

PROBATION BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

BOARD MEETING – 18 SEPTEMBER 2015**9.30 AM – CONFERENCE ROOM, PBNI****366th MEETING – 37th of TENTH TERM OF OFFICE****ATTENDANCE**

Mrs Vilma Patterson (Chairman)	Mr R Mullan (Deputy Chairman)
Mr D Brown	Mrs J Erskine
Mr E Jardine	Mrs L Jennett
Mr T O'Hanlon	Mr D Rose
Mrs P Shepherd	Dr M Wardlow
Dr R Wilson	

Mr P Doran, Deputy Director
 Mr H Hamill, (Acting) Deputy Director
 Mrs G Robinson, Head of HR
 Mrs C Teggart, Head of Finance
 Mrs G McGreevy, Head of Communications (Item 13)
 Mr M Cox, Board Secretary
 Mr S Hamilton, (Acting) Assistant Director (Item 3)
 Mrs C Hunter, Area Manager (Item 3)
 Mrs A Abraham, Personal Secretary Manager (Minutes)

MINUTEPAD REFRESHER TRAINING

David Braziel, Team Solutionz conducted MinutePad refresher training prior to the meeting.

1. OPENING REMARKS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

A Conflict of Interest was declared by Mr Brown for item 11.2.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mrs M O'Rourke and Ms Lamont, (Acting) Director.

3. RESET PROGRAMME (Interim Report on Intensive Resettlement and Rehabilitation Programme) - Presentation

Mr Hamilton provided Members with a presentation on the background and progress of the Intensive Resettlement and Rehabilitation Programme (Reset), highlighting the impact of Reset on Recall (benchmarked against current recall figures). To date, good progress has been made and early indications are that Reset is making a significant contribution to the rehabilitation and resettlement of offenders subject to PBNI post custody supervision. A full evaluation will be carried out on the pilot.

Mrs Hunter gave examples of two cases with positive feedback from offenders. PBNI will be interviewing for a Volunteer Co-ordinator in late September 2015.

Members commented on the good work to date, a good example of the Voluntary Sector working with the Public Sector. One Member suggested links be made with Community Groups to assist with Community Care Grants and assistance from Food Banks.

Mr Hamilton's paper is available to Members through the Board Secretary.

4. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the Board meeting on 14 August 2015 were accepted as an accurate account of the meeting with a number of agreed amendments.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Paper 1118/15)

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

Action Point 1 – Review of Audit Committee name – Mrs Erskine confirmed this would be covered under Item 10 Update from the Deputy Chair of the Audit Committee.

Action Point 4 – The Chairman advised that Ms Yiasouma would not be available for the October Board meeting but had suggested meeting with the Chairman and several Board Members later in October. The Board Secretary agreed to seek interest from Members to attend. The Chairman confirmed ACC Chris Noble would be attending the October Board meeting.

Action: Board Secretary to seek interest from Members to attend meeting with Ms Yiasouma

The Board noted Matters Arising.

6. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – VERBAL

The Chairman congratulated those Members who had been reappointed for a further 3-year term and drew attention to the DoJ's press release of 17 September 2015 acknowledging the work of outgoing Members. The Chairman agreed to circulate an e-mail regarding a lunch to mark the end of the outgoing term during November. Members were reminded of the Accountability Review meeting on Wednesday 7 October. It was agreed that the October Board meeting would focus on more strategic issues.

The Chairman referred to discussions with the Permanent Secretary on 9 September 2015.

The Board noted the update.

7. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE – VERBAL

Mr Doran updated the meeting on behalf of the (Acting) Director.

- Senior Managers and Board Members had received an invitation from NIHRC to a consultation event in respect of their strategic plan on Wednesday 23 September 2015, 9.30 am.

- The (Acting) Director's meeting with the Permanent Secretary and the Minister of 16 September 2015 had been rearranged to 23 September 2015.
- Mr Doran updated Members on the seminar on Enhanced Combination Orders (ECO) to the Bar Council, PPS and Law Society on 2 September 2015, attended by senior managers. ECO was also referred to positively in the Lord Chief Justice's Speech: Opening of the Legal Year at the Royal Courts of Justice on 7 September 2015. The ECO pilot will be launched by PBNI on 1 October 2015.

8. CORRESPONDENCE (Paper 119/15)

One item of correspondence was noted – a letter of 18 August 2015 from the DoJ's Deputy Director, Finance regarding the revised in-year budget 2015-16. Mrs Teggart confirmed that the October 2015 monitoring round had been deferred to the same time as the January 2016 monitoring round and therefore final budget for 2015-16/in-year cuts are not likely to be advised until then.

9. CORPORATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE – (Minutes/Verbal – 4 September 2015)

The Deputy Chairman updated Members on the first meeting of the Corporate Resources Committee held on 4 September 2015. The minutes of the meeting should be amended, noting Mr O'Hanlon's apologies.

Discussion took place on the Electronic Board/Senior Management Solution, MinutePad. A feasibility pilot for Phase 2 of the development of the functionality of MinutePad is to be established. The Chairman, Mr O'Hanlon and Mrs Erskine volunteered to participate in the pilot.

Action: It was agreed to establish a feasibility pilot on Phase 2 of PBNI's Electronic Board/Senior Management Solution, made up of Board Members and Senior Managers.

The Board noted the update.

10. AUDIT COMMITTEE UPDATE – (Verbal – 11 September 2015)

The Deputy Chairman updated Members on the Audit Committee of 11 September 2015. The revised Strategic Risk Register had been well received by Members and staff involved were thanked for their contribution. It was agreed that a Best Practice Guide on Risk would be included in the Induction pack for new Members.

The Audit Committee noted DoJ's 'satisfactory' rating on the Complaints Audit but suggested that this should have been given a 'substantive' rating, given that the three recommendations were level 3.

Members noted the letter of 8 September 2015 from Anthony Harbinson supporting the funding of a new PBNI Case Management System, in principle, however not guaranteeing availability of funding and confirming it will now be placed on the Departmental Risk Register.

It was agreed the Audit Committee Terms of Reference would be reviewed when new Members are elected to the Committee.

The Board noted the update.

11.1 VOLUNTARY EXIT SCHEME (Paper 120/15)

Mr Doran informed Members that the business case for a Voluntary Exit Scheme (VES) had been prepared despite lack of confirmed budget and possible further in-year cuts. However, the Management Executive Team considered it was an opportune time to review staff structures in line with the Workforce Modernisation programme.

Mrs Teggart talked through the key points of the paper and the business case. The purpose of the scheme is to achieve value for money through a reduction in payroll savings over the next spending review period and beyond.

She explained that PBNI proposes to run a VES similar to the NICS scheme, however unlike the NICS exit scheme, NILGOSC, PBNI's pension scheme, does not allow for the compensation payment to be used to buy out any reduction for early payment of their pension. Legal advice had been sought in this regard. The draft Business Case has a list of 9 options these were further explored and short-listed down to 5. Based on the level of savings and risk, the preferred option is Option 7 – One year scheme with no recruitment however the actual number of staff , who could exit (if the business case is approved) will depend on value for money and affordability.

The business case is currently in draft. Given the complexities of the pension element, PBNI does anticipate further revisions to the business case when it is submitted to DoJ and/or DFP. DoJ are currently undertaking a benchmarking exercise with other organisations across the public sector, who also have a NILGOSC pension scheme, to inform the PBNI business case.

The final business case will be presented to the Board for approval in October before final submission to the DoJ.

Action: It was agreed to approve the business case for the Voluntary Exit Scheme for submission to the DoJ and/or DFP for their consideration and review at the October meeting.

11.2 JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTRE ORDERS (Paper 127/15)

Mr Brown had expressed a Conflict of Interest and left the meeting.

Mr Doran explained that due to the Policy and Practice Committee not meeting over the summer, the paper on Juvenile Justice Centre Orders had been brought directly to the Board.

The Board received a report on the pilot scheme which had been run for 12 months, 1 October 2014 – 1 October 2015. It was proposed to extend the pilot for a further 12 months.

The Board approved the extension of the pilot scheme for 12 months from 1 October 2015. Mrs McIlroy, Assistant Director, will attend the November 2015 Board meeting with an evaluation report.

Action: The Board approved the extension of the pilot scheme for a further 12 months from 1 October 2015.

Mr Brown returned to the meeting.

12. BOARD INDUCTION (Verbal)

Discussion took place around the format of the Board Induction. Members agreed to a similar format to the 2013 Induction, particularly the visits to local offices. The Chairman indicated provisional dates of 14 and 15 January 2016 and proposal to discuss any suggestions with new and existing Members in advance.

13. COMMUNICATION QUARTERLY STRATEGY UPDATE (Paper 121/15)

Mrs McGreevy presented the Quarter 1 Communication Strategy Update paper highlighting the key areas of engagement and proposed areas of development. A business case for the development of an app for Community Service staff is currently being drafted and there are plans to set up a resource directory on staff mobile phones. Mrs McGreevy requested that the new Board should consider how Members could make best use of Twitter and LinkedIn. In response to a question on how feedback on external communications is captured, Mrs McGreevy confirmed this was covered in the annual Communications Audit at the end of the financial year and the Communications Department maintains a stakeholder database and list of the number of PBNI mentions on Hansard. Consideration will be given to include an omnibus survey in the new Communications Strategy.

The Board noted the paper.

14. FINANCE OUTTURN – AUGUST 2015 – (Paper 122/15)

Mrs Teggart gave a summary of the August 2015 Outturn paper. A number of items highlighted were: the year to date underspend in pay is decreasing as the vacant posts have been filled and the NIPS staff transfers actioned. A re-profiling exercise will not take place until January monitoring as the October monitoring has been delayed. Underspends in non-staff costs relate to the timing of maintenance work and travel which is expected in later months. The 2015-16 capital plan was discussed - spend is on target. PBNI is awaiting paperwork from HMRC to progress VAT registration from 1 April 2014 on non-business related activities. A further meeting is taking place with HMRC on PBNI's VAT position. Prompt payment is 91% down from 95% in July 2014, largely due to annual leave over the summer.

The Board noted the paper.

15. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION REPORT (Paper 123/15)

Items taken by exception only.

Mr Hamill referred to pages 9 and 10 in relation to caseload figures, noting that these were comparable to July 2014 and that Community Service orders showed a 11% increase on the previous year. The number of reports completed was 13% lower than July 2014, reflecting decline in Court activity.

Mr Doran informed Members of PBNI's meeting with the NICS Head of IT in relation to the possibility of PBNI's use of IT shared services.

Mr Doran informed Members of PBNI's response to a DoJ led consultation on the Criminal Records Filtering Review Mechanism, copies of which can be provided to Members, on request.

The Board noted the paper.

16. PROGRAMME AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT UPDATE Paper 124/15)

Items taken by exception only.

Mrs Teggart referred to the progress made during August 2015 on SIB/DoJ review of the Crawford Square/Limavady Road and the Andersonstown/Magherafelt leases. The Chairman drew attention to the Green RAG status of the Inspire and Workforce Modernisation Programmes.

The Board noted the paper.

17. PROGRAMME OF VISITS AND BUSINESS (Paper 125/15)

The Chairman informed Members of her discussions with Mark Omerod, Chief Executive of UK Supreme Court, formerly of the Probation Association, on 7 September 2015 and advised that her meeting with Mark Larmour, Director at NIO, was cancelled at short notice and would be rearranged.

The Board noted the paper.

18. BOARD WORK PLAN 2015-2016 (Paper 126/15)

The October Board meeting to take the form of a Strategic Board meeting, considering emerging strategic issues and reflections from outgoing Board Members on their experience with PBNI.

The Board noted the paper.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman welcomed Mr Michael Cox, Board Secretary, to his first PBNI Board meeting. The Chairman thanked Mrs Abraham for taking the Board minutes.

It was agreed that future Board meetings would be paperless utilising the MinutePad system with some hard copies being available on the day.

20. BOARD SECRETARY'S BUSINESS

The Board Secretary reminded Members to claim their expenses.

21. CLOSED SESSION

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would take place on Friday 16 October 2015 at 9.30 am, PBNI Headquarters, Conference Room.

Vilma Patterson
Chairman

Date