

## **NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY 5 DECEMBER 2024 AT 9.30AM IN NIPB HQ, JAMES HOUSE, BELFAST**

#### **MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Mukesh Sharma (Chair)  
Mr Brendan Mullan (Vice Chair)

- (1) Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
- (1) Mrs Linda Dillon MLA
- (1) Mrs Cheryl Brownlee MLA
- (1) Ms Nuala McAllister MLA
- (1) Mr Patrick Nelson
- (1) Mr Tommy O'Reilly
- (2) Mr Peter Osborne
- (1) Mr Les Allamby  
Dr Kate Laverty
- (3) Mr Frank McManus
- (4) Mr Alan Chambers MLA  
Mr Peter McReynolds MLA
- (5) Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
- (6) Mrs Marian Cree  
Mr Gerry Kelly MLA

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

- (7) Mr Jon Boutcher, Chief Constable
- (7) Ms Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating Officer
- (7) Mr Bobby Singleton, Assistant Chief Constable
- (7) Mr Mark McNaughten, Assistant Chief Officer Corporate Services
- (7) Ms Clare Duffield, Assistant Chief Officer People & Organisational Development
- (7) Ms Aldrina Magwood, Assistant Chief Officer Strategic Planning & Transformation
- (7) Mr Davy Beck, Assistant Chief Constable
- (8) Mr Ryan Henderson, Assistant Chief Constable
- (7) 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  
Ms Sarah Reid, T/Director of Police  
Pensions & Injury Benefits  
Three Officials

**OTHER OFFICIALS IN  
ATTENDANCE:**

Mr John Wadham, Human Rights Advisor

- (1) **Left after public session**
- (2) **From 9.40am**
- (3) **Left at 2.40pm**
- (4) **From 9.40am, left after public session**
- (5) **From 10.05am, left at 2.40pm**
- (6) **Left at 3pm**
- (7) **Item 10 only**
- (8) **Public session only**

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mr Mark H Durkan MLA and Mr Keith Buchanan MLA.

**2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

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

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

**3.1 Thursday 7 November 2024**

The Chair asked Members to consider the draft minutes from the Board meeting held on Thursday 7 November 2024.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The minutes of the Board meeting held on Thursday 7 November 2024 be approved for publication.

### **3.2 Friday 15 November 2024**

The Chair asked Members to consider the draft minutes from the Special Board meeting held on Friday 15 November 2024 to ratify the decision of the recruitment panel in respect of the appointment of the new Deputy Chief Constable.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The minutes of the Board meeting held on Friday 15 November 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 Friday 15 November 2024 be approved as a correct record and will not be published.

### **3.3 Tuesday 3 December 2024**

The Chair asked Members to consider the draft minutes from the Special Board meeting held on Tuesday 3 December 2024 to ratify the decision of the

recruitment panel in respect of the appointment of the new Assistant Chief Constables.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The minutes of the Board meeting held on Tuesday 3 December 2024 be approved for publication.

### 3.3.1 Confidential Annex

It was **RESOLVED** that: -

- The confidential annex of the minutes of the Board meeting held on Tuesday 3 December 2024 be approved as a correct record and will not be published.

In respect of senior officer recruitment processes Members sought further information on the vetting and due diligence checks undertaken.

The Chief Executive provided Members with a full update on the vetting process implemented as part of each recruitment process, and details of related legal advice.

Following discussion it was **AGREED** to write to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), to share the national recruitment standards for senior officers with Members, and to consider including Senior Officer recruitment on the agenda for the Board Member development session in January 2025. **(AP1)**

## 4. ACTION LOG

Members **NOTED** the action log and verbal update provided by the Chief Executive in relation to the Board meetings held on 7 November 2024, 3 October 2024, 5 September 2024 and 6 June 2024.

In relation to action points from the meeting on 7 November 2024 the Chief Executive provided the following updates:

- Action point 1 – a paper on the action plan from Members development session in January 2024 and proposals for the January 2025 session will be discussed later in today’s meeting at agenda item 8.3 and this action can now be closed.
- Action point 2 – this action will remain open and relates to a meeting of Independent Members ahead of the meeting with the Justice Minister scheduled for 11 December 2024.
- Action point 3 – a synopsis of the investigations and complaints made in respect of the use of surveillance against journalists has been provided alongside the action log for today’s meeting, and this action can now be closed.
- Action point 4 – matters relating to ‘The McCullough Review’ and potential next steps will be discussed later in the meeting at agenda item 8.5, and this action can now be closed.
- Action point 5 – matters relating to decisions taken by written procedure following the last Board meeting in November 2024 have been resolved and full details have been provided in the Chief Executive’s report at agenda item 6 of today’s meeting. This action can now be closed.
- Action point 6 – suggested amendments to the Performance Committee draft minutes from October 2024 (Mary Ward case) have been completed and this action can now be closed.

- Action point 7 – further discussions have taken place with a small group of Board Members in respect of the Board’s new Corporate Plan 2025-30 and this matter will be discussed later in the meeting at agenda item 8.2. This action can now be closed.
- Action point 8 – this action relates to PSNI Independent Investigations and correspondence on this matter is included in the Chair’s correspondence at agenda item 5.1 and will be discussed further with the Chief Constable at a future date. This action can now be closed.
- Action point 9 – this action will remain open and relates to matters raised in relation to the proposed contract extension of the Strategic Planning & Transformation (SP&T) Assistant Chief Officer role within the PSNI Service Executive Team. Following the receipt of legal advice the Director of Resources updated Members on the status of fixed term contracts which outlined the basic legal principle and applicable exemptions.  
The Chief Executive summarised additional advice from the HR consulting firm HeadsTogether on employment rights.

Members raised the following matters in response to the action log update:

- In relation to action point 9 from the November 2024 meeting Members outlined their support for the two year extension to the SP&T role and discussed the ongoing need for work around transformation and planning in an organisation of the nature and size of PSNI.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** to issue correspondence to PSNI outlining that in principle the Strategic Planning & Transformation role continues for a further two years subject to continuing satisfactory performance, and

references the need for further discussions around the enduring need for work around transformation and planning in PSNI. **(AP2)**

- A Member reiterated concerns regarding the planned meeting of a smaller group of Independent Members outside the normal Board meeting structure.

The Chair assured Members that no decisions will be taken on behalf of the Board and that it was scheduled at the request of Independent Members in advance of a meeting with the Justice Minister.

- In respect of action point 3 from the meeting in November 2024, no reference has been made to the appointment of 'Ethical Officers' in PSNI and Members were advised that this issue will likely be addressed as part of the McCullough Report.

## 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 6 November 2024 to 26 November 2024.
- A full list of correspondence issued and received by the Chair during the period 1 November 2024 to 3 December 2024.

In relation to engagements the Chair referred Members to Appendix 1A of the report providing details of engagements which may be of particular interest.

The Chair highlighted a meeting with Members and Mr Paul Sweeney, the lead reviewer of the Policing Board, on 28 November 2024, and advised that further details will be provided later in the meeting at agenda item 5.2.

In relation to correspondence the Chair highlighted a reply from the office of the Justice Minister in response to specific questions from Members following the meeting with the Minister in October 2024.

The Chair highlighted correspondence from the Justice Minister in respect of a consultation exercise which sought views on proposed changes to the Police Officer Injury on Duty (IOD) Scheme in Northern Ireland. Matters of concern raised by several respondents to the consultation which may constitute allegations have been referred to the PSNI Professional Standards Department.

Members raised the following matters in relation to the Chair's report:

- Concerns raised that correspondence from the Justice Minister following the meeting in October 2024 did not include an update on the implementation of recommendations from the review of the Cawdery case.

Following discussion it was **AGREED** to request an update from Assistant Chief Constable Henderson on work taking place as a result of the Cawdery review to implement recommendations relevant to PSNI and to consider thereafter the need to follow up with correspondence to the Task and Finish Group, jointly set up by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Department of Health (DOH) to oversee the implementation of the recommendations. **(AP3)**

- Concerns in respect of comments in the Justice Minister's correspondence that the Board's role in Ill Health Retirement (IHR) and IOD processes was part of the Patten reforms and that moving these



obligations from the Board to PSNI could potentially dilute structures and governance arrangements.

Following discussion it was **AGREED** to write to the Minister on this matter and where possible include reference to arrangements in other jurisdictions. **(AP4)**

## 5.2 Meeting with Mr Paul Sweeney – Independent Review of the Board

The Chair updated Members on the briefing on 28 November 2024 from Mr Paul Sweeney, the lead for the review of the Policing Board, which included his review methodology, findings, and next steps prior to release of the final report. The Chair gave members an overview of the issues discussed at the meeting and proposed that further discussion takes place at the Member development session in January 2025.

Members **NOTED** the update.

## 5.3 Chief Constable's Performance Review Plans

The Chair updated Members on plans for the Chief Constable's performance review and thanked Members for the feedback provided to date as part of this process and welcomed further input.

The Chair advised that the decision has been taken to postpone the review discussion until the end of the reporting year (end March 2025) to bring the reporting cycle into line with all other officers and staff.

Members **NOTED** the update and asked for details of the performance objectives and it was **AGREED** to recirculate these towards the end of March 2025 to facilitate Member feedback at this time. **(AP5)**

## 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 highlighted the following matters from the report:

- Following October monitoring the Board's revised budget allocation has been received from DOJ which takes account of a £220k easement and a capital bid of £25k.
- Plans are progressing with the Policing Plan survey 2025 and fieldwork is scheduled to commence in early 2025.
- Members were reminded of the open invitation to attend PSNI Attestations as well as scheduled TEAM PSNI events.
- Training for Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) Members of Policing Committees are ongoing and Member involvement to help facilitate and provide advice would be greatly appreciated.

The Chief Executive advised Members of four items of Board business recommended to the Board and agreed by written procedure since the last Board meeting in November 2024.

The requisite number of Members **AGREED** by written procedure to:

- **APPROVE** a written request from PSNI on 29 November 2024 to provide a Victim Detection Dog and handler to assist An Garda Síochána in the search of a residential property as part of a half day deployment, and

- **APPROVE** the proposal that all Committee papers are made available on the Boards sharing platform to all Members and Researchers the day after Committee meetings, and
- **APPROVE** the proposal to decline an invitation for the Board to be part of the Right Care Right Person (RCRP) Strategic Oversight Group, co-chaired by DOH and DOJ, and
- **APPROVE** the proposal to increase the number of Members on the Special Purposes Committee from six to seven, as required under legislation.

The Chief Executive recorded thanks to Mrs Marian Cree, Independent Member, for agreeing to join the Special Purposes Committee as the seventh Member.

In relation to correspondence received the Chief Executive highlighted one item from PSNI on the assessment of the current security situation in Northern Ireland and that there remains a real and substantial threat against Police Officers, and as such the relevant 'standing authorities' for the carriage of firearms by PSNI Officers has been signed by the National Police Chiefs Council Firearms Lead for PSNI.

The Chief Executive raised a final item not included in the report regarding the Board's status as an 'at risk' group in the Terms of Reference of the McCullough Review, and reminded Members that the Review team can be contacted should there be any concerns. This status has been extended to Board staff and senior officials will ensure this is communicated accordingly.

Members raised the following matters with the Chief Executive:

- The process for dealing with communications/ complaints received by Board Members and staff that contain offensive or inappropriate material.

- Concerns that process to approve a request from PSNI to provide approval for a Victim Detection Dog and handler to assist An Garda Síochána was unnecessarily bureaucratic.
- Whether former Members of the Policing Board should be notified as part of an ‘at risk’ group in respect of the McCullough review of PSNI surveillance activities. Following discussion it was **AGREED** that Board officials will contact all former Independent Board Members (since 2011) to engage with the McCullough Review team should they wish to do so, and contact current Political Party leaders in relation to former Political Board Members. **(AP6)**

## 7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### 7.1 Performance Committee – 14 November 2024

The Board **NOTED** the Performance Committee Chair’s report, draft minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2024, and were advised that matters relating to Justice & Security Act Authorisations and the McCullough Review/ Section 59 will be considered later in the meeting.

### 7.2 Partnership Committee – 21 November 2024

The Board **NOTED** the Partnership Committee Chair’s report and draft minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2024.

The Committee Vice Chair advised of one recommendation from the Committee in relation to the Police Property Fund and subject to one small amendment **(AP7)** it was **AGREED** by Members to:

- **APPROVE** the Police Property Fund 'First two calls of the Small Grants Scheme' Report for publication.

### 7.3 Resources Committee – 28 November 2024

The Board **NOTED** the Resources Committee Chair's report of the meeting held on 28 November 2024.

The Committee Vice Chair advised of two recommendations from the Committee in relation to amendments to the removal and relocation policy and PSNI proposed purchase of the site at Kinnegar in Holywood, which is vacant and offered for disposal.

Members requested an amendment in respect of the flights allowance in the Removal and Relocation policy. **(AP8)**

Following discussion and subject to this change above it was **AGREED** to:

- **APPROVE** the changes to the Removal and Relocation Policy for PSNI Chief Officer and Senior Police Staff equivalents.

Members raised the following matters in relation to the proposed purchase of the Kinnegar site:

- Status and availability of an expert report completed by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) on the Kinnegar site and concerns that Board has only been provided with a summary report and should request to view the full report at a secure location if necessary to provide assurance, with possible involvement of the Board's Special Purposes Committee.
- Concerns regarding need for and ability of Board to carry out due diligence checks given the intention to meet the site purchase deadline

of 31 March 2025, and potential implications for the Board given its accountability role for the management and development of the Police Estate.

Members were advised that the full MOD report is classified by the MOD and has restricted access, and that the restrictions relating to viewing the reports to provide necessary assurance do not lie with PSNI.

- Concerns regarding contamination issues, flood planning, road access/ infrastructure and associated costs to ensure site is fit for purpose prior to purchase, and legal implications of issues highlighted post purchase the Board was not previously made aware of.
- Reasons for significant difference in D1 disposal value compared to the Red Book current market valuation and whether funding was available to proceed with the project given the significant resource and funding challenges still facing PSNI.
- Plans for the disposal of existing PSNI sites as part of the proposed college campus development at Kinnegar, and whether representatives from Construction and Procurement Delivery (CPD) can meet with Members to offer expert advice.

Members were advised that Resources Committee will consider the matter further at its meeting in January 2025 and it was subsequently **AGREED** by Members to:

- **APPROVE** the Committee recommendation to allow the D1 process to progress without prejudice to any outcome regarding the purchase of the Kinnegar site.

Mr Trevor Clarke MLA asked to be recorded against the Resources Committee recommendation to allow the D1 process to proceed.

## **8. BOARD BUSINESS**

### **8.1 National Crime Agency and PSNI Serious and Organised Crime Performance Reports**

The Director of Performance presented a paper which provided Members with a summary report of the National Crime Agency's (NCA) and the PSNI's performance and activity in Northern Ireland in respect of Serious and Organised Crime for the Quarter 1 & Quarter 2 period from April 2024 to September 2024.

The paper highlighted the key issues that Members may wish to consider and discuss further with the NCA Director General and the Chief Constable later in the meeting.

Members **NOTED** the reports.

### **8.2 Consultation for NIPB Draft Corporate Plan 2025-30**

The Director of Resources presented a paper on the Board's draft Corporate Plan 2025-30 consultation document for Members to consider and agree to issue for public consultation.

This item was previously brought to the Board at the meetings in September 2024 and November 2024 and following matters raised at the November meeting a small group of Members including the Vice Chair met to discuss proposed changes for consideration by the Board.

The proposed changes to the consultation document relate to the following matters:

- NI Policing Board Mission Statement,

- Minor revision to the wording of Objective A,
- Amended wording of Objective C relating to the work of Partnership Directorate,
- Amendments to the language of Objective E and changes to the narrative supporting this objective, and
- Amendment to the consultation response form with a new second question proposed.

The Director of Resources advised of next steps following the conclusion of the public consultation including the collation of responses and the establishment of a small group of Members to consider the responses to enable a collective view to be reached in relation to any suggested amendments.

Members were also advised that due to a delay in the commencement of the three month public consultation and the work required following the consultation period it will not be possible to launch the new Corporate Plan for the new financial year commencing 1 April 2025.

Members raised a number of matters and requested that the mission statement includes reference to a 'police service which is representative of the community it serves', and to update objective D to reflect the Board's ongoing position that Ill Health Retirement and Injury On Duty responsibilities should be removed from the Policing Board. **(AP9)**

Following discussion of the proposed revisions to the draft NIPB Corporate Plan 2025- 30 consultation document, and subject to the amendments outlined above Members **AGREED** to:

- **APPROVE** the final draft NIPB Corporate Plan 2025- 30 consultation document,



- **APPROVE** the final draft NIPB Corporate Plan 2025-30 consultation document and related Equality Screening document to go to public consultation commencing Monday 9 December 2024, and
- **APPROVE** the establishment of a group of Members to consider consultation responses following the conclusion of the public consultation.

### 8.3 Members Development Session – Action Plan

The Chief Executive presented a paper to provide Members with an overview of issues raised and action taken following the last Member development session in January 2024 and proposals for the next session scheduled for January 2025.

Key discussion points for the next development session were outlined including the way the Board functions, with a focus on the Sweeney Review of the Board, and on improving the Board's understanding of key elements of PSNI operations. Members were asked to submit their views in writing on these areas and to provide any other feedback by 16 December 2024 to allow time for planning to be completed and for PSNI to provide their input.

A Member asked about the timeline for the Sweeney Review and whether it will be available to Members before the next development session and the Chief Executive advised that discussions are due to take place with DOJ in the coming weeks regarding the availability of the final report.

Members **NOTED** update provided.

A Member asked about the scheduled programme for today's meeting and the management of Board business, including the public session with PSNI given the need for some political Members to leave the Board meeting before 2pm to attend Assembly Committees. The Member asked that consideration be given

to options to manage business differently and it was agreed to include these matters for discussion at future meetings with PSNI and at the Member development event in January 2025.

#### **8.4 Information Technology Arrangements for NIPB Board Members**

The Director of Resources presented a paper for Members to consider a proposal to amend the existing Information Technology (IT) arrangements for Board Members and the options available to ensure the Board is fully up to date and remains compliant with its Data Protection Act responsibilities and the terms and conditions of the cloud-based applications used as part of its day-to-day IT arrangements.

Members were advised that an agreed approach going forward will ensure that as a data controller/ processor the Board has the appropriate IT systems/ processes in place to protect data and the proposed changes will provide a more secure solution for accessing and sharing information electronically to mitigate against the risks of data loss and cyberattack.

The Director of Resources highlighted the areas of potential security vulnerability and the options to be considered as a means of addressing these issues.

The Board was advised of the three available options, with a breakdown of projected net cost for each option, as follows:

1. All Members are provided with secure IT Assist Laptops and Policing Board e-mail accounts with access to e-mail accounts only available on these laptops.
2. Only Independent Members are provided with IT Assist laptops and Policing Board e-mail accounts whilst Board Officials continue to

progress discussions relating to political members using their new NI Assembly Commission devices.

3. No change to existing arrangements for Members and commercial Apple iPad devices issued by the Board remain in place to access third party accounts including Decision Time and Criminal Justice Secure eMail (CJSM).

Option one was highlighted as the preferred option and Members raised the following matters:

- Accessibility options and restrictions for IT Assist issued laptops in respect of logging into personal e-mail accounts and printing documents.
- Practical concerns regarding carrying multiple laptops when 'on the go' and potential to miss e-mail communications if access to Board related e-mails is restricted to one approved device.
- Clarity around whether there will be any changes to the software currently used by the Board or these changes only relate to hardware, and potential security vulnerabilities of connecting a Board issued laptop to the Internet at home.

In response Members were advised that IT Assist will push automatic updates to laptops and other security features on the device will mitigate against cyber risks and minimise risk to Board data.

- Whether current Board issued Apple iPad devices can be upgraded or reissued by IT Assist with data (4G/ 5G) capability and can provide the same security features as the IT Assist laptop equivalent, including push updates. Additionally, whether smart phones meeting the requisite standard could also be considered as a viable option.

Members **NOTED** the update provided and following discussion the Director of Resources agreed to explore the options available for Members to use a different type of device including a smart phone or tablet, instead of an IT Assist laptop, as a way of resolving the key issues of data security and practicality, and an updated paper will be brought to a future Board meeting. **(AP10)**

## **8.5 Section 59 Report and the McCullough Review**

The Chair invited the Board's Human Rights Advisor (HRA) to present a paper to provide Members with information for further consideration and decision on whether to issue a formal request under section 59 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 and, if so, whether to adopt the McCullough Review agreed Terms of Reference or the amendments to those suggested by the Board in August 2024.

The Board's HRA summarised previous discussions at Board meetings in relation to section 59 and the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the McCullough Review and indicated that further clarity was required in respect of the decision to be taken by the Board on these matters.

The Board's HRA advised that Members have been provided with the procedure adopted by the Board in December 2012 for requiring the Chief Constable to submit a report to the Policing Board under section 59 of the 2000 Act, and offered an overview of the determining factors before exercising the power under section 59.

Members were also provided with several options to consider including initiating a section 59 report forthwith, delay a decision until the findings of the McCullough report are made available, and subject to the decision taken at today's meeting, agree the TOR as those adopted by the McCullough Review or the amended TOR suggested by the Board in August 2024.

The Board's HRA advised that his recommendation to the Board was to initiate a section 59 request at this time and to adopt the same TOR of the McCullough Review, to allow for consistency of approach and avoid duplication.

Members expressed their support for the recommendation from the Board's HRA and noted that the option of initiating a section 60 inquiry following receipt of a section 59 request remains available. The Vice Chair also suggested amendments to the draft correspondence to the Chief Constable in relation to the timetable.

Following discussion it was **AGREED** to:

- Issue a formal request under section 59 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 for a report on the surveillance of journalists and others by PSNI, and
- Adopt the McCullough Review's original and current Terms of Reference as part of the request, and
- Issue correspondence to the Chief Constable as formal notice of the request pursuant to section 59 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 subject to amendments suggested by the Vice Chair, with the report to be received by 31 March 2025. **(AP11)**

## **8.6 Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 – Authorisation Procedure**

The Director of Performance presented a paper to advise Members of the recent discussion with the Independent Reviewer of the Justice and Security Act (JSA) that took place at the Board's Performance Committee in November 2024.

The Committee discussed the use of Stop and Search powers and the recommendation made in current and previous reports of the Independent Reviewers that the length of the authorisations that can be made under the Act should be extended from 14 to 28 days.

It was subsequently **AGREED** by Members to:

- **APPROVE** the Performance Committee's recommendation for the Board Chair to write to the Northern Ireland (NI) Secretary of State on this issue, and
- **APPROVE** the draft letter from the Chair to the NI Secretary of State.

## 9. KEY ISSUES OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Members **NOTED** a paper 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 Jon Boutcher, Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) Bobby Singleton, Chief Operating Officer Pamela McCreedy, ACC Ryan Henderson, ACC Davy Beck, Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) People & Organisational Development Clare Duffield, ACO Strategic Planning & Transformation Aldrina Magwood and ACO Corporate Services Mark McNaughten to the meeting.

Following this the Board Chair invited Members questions to the Chief Constable and the following matters were discussed with the PSNI Leadership team:

- Management of ongoing legal cases and the role and work of the recently established senior legal case review panel.

In response the Chief Constable expressed his concern with the overall approach to civil litigation in this jurisdiction and highlighted that many cases have incurred significant administrative and legal costs due to delays and inefficiencies throughout the system.

He noted his support for a collaborative approach involving all relevant agencies to address inefficiencies and advised that a meeting involving key stakeholders is being sought to discuss a strategic approach to the issue and secure necessary funding without compromising other budgetary priorities.

The Chief Operating Officer also explained that the framework for addressing high value cases has evolved to become more robust and detail was provided on the significant progress that has been made in reducing the caseload.

In response to the Member's questions PSNI discussed:

- Challenges in relation to device accessibility, triaging of devices, prioritisation processes and timeframes for accessing devices.
- Resourcing issues, including in relation to availability of detectives, offender monitoring and available technical expertise in this area.
- Collaboration with national agencies, and
- How these risks are reflected on the PSNI's Corporate Risk Register.
- Whether all departing staff and officers are invited to participate in an exit interview and the disparity in completion rates between Catholic and Protestant staff and officers.

In response PSNI confirmed that all voluntary leavers are invited to participate in exit interviews with the aim to identify reasons for departure.

Members were advised that local line managers may offer face-to-face interviews in addition to online surveys to gather more actionable feedback and it was highlighted that efforts are made to learn from the feedback provided during exit interviews and that all outgoing staff are formally recognised with personal letters acknowledging their contributions.

In relation to the disparity between Catholic and Protestant leavers, discussion focused on possible reasons behind the differential in exit interview participation rates, however it was highlighted that, further work would be necessary in order to pinpoint specific causes for the discrepancy.

Following discussion PSNI agreed to provide updated information in relation to exit interview statistics.

The Chair thanked the Chief Constable Jon Boutcher, Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) Bobby Singleton, Chief Operating Officer Pamela McCreedy, ACC Ryan Henderson, ACC Davy Beck, Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) People & Organisational Development Clare Duffield, ACO Strategic Planning & Transformation Aldrina Magwood and ACO Corporate Services Mark McNaughten and they left the meeting.

## **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 responses to Committee written questions for the previous period since the last Board meeting.



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

Members **NOTED** the PSNI responses to written questions and follow up responses to oral questions from the Board meeting in November 2024.

### **12. COMMUNICATION ISSUES**

None.

### **13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

### **14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next full Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 6 February 2024 at 9.30am in James House.

The meeting closed at 3.15pm.

## **Strategic Planning & Governance**

**December 2024**

**Chair**