

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY
17 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 10AM AT THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING
BOARD, WATERSIDE TOWER**

PRESENT:

- Mrs Dolores Kelly (Chair)
- Mr Michael Atkinson
- Mrs Joanne Bunting (Zoom)
- (2) Ms Liz Kimmins
- Mr Tom Buchanan
- Mr Sean Lynch
- (3) Mr Mervyn Storey
- Ms Carmel McKinney (Zoom)
- Mr Mike Nesbitt

PSNI: (1) ACC Alan Todd

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:** Mrs Amanda Stewart – Chief Executive
Mrs Dympna Thornton Director of Partnership
6 Board Officials

**HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVISOR:** (4) Mr John Wadham

- (1) Present only for Item 6.1
- (2) Left the meeting at 11:00am returned at 11:05am
- (3) Left the meeting at 11:05am returned at 11:10am
- (4) Present only for Item 6.2

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from John Blair and Janet Gray. The Committee agreed the agenda for the meeting.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chair asked Members to declare any conflicts of interests arising from the agenda. No Conflicts of Interest were declared. **NOTED**

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 18 June 2020.

It was:-

RESOLVED:-

- That the draft minutes of Partnership Committee meetings held on the 18 June 2020 be approved.

4. UPDATE ON ACTION LOG:

The Director of Partnership provided Members with an update on the Committee's rolling action log.

Action points 8.2, 12.3 15.1, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5, 15.6, 15.7, 15.8 are closed.

AP 9.10 can be closed and updates will be provided to the Director of Partnership by PSNI every 6 weeks.

Officials recommended closing Action point 11.1 following the publishing of a report in September which will be uploaded to Decision Time.

AP 12.4 will be brought to the October meeting.

AP15.2 remains open and is included in the Chairperson Business today

NOTED

5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

5.1 Response letter from the ACC McEwan re: IAG – Covid-19

The Chair advised Members in relation to the response received from ACC McEwan on 3rd September 2020 regarding IAG for Covid-19. Members asked that the length of time it took for the group to meet is noted. **NOTED**

5.2 Response letter from Chair to ACC Donaldson re: Offer of Ops Support Branch Briefing

The Chair referred Members to Action Point 15.2 from the action log and asked that Members agree to Board Officials progressing the offer contained within the response letter from ACC Donaldson. **NOTED**

6. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1 Report on the Performance Plan Measure 2.1.1 (Accessible, Visible, Responsive and Victim Focused)

A Police Performance Monitoring Officer provided a Board analysis paper from the OBA Report Card provided by PSNI against Measure 2.1.1 of the 2020/21 Performance Plan – *Number of people in Northern Ireland who are confident that PSNI is accessible, visible, and responsive and victim focused* and in particular highlighted the limited information provided, and available, on confidence in policing. The Chair recognised the challenge posed to police confidence following the Black Lives Matter protest.

ACC Todd joined the Committee and discussed the following:

- Acknowledgement of staff progression and inevitable Officer movement and how this affects community confidence;
- Difficulties around the absence of the NISRA Omnibus Survey and holding local Commanders to account;
- Focus on three key areas of confidence – Engagement, Effectiveness and Confidence; and

- PSNI have sought to protect Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPT's) during Covid-19.

Members discussed:

- Complaints trends with the Office of the Police Ombudsman NI;
- The potential disparity between public confidence and the PSNI's ability to keep people safe;
- The need to ensure balancing resources and the roll out of the 400 NPT Officers;
- The information required to report online;
- PSNI's confidence in the survey results;
- Sensitivities around the Domestic Abuse Call Back Scheme;
- The effectiveness of crime screening tools;
- The Police Staff/ Police Officer ratio in Contact Management Centres;
- The importance of focussing on crimes with direct personal impact to ensure people feel that their individual problems are being dealt with; and
- PSNI involvement in developing a draft Community Safety Strategy with the DoJ.

ACC Todd provided the following responses:

- Acknowledged complaint trends are almost at an all-time low and believes body worn video has contributed to this as well as increased scrutiny on use of force by the Board;
- Importance of balancing resources to deliver effective response to emergency calls and ensuring local police are dealing with local issues;
- Current information gathered is required to establish reporting history and frequency which may need to be flagged if not followed up;
- Acknowledged that the Omnibus Survey did not provide effective local data due to the sample size and recognised the need to separate Confidence in Policing from Satisfaction with Policing;

- Reported positive feedback to date on the Domestic Abuse Call Back Scheme, however challenged if the PSNI is the appropriate service provider;
- Advised that PSNI are moving towards improving the PSNI's Crime Screening Allocation Model which is needs-based rather than cost focussed;
- Invited Members to visit a Call Management Centre to view arrangements;
- PSNI are aiming to have a ratio of one third Police Officers to two thirds Staff in Contact Management Centres;
- Would recommend that any future surveys should have a greater focus on police performance in terms of crime and effective partnership working; and
- Advised that ACC McEwan is working closely with DoJ Officials on the draft Community Safety Strategy.

The Chair thanked PSNI for their attendance and input and PSNI left the meeting.

6.2 NIPB Thematic Review of the PSNI Response to COVID-19 draft report

The Board's Human Rights Advisor and a Board Official introduced the draft report providing background to the areas covered and timelines for response.

Members discussed:

- Concerns in relation to the police having to enforce the recent Covid-19 regulations and the impact this could have on confidence;
- Further clarity needed in the report to link the Terms of Reference within the draft report, specifically in relation to public confidence.

It was:-

AGREED

- The Executive Summary in the Report will be revised, further comments from Members are requested by Friday 18th September

and that Members will receive a tracked change version of the report by for consideration by the Board at the next meeting on 1 October 2020 **(AP1)**.

6.3 Tackling Paramilitarism – Committee Review (2019/20)

The Engagement Manager provided an update on Board recommendations from the Executive's Action Plan and a Committee Review on the work undertaken in relation to Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality and Organised Crime (2019/20).

Members discussed:

- The delivery of PSNI recommendation B4 on the ground and how PCSP's can be kept informed. Members would welcome an update on this. This could also be brought to the next Joint Committee;
- The variation of reporting on paramilitary activity at a district level; and
- The inclusion of reporting of coercive control issues within the review.

Board officials advised:

- That coercive control issues can be considered as part of the next review as this report covers the 2019/20 period. **NOTED**

It was:-

AGREED

- That the Committee Review on Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality and Organised Crime (2019-20) go to the Board for approval to publish **(AP2)**.

6.4 Draft Responses to DoJ Consultations on Organised Crime

The Engagement Manager provided background and the draft responses to the DoJ consultations on the Draft Organised Crime Strategy for NI (2020-2023) and Policy on Proposals for New Provisions to Tackle Organised Crime in NI.

Members discussed:

- Communication which has taken place between the Board and the Assembly, with the Committee Chair advising that the matter of Unexplained Wealth Orders is moving through the Assembly.

It was:-

AGREED

- That recommendations 4 and 5 from the Tackling Paramilitarism Committee Review (see item 6.3) should be added to the draft letter of response to both consultations and that the draft letter be brought to the Board for approval **(AP3)**.

6.5 Draft Response to DoJ Consultation on an Adult Restorative Justice Strategy

The Director of Partnership provided information and a draft response to the DoJ Consultation on an Adult Restorative Justice Strategy and asked that Members agree the response for Board approval.

It was:-

AGREED

- That the response is approved by Members and will go to the Board for approval of Board Chair's written response **(AP4)**.

6.6 Draft Engagement Strategy

The Engagement Manager provided an update on the amendments made to the draft Engagement Strategy. Members welcomed the inclusion of faith based groups in Annex 1 of the strategy but noted concerns on the potential

disproportionate focus on some groups. Members sought more detail on how the Board will carry out Engagement with groups as part of the Annual Programme of Work and stressed the importance of the Board being seen to be impartial in progressing activity.

It was:-

AGREED

- That the Engagement Strategy be approved and recommended for publication by the Board. **(AP5)**.

6.7 Police Property Fund – Update on Implementation

The Partnership Manager introduced a paper which included an update on:

- The ongoing Covid-19 restrictions which could impact on the fund launch;
- Preparations including the final design documents; and
- A proposal for Members to consider multi calls for the Small Grant Scheme.

Members discussed:

- The potential for a launch in the latter stages of 2020;
- The merit in having several calls for funding;
- The need for clarity in relation to match funding and the eligibility of projects;
- The need for an evaluation of the first call to inform future calls;
- Arranging Small grants launch first in order to inform future calls for funding;
- The subsequent launch of calls for the Larger Grant Scheme; and
- Whether the same applicants can apply for more than one call.

Board officials advised:

- That the majority of other funding programmes do not preclude applicants from applying into multi calls.

It was:-

AGREED

- The fund should launch in late 2020 **(AP6)**;
- To approve the FAQ's document;
- Multi calls are permitted (3 calls per application) on the Small Grant Scheme; and
- The Large Grant Scheme will not launch at this time.

7. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

It was requested that the Chief Constable provide an update on the Neighbourhood Policing Extraction plan, and on any other measures to ensure officers have the time and space for meaningful engagement and partnership working with local communities.

8. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

The Communications Manager advised that it has been proposed that the new style report cards will be published on the Board's website in order to ensure greater transparency regarding information provided to the Board in respect of Policing Plan measures.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

NONE

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was agreed as 15th October 2020.

(Meeting closed at 12.15 PM).

PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORATE

SEPTEMBER 2020

Dolores Keef
Chairperson