

## PROBATION BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

**BOARD MEETING – 13 February 2015****9.30 AM – CONFERENCE ROOM, PBNI HEADQUARTERS****359th MEETING – 30th 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 B McAllister	Mr D Rose
Mrs M O'Rourke	Dr M Wardlow
Dr R Wilson	

Ms C Lamont, (Acting) Director  
Mr P Doran, Deputy Director  
Mrs G Robinson, (Acting) Board Secretary/Head of Human Resources  
Ms C McCann, Head of Finance  
Mr B McCutcheon, Head of IT (items 23,24)  
Mrs W Rodgers, Personal Secretary (Minutes)

**1. OPENING REMARKS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The Chairman welcomed all attendees to the meeting. Members were advised that the Draft Organisational Development SMT Review Report will be taken under Closed Session at the end of the meeting, followed by lunch for Mr McAllister as he was leaving to take up a post as part of the United Nations' Standby Mediation Team.

Mr McAllister had been asked to say a few words of reflection at the end of the meeting.

No Conflicts of Interest were declared.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from, Mrs P Shepherd and Mr H Hamill, (Acting) Deputy Director.

**3. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES**

The Minutes from the Board Meeting held on 16 January 2015 were agreed with the following amendments:

- Remove second regretfully in the first paragraph of the Opening Remarks and Conflicts of Interest.
- Page 4 under item 14 - The Chairman and (Acting) Director will continue to engage with key stakeholders to broaden understanding of our role in rehabilitation and social welfare in prison.

The Minutes of the Special Board Meeting held on 30 January 2015 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Minutes of the Closed Session held on 16 January 2015 were agreed during the Closed Session held 13 February 2015.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Paper 16/15)

Members were asked to note the Matters Arising, with all actions either in progress or completed.

The (Acting) Director updated the Members on Action 11 and advised that discussions were still ongoing with the Director General of Prisons on the Terms of Reference for the Review of the Service Level Agreement. The (Acting) Director is due to meet with the Director General, week commencing 16 February 2015, to agree the Terms of Reference and advised of the discussions that had already taken place and the Deputy Director had met with the Director of Rehabilitation.

5. CORRESPONDENCE (Paper 17/15)

The Chairman brought attention to the letter received from NIPSA in December with reference to the Review of the Senior Management Team.

The Chairman asked Members to note the correspondence with the Minister and her response back to the Minister. The Members were briefed by the Chairman on her meeting with the Minister and his Special Advisor, Richard Good.

Members noted all correspondence.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY MAIN POLICY (Paper 18/15)

The Head of Human Resources advised Members that the Policy had been through General Purposes Committee on 30 January 2015 with one Member requesting that Wellbeing be inserted into the Policy; the Head of Human Resources advised that this had been done.

The Chair of the General Purposes Committee advised that the Committee had recommended approval of the Policy to the Board.

The Board approved the Policy.

7. PERSONAL SAFETY POLICY (Paper 19/15)

The Head of Human Resources gave the Members a brief background to the Policy. Members were advised that the Policy had been through General Purposes Committee on 30 January 2015 with no issues or amendments. The Chair of the General Purposes Committee advised that the Committee had recommended approval of the Policy to the Board.

The Board approved the Policy.

8. VICTIMS POLICY (Paper 20/15)

The Deputy Director advised Members that the Policy had been through General Purposes Committee on 30 January 2015 with one Member requesting the correct usage of apostrophes; the Deputy Director advised that this had been done.

The Chair of the General Purposes Committee advised that the Committee had recommended approval of the Policy to the Board.

The Board approved the Policy.

9. CLOSURE OF STRABANE REPORTING CENTRE (Paper 21/15)

The Deputy Director briefed Members in the absence of the (Acting) Deputy Director of the background to the paper and the cost savings which would be achieved together with the current footfall of the building. The Members were asked to approve the closure/lease buy-out of the Strabane Reporting Centre.

The Board approved the paper in principle, pending the outcome of the lease buy-out negotiations with the landlord.

10. BUSINESS PLAN 2015-16 (Paper 22/15)

The Deputy Director advised Members that the Draft Business Plan was being brought to the Board for their input. The Members were given a brief background together with the process used to create the Business Plan for 2015-16. There were 10 objectives with a mixture of operational practice and organisational issues – seven objectives concerned operational practice. It was advised that once the Board agree the final revision of the Business Plan, senior managers would work with middle managers on the action steps and then report back to the Board on the RAG status of each objective on a quarterly basis.

The Deputy Director took the Members through each objective with a brief summary of each. Feedback from the Members included: one Member wished to see prisons review within the objectives; another Member asked for the need to focus on the equality issues.

The Chairman noted that the Business Plan was both ambitious and achievable. She stated that it was progressive in this time of budget pressures and she congratulated the staff involved. Members looked forward to the final plan being presented to the Board in March.

The Board approved the paper in principle with an updated version to be discussed for approval at the March Board Meeting.

11. GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – ANY OTHER BUSINESS – (Agenda items 11 and 12 - minutes)

The Chair of the General Purposes Committee advised Members that the last meeting of the Committee had been held on 30 January 2015. The draft minutes were presented for

the Members information although the Chair wished to add further information to the minutes on the presentation by Virginia McVea, Director of Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. The Chair brought attention to the usefulness of the presentation and in particular the discussion on victims and suggested that this topic would require revisiting. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for the 27 February 2015. Members were advised that there would be a presentation by Mark Nicholson, Area Manager, North Belfast on Reducing Offending Partnerships (ROP) and that the Committee will be looking at absenteeism again.

**Action: The Chair of General Purposes Committee to provide a note to the minutes on the presentation from the Director of NIHRC.**

**Action: The (Acting) Director to follow up on the content of the presentation with the Director of NIHRC.**

The Board noted the update.

### 13. AUDIT COMMITTEE – ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda items 13 and 14 - minutes)

Draft minutes from the Committee meeting held on 23 January 2015 were presented to Members for information. The Chair of the Audit Committee highlighted a number of points to the Members from the minutes including: the (Acting) Director to report back reference additional staff with accountancy qualifications and DOJ's conflict of interest reference the Case Management System as they are providing the monies. PWC have been appointed as the External Auditors and had attended the Audit Committee meeting. It was highlighted that the Committee will meet twice in May to sign off the Annual Accounts so there would be no requirement for the scheduled meeting in June.

It was noted that from the Audit Log almost all priorities have been addressed.

Members were advised that Mrs Erskine had met with the (Acting) Deputy Director to redesign the Strategic Risk Register which will be brought to the next Audit Committee for consideration.

The question was asked if the Audit Risk Register is for noting or recommending, this requires clarification.

As Mr McAllister has resigned from the Board there is a need for a replacement member and the Chairman asked for any volunteers for this post to approach her.

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for 6 March 2015 and the Chair asked Members of attendance to ensure that there was a quorum.

The Board noted the update.

### 15. REMUNERATION COMMITTEE (Agenda items 15 and 16 Verbal)

The Chairman advised Members that the Remuneration Committee had met on the morning of the 13 February 2015 prior to the Board Meeting.

The Board noted the update.

17. SENIOR MANAGEMENT AND BOARD MEMBERS' REGISTER OF INTEREST (Paper 23/15)

The Members were advised that if there were any changes to be made then they should notify the (Acting) Board Secretary. It was noted that one Member had changes to be made.

The Senior Management Register of Interest was also noted.

The Board noted the paper.

18. WORKFORCE MODERNISATION PROGRAMME (Paper 24/15)

The (Acting) Director briefed the Members on the planned approach for this work.

There was discussion on the approach of the work and the Chairman commended the (Acting) Director for the planned and strategic approach taken in the paper presented to the Board.

The Board noted the paper.

19. DRAFT REPORT ON ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SMT REVIEW (Paper 25/15)

This item was discussed during a closed session at the end of the meeting.

20. JANUARY FINANCIAL OUTTURN AND COST REDUCTION (Paper 26/15)

It was noted to the Members that this paper was received on 12 February 2015 due to the timing of the closing of accounts and the audit recommendation that the most up to date accounts were to be brought to the Board.

The Head of Finance took the Members through the paper presented and highlighted a number of areas to Members by way of an update. The Head of Finance took the Members through the expenditure lines with explanations.

Members noted the outcome of the HRMC VAT issue and congratulated the Head of Finance on this.

The Board noted the paper.

21. BUSINESS CASES, PROJECT AND PROGRAMME UPDATE (Paper 27/15)

The Head of Finance updated Members on the current situation and progress of business cases and projects.

The Board noted the paper.

22. BUDGET 2015-2016 (Verbal)

The (Acting) Director received a letter from Nick Perry, Permanent Secretary confirming a budgetary reduction of 9.2% - letter tabled to Members at the meeting. Within the letter it asked to return the savings plans under 9.2% to the DOJ and the equality impact of

Section 75. The deadline for this is the 26 February 2015. Currently the preparation of the 2015-16 budget detail is being set up and will be presented to the Board March.

### 23. CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (Verbal)

The Head of IT briefed the Members on the latest position with regard to the Case Management System. There had been a meeting with CPD, Prisons and YJA to discuss the possibility of using the prison system PRISM.

There was discussion around contracts and the Head of IT explained the position and that PBNI would require add-ons to the PRISM system. NIPS has recently extended their contract with their supplier (formerly Sopra, now Sopra-Steria) until March 2018.

**Action: A paper is to be brought to the April Board on the outcome of discussion.**

The Board noted the update.

### 24. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION (Paper 28/15)

The Management of Information paper was deferred to the General Purposes Committee due to time constraints at this meeting. Topics to be discussed were staffing levels, sickness rates and caseload statistics.

The Head of IT brought attention of page 8 of the paper and updated Members on the procurement of the tablets for Board and Senior Managers. It transpired that an extra piece of software was required to ensure remote wiping of a device in the event of loss or theft of a tablets. Members were assured that this was not included in the original tender and that CPD guidance and advice is being followed.

The Case Management update was discussed under item 23.

The Board noted that the paper was deferred to General Purposes Committee on this occasion.

### 25. PROGRAMME OF VISITS AND BUSINESS (Paper 29/15)

The Board noted the paper

### 26. BOARD OBJECTIVES AND WORKPLAN 2014-15 (Paper 30/15)

The Board noted the paper.

### 27. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

- a) Members were advised that the Justice Committee briefing on 25 February 2015 has been deferred as the Committee had changed their location to NIACRO. The Head of Communications is to come back with alternative dates and the Chairman suggested that the Justice Committee holds a session at PBNI.
- b) Members were advised that Mrs Jennett will be representing the Board at the Investors in People interviews which are being held on 24 February 2015.

- c) Members were advised that they would no longer be receiving documentation on Media Coverage as this contract had ceased.
- d) Members were advised of the Chairman’s intention of holding the March Board and a Board Planning day off site on the 13 March 2015. Members were asked to advise Mrs Rodgers of their availability.

**28. DIRECTOR’S /SECRETARY’S BUSINESS**

- a) The (Acting) Director advised that PBNI had been asked to participate in a Talkback session on Prisons on 4 March 2015, with the Minister and Director General of Prisons also participating.
- b) The (Acting) Board Secretary requested Members to be mindful of expense submission in particular coming up to year-end.

**Leaving Speech**

The Chairman invited Mr McAllister to say a few words of reflection on his time as a member of the Probation Board as this was his last meeting. The Chairman thanked Mr McAllister for his comments and his contribution to the work of the Board and wished him well with his work with the United Nations.

**29. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would take place on Friday 13 March 2015 at 9.00 am, venue to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 12.20 pm, followed by a closed session of the Board were item 19 was discussed.

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 Vilma Patterson  
 Chairman

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 Date