

PROBATION BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

BOARD MEETING – 12 JUNE 2015**9.30 AM – CONFERENCE ROOM, PBNI****363rd MEETING – 34th of TENTH TERM OF OFFICE****ATTENDANCE**

Mrs Vilma Patterson (Chairman)	Mr R Mullan (Deputy Chairman)
Mr D Brown	Mrs J Erskine (Items 1-23)
Mr E Jardine	Mrs L Jennett
Mrs M O'Rourke	Dr R Wilson

Ms C Lamont, (Acting) Director
Mr P Doran, Deputy Director
Mr H Hamill, (Acting) Deputy Director
Ms C McCann, Head of Finance
Ms G McGreevy (Item 8)
Mr N O'Neill (Item 19)
Mrs W Rodgers, Personal Secretary (Minutes)

1. OPENING REMARKS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chairman welcomed all Members to the meeting. No Conflicts of Interest were declared.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mrs Shepherd, Dr Wardlow, Mr Rose, Mr O'Hanlon and Mrs Robinson, Head of HR/(Acting) Board Secretary.

3. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

The minutes were accepted as an accurate account of the meeting held on 15 May 2015, with one spelling error on Page 8, Item 21 – Wellbeing.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Paper 81/15)

The Chairman wished to draw attention to a number of items on Matters Arising:

Action point 6 – A meeting has been arranged for Mark Adam to meet with the Board on 26 June 2015 prior to General Purposes Committee. Members were advised that a Special Board meeting will be called to facilitate the meeting.

Action point 15 – The Members' follow up visit with the residents of Crawford Square will be discussed under agenda item 17 - Update on Estates Strategy pertaining to Derry.

Action point 16 – The Head of Finance confirmed that PWC were content that the proposed financial arrangements for sharing premises with the YJA, in Waring Street, did meet requirements.

Matters Arising were noted.

5. CORRESPONDENCE (Paper 82/12)

Three items of correspondence were noted. Members were advised that 5.1, letter from Nick Perry, Permanent Secretary would be discussed more fully under agenda item 23.

Attention was drawn to the letter of thanks received by the (Acting) Director from the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust. Members were advised that the PBNI are to submit a Butler Trust nomination an Area Manager, for his work in relation to Crawford Square and his work with the residents.

6. SICK ABSENCE PROCEDURES (Paper 83/15)

The Deputy Director presented the paper to Members in the absence of the Head of HR. Members were advised that the reason for the amended procedures being presented to the Board for approval was that the Board have a role in the Procedures at a number of points. The Deputy Director advised that the Procedures had been presented to General Purposes Committee on 29 May 2015 and received a recommendation of recommending the Procedures to the Board for approval with no amendments. The Chair of the General Purposes Committee confirmed that the Committee had agreed to recommend the Procedures to the Board for approval.

The Board approved the paper.

7. NNC TERMS AND CONDITIONS (Paper 84/15)

The (Acting) Director presented the paper in the absence of the Head of HR. Members were briefed on the background to the paper which laid out three options. The Members were advised that the preferred option was a formal review of PBNI's NNC Terms and Conditions with a report being brought back to the Board on progress before the end of the 2015 calendar year.

The Board approved the option of a formal review.

8. WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY (Paper 85/15)

The Chairman welcomed Ms McGreevy, Head of Communications to the meeting.

The Head of Communications advised Members that the Whistleblowing Policy had been presented to the General Purposes Committee on 29 May 2015 with a recommendation to the Board for approval with no amendments. Members were advised that considerable

consultation had taken place in the preparation of the Policy and work with the charity Public Concern at Work together with the reference to the Northern Ireland Audit Office Policy had been very useful. It was also confirmed that the unions had no issue with the Policy and that the Policy was consistent with 'good practice'. It was also noted that when the new Board Secretary was appointed the section which refers to the Board Secretary would be updated.

The Chair of the General Purposes Committee confirmed that the Committee had agreed to recommend the Policy to the Board for approval.

Action: The Board approved the Policy. The Head of Communication to provide the Chairman with a draft form of words to send to all PBNI users advising of the new Policy.

The Board approved the paper.

9. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS (Paper 86/15)

The Chairman presented the paper to Members and gave background as to the process and reasons for the review of Standing Orders. The Review of Standing Orders had been carried out in March with the Members and with the assistance of David Nicholl. The Standing Orders had now been finalised with them having been updated to meet new methods of working. The Chairman highlighted the substantive changes. The frequency of committee meetings for the remainder of the Board year were agreed.

The new committees' structure and Terms of Reference were now appended to the paper. It was also confirmed that the Audit Committee's Terms of Reference would be reviewed.

The Board approved the paper.

10. GENERAL PURPOSES UPDATE – (Minutes) – agenda items 10 and 11

The Chair of the General Purposes Committee updated Members on the meeting that took place on 29 May 2015. The Chair of the Committee highlighted the presentation by Laura Duncan of the DOJ on reoffending data. Policies that had been presented to the Committee with recommendations for approval to the Board had been discussed at earlier agenda items of this meeting.

Members were reminded that the next General Purposes Committee on 26 June 2015 will commence at 10 am, following on from the Special Board meeting at 9 am.

The Committee Chairman also expressed his thanks to Mrs Erskine who met with the Church Leaders in Derry on behalf of the Chairman.

The Board noted the update.

12. AUDIT COMMITTEE - (Minutes) – Agenda items 12 and 13

The Deputy Chair of the Audit Committee updated Members in the absence of the Chair who was on leave. Members were advised of the last meeting which took place on 29

May 2015 with the purpose of approving the Annual Report and Accounts. The Deputy Chair of the Committee thanked the Head of Finance and her staff for their work noting that the final Accounts had been completed and approved by the end of May 2015 which was a significant achievement. Attention was brought to the 'limited' assurance given to the Case Management System by Internal Audit. Internal Audit had been supportive in this assurance and as an action point from the meeting it was agreed that the Chair of the Committee was to write to the Department with the Committee's concerns, it was confirmed that a letter had been sent. The Case Management System will be discussed under agenda item 21 of this meeting.

It was confirmed by the Head of Finance that the Accounting Officer had signed the accounts on 1 June 2015 and that she was awaiting C&AG's signature on the certificate. The Accounts will be laid before the Assembly before summer recess on 4 July 2015.

Members were advised that the next meeting of the Committee will be on 11 September 2015.

The Board noted the update.

14. GUIDANCE ON TRANSPORTING SENSITIVE INFORMATION VIA SECURE CASE (Paper 87/15)

The Chairman presented the paper and briefed Members on the background and requirements to comply with the procedures contained in the paper.

Action: All Members to complete the form on page 9 of the document and return signed forms to Secretariat.

The Board noted the paper and action point.

15. TPMO UPDATE (Paper 88/15)

The (Acting) Deputy Director advised Members that they had been previously updated on TPMOs in May 2014 and that he wished to advise Members of the developments since then.

The (Acting) Deputy Director took Members through the paper by way of an update. Members were advised that regular practice meetings were held with all staff who are involved in TPMO cases, chaired by Terry Doherty, Assistant Director. Discussion ensued on the complex and challenging area of work that TPMOs present.

Action: There is to be a further strategic discussion at a future Board meeting.

The Board noted the paper

16. NIPS OPERATING MODEL (Paper 100/15)

The (Acting) Deputy Director advised Members that the paper brought to the May Board was deferred from decision due to ongoing correspondence from NIPS. The paper presented to the Board at the previous meeting was for noting; however the Board was requested to make a decision today due to further correspondence received from NIPS. Members were asked to read the paper for decision at today's meeting in conjunction with

the paper at May's Board meeting. The (Acting) Deputy Director took the Members through the presented paper in detail and explained the tables A and B of proposed delivery models. Discussion ensued on the: financial and staffing implications for service delivery. There was discussion around PBNI's statutory duties and the risks that this involved.

The Board were asked to accept the model proposed. This was agreed with the proviso that the Chairman formally draws the Minister's attention to the Board's concerns in writing. The Chairman thanked the Senior Team for their work on the Model.

Action: Chairman to write to the Minister.

There was discussion on the impact of staff and the level of engagement with offenders with reference to Parole Commissioners, PRT etc. The (Acting) Director confirmed that she was looking at this piece of work and that she would write to Brendan McGuigan as this was an operational issue.

Action: (Acting) Director to write to Brendan McGuigan of CJINI.

17. UPDATE ON THE ESTATES STRATEGY PERTAINING TO LONDONDERRY (Paper 89/15)

At the May Board meeting Members asked for an update on the Estates Strategy pertaining to Derry be brought to the June Board. The (Acting) Deputy Director took the Members through the background to the strategy as it related for Derry. It was confirmed that the strategy includes planning to reduce the estate in Derry from two offices to one office to a neutral, central location. However the DOJ strategy of sharing premises needed to be taken into account. It was advised that DOJ were particularly looking at the North West for a larger criminal justice hub but this could be at least 5 years away.

It was agreed that due to circumstances with potential budget pressures for 2016/17, and due to matters relating to Crawford Square there was a need to look at the Derry estate at an earlier opportunity.

The Head of Finance took Members through the Business Case process and advised that a meeting had been arranged for next week with SIB to commence the business case process with a timeline that may take up to six months.

Discussion ensued on finance and estate priorities. Mrs Erskine, who had met with the Church Leaders in Derry, commented that she would be keen to see alternative accommodate found. The Chairman thanked Mrs Erskine for attending the meeting with the Church Leaders on her behalf.

It was agreed that Estate Strategy for Derry was to be progressed and Members would be kept up to date with developments.

The Board approved the paper.

18. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER(S) – (Paper 90)

The (Acting) Deputy Director took the Members through a summary the 2014-15 Quarter 4 Risk Register which had been endorsed by the Audit Committee.

Members were advised of the new format to the 2015-2016 Risk Register and drew attention to page 5 which listed six risks. There are two new risks which have been added referring to: not living within budget for 2015-16, and a risk in respect of the PIMS Case Management Systems. Risks 1, 3, 4 and 5 were carried forward from last year.

The (Acting) Deputy Director advised Members that it was prudent to bring the Risk Register to the Board early in the year and that it would be presented quarterly as an update. Mrs Erskine thanked the Mr Hamill and Ms Dougherty for their work on the Strategic Risk Register.

The Chairman commended the Audit Committee, and Risk Owners, commented that the Register was a more dynamic document which should assist in risk identification and management of the strategic risks. It was confirmed that the last page on the log of closed risks will be populated.

Mrs Erskine advised that she was happy to go through the register in more detail with any Members who wish to do so.

The Board noted the paper.

19. REPORT ON NON-COMPLIANCE DUE TO CLOSURE OF REPORTING CENTRES
(Paper 91/15)

The Chairman welcomed Mr O'Neill to the meeting.

As an action from the Board meeting in August 2014, Mr O'Neill presented to the Board analysis of non-compliance due to the closure of reporting centres. The Members were asked to note several caveats to the quantitative analysis. The analysis shows that there has not been any increase in non-compliance; Mr O'Neill also received feedback from the Area Managers on the impact of closure of reporting centres. In Rural South there was a perception of an increase in warnings although this could be down to a reduction in travel assistance.

The Chairman commented that this was helpful analysis in light of the budget cuts and that the ability to track the changes in general for example by gender, age etc would be of interest to the Board. Mr Jardine asked if it would be possible to use DOJ to analyse low/medium offenders, (in the context after the NIPS/PBNI review) in relation to reoffending rates as this was a critical area for PBNI.

Action: Update report on non-compliance due to closure of reporting centres to be presented to the Board in May 2016

The Board noted the paper.

20. QUARTERLY UPDATE ON WORKFORCE MODERNISATION REPORT (Paper 92/15)

In the absence of the Head of HR, the (Acting) Director presented the paper to Members. One point to note, the draft Voluntary Exit Scheme has not been developed as stated in the paper due to the absence of the Head of HR; this will be taken forward on her return. The Programme is on target with a Programme Board meeting taking place at the end of June 2015. The outworkings of this will be brought to the Board as soon as possible and the (Acting) Director confirmed that the work is in line with the Board's work on Organisational Development work on SMT.

The Board noted the paper.

21. CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM UPDATE (Paper 93/15)

The Deputy Director presented the paper advising that the Members had been provided with updates over the last number of months. Although the paper is listed for noting, the Board's agreement on direction of travel would be helpful. Members were briefed on progress to date and option 3 as laid out on page 2 of the paper. A key point is the remote access although cost would be the determining issue. Members were advised of the number of systems that PBNI could avail of through IT Assist which would benefit the Organisation.

There was discussion on the finance relating to the use of PRISM and also the risks involved with moving to the Prison's system. It was noted that a Memorandum of Understanding and a Service Level Agreement may be required to ensure there is clarity on outcomes for PBNI and control measuring within our specification.

The Board agreed that the updated Strategic Outline Case could go ahead and noted the paper. The Board will be given a further update at the August meeting.

The Board noted the paper.

22. ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2014-15 (Paper 94/15)

The Head of Finance advised that the Deputy Chair of the Audit Committee had updated Members during her report from the Audit Committee under agenda item 12 of this meeting. The Audit Committee had approved the final accounts with no major changes – in short no figures were changed. The Accounting Officer signed the accounts on 1 June 2015 and they are now with the C&AG for signature. It was noted that the Internal Auditor had offered a 'substantial' assurance and the Board Members congratulated the Executive Team on this achievement and getting the accounts to that position.

The Board noted the paper

23. FINANCE OUTTURN – MAY 2015 (Paper 95/15)

The Head of Finance advised Members that there was an underspend of £147k, year to date, mainly due to staffing costs (filling vacant posts), due to the uncertainty of the NIPS budget reduction. The underspend will be reduced as staff leave prisons and fill vacant posts. The impact in NIPS decision would result in a pressure of £24k. Prompt payment was down to 78% due to AccountNI reduced staffing last month. Members discussed the

issue of AccountNI and it was agreed that the Head of Finance Department expressed their concerns.

Action: The Head of Finance is to write to the Department to express concern over the service provided by AccountNI and the issue of prompt payment.

The Members discussed the correspondence received by all DOJ Accounting Officers from Nick Perry, Permanent Secretary on the 3 June 2015 which advised that all discretionary spend is to be suspended and that there is likely to be significant in-year cuts. Each Accounting Officer was to return details of discretionary spend to the Department for decision. The Head of Finance took the Members through the paper and discussion ensued. The (Acting) Director advised that more information will be brought to another Board meeting for noting when feedback has been received from the Department.

Action: Update on discretionary spend and in-year cuts to be provided as necessary to a forthcoming Board meeting after feedback from DOJ.

The Board noted the paper

24. PROGRAMME AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT UPDATE (Paper 96/15)

The Head of Finance advised that Programmes and Project updates had been covered under earlier agenda items.

The Board noted the paper.

25. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION (Paper 97/15)

The Chairman requested that items be taken by exception only.

The Deputy Director advised Members that the caseload had decreased slightly but the fluctuation in numbers had now steadied. Sick Absence is now being projected at 12 days which is an increase on the previous year. Personnel appointments were highlighted to the Members.

The Board noted the update.

26. PROGRAMME OF VISITS AND BUSINESS (Paper 98/15)

The Chairman advised Members that her meeting with Anthony Harbinson did not take place on 9 June 2015 and had been rescheduled for the 17 June 2015.

The (Acting) Director advised Members of Nick Perry's visit to the Newry Office where he met with a client and sat in on a PSR interview. He also met with Jill Grant and Paul Devlin, Area Managers, and went to see a community service placement. The (Acting) Director wished to thank the Area Managers for their arrangements for the visit. The meeting the International Red Cross on 5 June 2015 did not take place and needs to be rearranged.

Mrs Jennett updated Members on her and Mr Rose's visit to Magilligan. She advised that it had been a worthwhile visit and very informative, highlighting three areas of work to the Members: Probation Officers are keen to remain working in prisons as it is proven to be

the most effective way to support offenders and ensure a positive outcome. With regard to Parole Commissioner Reports, Members were advised that as a result of the input provided to the Parole Commission by Probation Officers being of such an in-depth and high quality, Probation Officers have been asked to provide further assistance in the decision making. If carried out, this would lead to increased workload for Probation Officers and therefore Unions and staff have raised capacity concerns. An area of significant additional challenge is in Magilligan finding accommodation/housing for sex offenders who are due to be released.

Both Members wished to place on record how impressed they were with the dedication and commitment of the staff.

The Board noted the paper.

27. BOARD WORK PLAN 2015 (Paper 99/15)

The Board noted the paper.

28. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None discussed

29. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS (Verbal)

- 29.1 The Chairman advised Members that the advertisement for the Board Secretary post was in both the Belfast Telegraph and the Irish News.
- 29.2 The meeting with Mark Adam who is the lead in the DOJ Reform Programme, has been set for the 26 June 2015 at 9 am. A Special Board has been called to facilitate this meeting. To ensure a quorum for the Special Board there is a requirement for six members to attend. Members were asked to advise of their availability as soon as possible to ensure a quorum. Mr Brown advised he needed to leave early on the day.
- 29.3 General Purposes Committee have three policies being brought to the Committee for recommendation. The Minute Pad training will also take place on the day; however the Social Media training will be deferred to a later date.
- 29.4 The Chairman will advise Members as to which of the new committees they will be sitting on, once their preferred options had been received.
- 29.5 The Chairman advised Members of her intention to arrange her annual meeting with the Minister for July.

30. (ACTING) DIRECTOR'S / BOARD SECRETARY'S BUSINESS (Verbal)

- 30.1 The (Acting) Director updated Members on her meeting with the Lord Chief Justice and advised that he is looking at alternatives to custodial sentences of up to 12 months. The Lord Chief Justice would like to run a pilot on an enhanced combination order instead of custody which the Deputy Director has been working on. Members were advised the Justice Delivery Group would be meeting next week and the Lord Chief Justice will be championing the paper

which will be presented by the Deputy Director. The Members endorsed this approach.

Action: A presentation is to be made to the Board on the pilot in August.

- 30.2 The (Acting) Director advised Members that she represents PBNI on the Safeguarding Board. Members were given information of a review being undertaken by the Minister of Health; this will be a detailed report and will be launched by the end of this month. There should not be any involvement to PBNI work.

The Chairman congratulated the (Acting) Director on the work with the Lord Chief Justice.

The Meeting closed at 12.45 pm.

31. CLOSED SESSION

32. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would take place on Friday 14 August 2015 at 9.00 am, PBNI Headquarters, Conference Room.

Vilma Patterson
Chairman

Date