

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON TUESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2024 AT 18:50 IN JAMES HOUSE BELFAST AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE FACILITY

PRESENT:

Mr Mukesh Sharma (Chair)
Mr Brendan Mullan (Vice-Chair)*
Mr Keith Buchanan MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA*
Mr Patrick Nelson*
Mrs Cheryl Brownlee MLA *
Mrs Linda Dillon MLA
Mr Mark Durkan MLA *
Mrs Marian Cree *
Mrs Nuala McAllister MLA
Mr Frank McManus *
Mr Tommy O'Reilly

EXTERNAL ADVISORS IN ATTENDANCE:

Joanne Kane, HeadsTogether Consulting
(Independent Human Resources Advisor)

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs Sinead Simpson, Chief Executive
1 Board Official
2 Board Officials*

*Attended meeting by video conference facility

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Les Allamby, Mr Gerry Kelly, Dr Kate Laverty, Mr Cathal Boylan, Mr Peter McReynolds, Mr Alan Chambers, and Mr Peter Osborne.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. AGREEMENT OF APPOINTMENT PANEL DECISION ON ASSISTANT CHIEF CONSTABLES AND NEXT STEPS

The Chair advised that the purpose of this Special Board meeting is to provide Members with an update on the ACC Appointment process and to ask Members to ratify the recommendation of the Appointment Panel.

The Chair thanked Members for making themselves available at this late hour and outlined the usual arrangements for those joining the meeting remotely.

The Chair reminded Members of the care that is needed in respect of protecting the confidentiality of Board business and noted how this is especially pertinent in relation to appointments processes. The Chair advised there would be a discussion towards the end of the meeting about arrangements for communication of the outcome of the competition but underlined the importance of Members treating the information shared in confidence until released in accordance with our communications plan.

The Chair provided Members with a synopsis of the following:

- Board agreement in May 2024 on the composition of the panel and the eligibility for the role namely, extensive operational command experience and, in keeping with national practice, eligible candidates to have successfully completed the senior police national assessment centre (senior PNAC) and the strategic command course (SCC). Alternatively police officers who have successfully completed the Police Executive Leadership Programme (PELP) – stage 5 (executive leaders) as part of cohorts 1 and 2 will be eligible for substantive appointment to a chief police officer role. Police officers who are completing the PELP as part of cohort 3 can be appointed into chief police officer roles on a temporary basis and on successful completion

of the programme, they can be substantively appointed with no further appointment process.

- The roles and responsibilities of the advisors to the Appointment Panel including Joanne Kane, Headstogether Consulting Ltd who provided HR and equality advice and the Chief Constable who provided professional policing advice, as is required by Board guidance on the appointment of senior officers. Members noted that neither were part of the decision-making panel.
- The provision of other support from Board Chief Executive and other Board officials.

The Chair noted the thanks of the panel for all the advice and support they had received throughout the process.

Moving to the specifics of the ACC competition the Board Chair advised as follows:

- The Assistant Chief Constable competition was launched on 14 October 2024 with a closing date for applications of noon on 4 November 2024.
- The number of applications received.
- Shortlisting was conducted on 8 November and resulted in all applicants being deemed as suitable to progress to the Assessment Days which were held on 2 & 3 December 2024.

In terms of the process followed, the Chair advised:

- The NIPB Guidance for the Appointment of Chief Officers and Senior Police Staff Equivalents (Section 3) which outlines the Principles of

Appointment as being: Merit, Fairness and Openness, had been followed.

- Panel members had undertaken all necessary training to ensure that appropriate knowledge of effective assessment and selection practices, the relevant legislation and assessor skills were in place, and applied throughout the process.
- The necessary requirements to perform the role of PSNI Assistant Chief Constable were drawn from the national competency and values framework.
- Due diligence was followed in respect of checking information disclosed for all of the ACC candidates. This included an enhanced vetting procedure to ensure alignment with national best practice, post the Angiolini report, which would include re-vetting should it be necessary to draw from a reserve list.

In terms of the assessment process the Chair advised members as follows:

- Assessment took place over 2nd and 3rd December and involved candidates being challenged and assessed against the criteria advertised for the role using a robust process.
- Candidates submitted a pre-seen presentation. Candidates also had to prepare and deliver an unseen briefing, and they underwent a competency and values-based interview. In total the assessment process for candidates lasted just over two hours.
- A marking framework had been agreed in advance of the selection process.

In relation to the outcome of the process, the Chair advised of the Panel's unanimous decision regarding the candidates to fill the vacant ACC positions, which was being recommended to the Board, along with a recommended reserve list to be retained for a 12-month period. The decision of the Appointment Panel was unanimous.

The Chair confirmed that Joanne Kane from Headstogether Consulting Ltd who was present throughout had developed a process which complied with the national framework and adhered to Board's own guidance on Appointment of senior officers, as well as to HR best practice.

As the Appointment Panel Chair, and in line with para 4.1.7 of the Board's Guidance, the Chair recommended to the Board the candidates for the roles of Assistant Chief Constables in PSNI.

The Chair confirmed other Appointment Panel Members had no further comments to add.

The Chair invited Board members to ratify the decision of the appointment panel and agree the candidates to be appointed to the vacant Assistant Chief Constable positions, subject to Ministerial approval, and that a reserve list should be retained for 12 months.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- That the appointable candidates would be recommended to the Minister of Justice for appointment to the vacant Assistant Chief Constable positions in PSNI, and her agreement secured in relation to a reserve list.

In terms of next steps, the Chair advised that he would, at the conclusion of this meeting, speak with the Minister and seek her verbal approval of the

Board's decisions. Once that is secured, he would advise the Chief Constable of the outcome and will then contact each candidate by telephone. He also noted that issues required for finalising the terms and conditions of appointment would be progressed by the Chief Executive.

5. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

The Chair outlined the intention to issue a public statement at 11am on Wednesday 4th December to confirm the appointment.

The Chair reiterated that the panel and their advisors have signed a confidentiality agreement and have been assiduous in maintaining the confidentiality and integrity of the process and asked that all Board Members do likewise in relation to the information shared with them in this meeting. The Chair emphasised the importance of the details of the preferred candidate not entering into the public domain in advance of the announcement on Wednesday 4th. The Chair advised that Board Members should not engage in commentary before the official confirmation of the appointment decision is announced.

The Chair also advised that Members should not comment on any aspect of the appointment process so that candidate confidentiality is maintained.

The Chair concluded by thanking the Appointment panel for their work and all members for attending the special Board meeting to ratify the Appointment panel decision.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was conducted.

The meeting closed at 19:00.

RESOURCES DIRECTORATE

December 2024

Chair