the Equality Screening Document.

## 8.2 Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) - New Corporate Plan 2025-30

The Director of Resources presented a paper updating Members on work carried out to date in relation to the development of the Board's new Corporate Plan 2025-30, and to seek Members' views on the Vision, Mission Statement, Values and Objectives for inclusion in the new Plan and the proposed approach to the public consultation and timeline.

In accordance with the Board's Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) Officials have given consideration to the DoJ Departmental Plan as part of the NIPB Corporate Plan development process. Members noted that the DoJ Corporate and related Annual Business Plans up to 2023-24 are published on the Department of Justice website.

Members were advised that to date, work in relation to the development of the NIPB Corporate Plan has included consideration of items raised at the Board Members development session in January 2024; an internal review by the Board's Senior Management Team of the four current objectives; matters arising from the recent PSNI Strategic planning event in May 2024; engagement with DoJ Officials; the proposed addition of a new fifth objective linked to the performance of NIPB as an organisation, as discussed by Members at the January development session and also suggested by the Justice Minister; review of other organisations Corporate Plans as part of a high level benchmarking exercise, and consideration of the proposed three new Policing Plan outcomes outlined earlier in the meeting.

Following completion of the work outlined above and after consideration of the four objectives in the current Corporate Plan Members noted the proposal that the four current objectives remain relevant and should be retained unchanged as the statutory functions of the Board have not been amended with new legislation.

In relation to the proposed additional fifth objective, *'To manage our business and deliver our responsibilities efficiently and effectively ensuring our governance responsibilities are fulfilled'*. Members were advised that this is linked to the internal performance of the Board as an organisation and has been drafted after considering the various inputs in relation to the Board's efficiency and effectiveness from Board Members and input from the Justice Minister. This Objective is designed to be high level to facilitate the design and implementation of the Annual Business Plan and these Business Plan actions will set out each area with focus areas and will reference Board performance and organisational resources.

The Director of Resources advised that the proposed five Objectives for the new NIPB Corporate Plan 2025-30 will be linked and aligned with the three proposed Outcomes from the new Policing Plan 2025-30 and that a broad spectrum of Business Plan actions relating to each of these outcomes will be mapped across the five Objectives.

Members raised the following matters with the Director of Resources:

- Further clarity on the scope of the Corporate Plan as it relates to the Board and the accountability structures within the tripartite arrangements, and the extent of Members' role and responsibilities in ensuring the executive functions of the Board are discharged effectively in addition to their accountability role in ensuring the effectiveness of the PSNI and holding the Chief Constable to account.
- To ensure the Vision speaks to all stakeholders across NI and is clearly associated with the Board, the Mission Statement is stronger on the aims of the organisation, and the importance of maintaining the existing Values so that they are embedded in the long term. Also, to ensure the Vision reflects the role of the Board to enable PSNI and the role of the Board as the oversight and accountability body.



- Further consideration of the wording of Objective C (Partnership) and the extent to which the Board is able to enable local communities to engage with the work of the Board to hold PSNI to account. Increased focus should be on raising community and partners awareness of the Board's work and to enhance the Board's understanding of issues facing stakeholders.
- Consideration given to the descriptor of the proposed new fifth Objective to include reference to 'People' as this represents a key focus area which is included in the Corporate Risk Register and there should be a Strategic Plan for People.
- Extent to which Members are responsible for the governance of the Board as an organisation and it was agreed to provide Members with the relevant legislation and to establish the situation as is in respect of governance and accountability structures and to identify gaps and concerns.
- Importance of agreeing a robust and quality document given that it will be in place for a five year period and the requirements to carry out a public consultation for the new Corporate Plan.

Following discussion, the Chair thanked Members for their views and feedback, and the amendments suggested will be taken forward by Officials. **(AP11)**

In relation to the matters raised in respect of governance and accountability structures it was agreed that Officials will progress these separately to the development process of the New Corporate Plan. **(AP12)**

Members **NOTED** the work carried out to date in relation to the development of the new Corporate Plan, and the proposed approach to the consultation and timeline for the development of the new Corporate Plan.

### 8.3 Violence against Women and Girls

The Chief Executive presented a scoping paper to Members following discussion at the previous Board meeting in August 2024 in relation to the increasing number of cases categorised as Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and the ways in which PSNI responds and investigates matters relating to vulnerable female victims of crime.

Members asked Officials, at the Board meeting in August 2024, to consider ways in which the Board could address this issue by ensuring the police response was adequate and that the Board is able to provide reassurance to the public.

Correspondence has been issued to both the Chief Constable and Justice Minister to request an update on work taking place to both inform Members and avoid any duplication of work already taking place, and PSNI provided a comprehensive update on work taking place in tackling Violence against Women and Girls including Serious Case Reviews of specific cases, training, operational initiatives, and ongoing investment in Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs).

The Chief Executive highlighted key focus areas including follow up actions on the cases reviewed as part of the Serious Case Review, key learning points from the review process and its implementation across the PSNI, and how the Board can provide public reassurance to enable confidence in policing.

The Chief Executive asked Members to consider the way forward to ensure clarity of purpose and outlined three potential next steps for the Board to consider, including the formation of an Independent Board-led Review Panel, to request a report from the Chief Constable against a detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) determined by the Board, with draft TOR provided for Members to consider, and should this report be requested then to follow up by commissioning an assessment from an independent expert panel.

Members raised the following matters with the Chief Executive:

- Their preference to wait on the outcome of the PSNI Serious Case Review in order to consider learning and recommendations, and then consider Board position and response following collaboration with independent experts.
- Important that work taking place leads to outcomes that will make a real and measurable difference and that PSNI communicates the findings from the Serious Case Review to the Board
- Resource implications and financial challenges associated with the Board carrying out its own Inquiry into the PSNI handling of Investigations originally classified, or not, as Violence against Women and Girls.
- To establish and agree role of the Board should a VAWG strategy be brought to the NI Assembly.
- Support for the Board appointment of an independent expert panel to review and assess a report from the Chief Constable which includes outcomes from the Serious Case Review, Police Ombudsman Report, DHRs, lessons learned and recommendations.
- Ongoing concerns in respect of cultural issues in PSNI and view that the previous Cultural Audit did not address issues raised including misogyny.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** to wait for the outcome of the PSNI Serious Case Review and give further consideration to the use of an independent expert panel to assess a report called for from the Chief Constable against a detailed Terms of Reference determined by the Board. The Chair will also write to the Chief Constable to outline the views of the Board **(AP13)**

#### **8.4 NIAO Audit Report on Continuous Improvement Arrangements in Policing**

The Director of Performance asked Members to **NOTE** a paper providing a summary of the main findings of the final NIAO Report on Continuous Improvement Arrangements in Policing.

The Report includes an unqualified audit opinion and one recommendation in relation to the inclusion of up to date and relevant data and baseline information for all indicators and measures in the annual Performance Plan. This recommendation was made in 2022-23 and has already been taken forward as part of the annual review of the Policing Plan and Annual Performance Plan.

The Director of Performance asked Members to consider the draft statement in relation to the recommendation with the Board and PSNI response, and following discussion it was **AGREED** to:

- **APPROVE** the Board's draft statement and proceed to consultation on the statement with the Chief Constable.

#### **8.5 PSNI Holiday Pay Remedy Options**

*This item was considered with Members of the PSNI Leadership Team and immediately following the private session with the Chief Constable at agenda item 10.*

A confidential annex for this item will be made available for Members to view but will not be published at this time.

### **9. KEY ISSUES OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

The Board **NOTED** a paper from the Communications branch which detailed recent issues of public interest relevant to the Board's areas of work.

## **10. PRIVATE SESSION WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE INCLUDING THE CHIEF CONSTABLE'S ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT TO THE BOARD**

The Chair welcomed the Chief Constable, T/Deputy Chief Constable Chris Todd, Chief Operating Officer (COO) Pamela McCreedy, Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) Bobby Singleton, T/ACC Melanie Jones, T/ACC Ryan Henderson, T/ACC Davy Beck, Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) People & Organisational Development Clare Duffield and ACO Corporate Services Mark McNaughten to the meeting.

The Chief Constable presented Members with an overview of the Chief Constable's Accountability Report for August 2024 and highlighted the following areas:

- The recent attacks on ethnic minorities and police officers with crimes like arson and damage being incited via social media. It was highlighted that some of the violence was connected to a false right-wing narrative linking the deaths of three girls in Southport to illegal migration.

On the response to the attacks the Chief Constable stated whilst reluctant to criminalize young people he also recognised the importance of prosecuting these crimes strongly and as such PSNI have taken a robust stance making numerous arrests whilst examining video footage for future prosecutions.

It was also highlighted that PSNI continue to engage with Muslim and other diverse communities and the Chief Constable expressed his wish that the recent disorder is a turning point in addressing racism.

- The support provided by 80 specialist public order officers from Police Scotland who volunteered to assist in Northern Ireland between August 13<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. The Chief Constable highlighted their invaluable support

to PSNI and wished to publicly express his gratitude to them and the Chief Constable of Police Scotland for their support.

- Disorder and attacks on police officers during recent parades. On this the Chief Constable condemned the rioting and called for parents and guardians to take more responsibility for the young people within their community.
- Visits by the Prime Minister and Secretary of State to the Police Training College at Garnerville where they had the opportunity to meet with ethnic community leaders and a number of officers who sustained injuries during the recent riots. It was also highlighted by the Chief Constable that during these discussions the ethnic minority community leaders acknowledged and praised the PSNI's response to the disorder.
- Praise for the efforts of PSNI officers whilst emphasizing the need for additional officers and funding to effectively manage such challenges. The Chief Constable stated that PSNI is facing severe resource constraints and called for financial support from both the Northern Ireland and UK governments to meet policing demands.
- The Chief Constable also confirmed that work continues on a business case to restore police numbers to 7,000 officers though ideally requiring 8,000.
- Confirmation that the uplift of the Revised Environmental Allowance has now been negotiated stating that staff have received an interim payment in August and work continues with the Department to conclude the matter in September.

Following the Chief Constable's introduction, the Board Chair invited Members questions and the following matters were discussed with the PSNI Leadership team:

- The investigation into the death of Matthew McCallan and the search operation following his disappearance including how his disappearance was initially categorised and questioning if the deployment of dogs could have assisted with the search.

On this point PSNI said that whilst they believed due process had been followed, they would be happy to meet with the family.

- PSNI's perspective on the current threat of cybercrime, and how it is allocating resources to combat it.
- In response PSNI highlighted that whilst advances in technology have increased the complexity of cybercrime and created opportunity for criminals, the PSNI continues to work on detection with partners globally including the National Crime Centre and the NCA.

PSNI also stated that they have invested significantly in the Cyber Crime Unit and offered Members the opportunity of a visit to see first-hand the work being carried out.

- PSNI's reaction to the recent judgment deeming misconduct proceedings against an officer as unlawful and how PSNI plans to handle such situations in the future.

On this point PSNI noted the challenges and discussed in detail the processes around misconduct proceedings.

- The arson attack at Greenisland Church and whether PSNI had any theories regarding the motive behind it.

In response PSNI explained it was an ongoing investigation and would provide further detail in due course.

- A discussion on what PSNI consider to be the operational description of Health and Safety and what limitations officers must consider.

On this point PSNI detailed considerations officers take when making decisions around Health & Safety.

- A request for an update on the investigation into the death of Noah Donohue.

In response PSNI said it would provide a written response in due course.

The Chair thanked the Chief Constable and he left the meeting.

*The PSNI Leadership team remained in the meeting to brief the Board and respond to Members questions in respect of agenda item 8.5, outlined above.*

## **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**

Members **NOTED** the PSNI written responses to questions from the Resources Committee and Performance Committee.

### **11.3 Individual Members' Written Questions and Responses**



Members **NOTED** the PSNI responses to written questions from Members and the follow up response to a Member question from the Board meeting in August 2024.

**13. COMMUNICATION ISSUES**

The Board agreed a statement on a number of issues discussed at the meeting should be issued.

**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next full Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 3 October 2024 at 9.30am in James House.

The meeting closed at 3.35pm.

**Strategic Planning & Governance**

**Date:** September 2024

**Chair**