

PROBATION BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

BOARD MEETING – 15 MAY 2015**9.30 AM – CONFERENCE ROOM, PBNI****362nd MEETING – 33rd of TENTH TERM OF OFFICE****ATTENDANCE**

Mrs Vilma Patterson (Chairman)	Mr R Mullan (Deputy Chairman)
Mr D Brown (Items 1-21)	Mr E Jardine
Mrs L Jennett	Mr T O'Hanlon (Items 1-22)
Mrs M O'Rourke	Mr D Rose
Dr M Wardlow	Dr R Wilson

Ms C Lamont, (Acting) Director
Mr P Doran, Deputy Director
Mr H Hamill, (Acting) Deputy Director
Mrs G Robinson, (Acting) Board Secretary/Head of Human Resources
Ms C McCann, Head of Finance
Ms G McGreevy (Items 6, 22)
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.

The Chairman stated that this was the first meeting of the Board since the incident on the 27 April 2015 outside the PBNI office in Crawford Square. On behalf of the Board the Chairman condemn the attack on the office and noted the expressions of support extended to PBNI following the incident. The Police have advised of the threat level and this will be discussed more fully under item 22 of this agenda. The Chairman wished to extend thanks on behalf of the Board in relation to the handling of the incident by the (Acting) Director, the Deputy Directors together with the (Acting) Assistant Director, Assistant Director, Head of Communications, the Head of Human Resources and the two Area Managers.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Mrs P Shepherd and Mrs J Erskine.

3. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

Subject to some minor amendments, the Minutes from the Board Meeting held on 17 April 2015 were agreed as an accurate account of the meeting.

Minutes of the Closed Session held on 17 April 2015 were agreed at the end of this meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Paper 64/15)

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

The Chairman drew attention to two points:

Item 8 – The Chairman advised Members that she had met with Nick Perry (Permanent Secretary). The Chairman updated Members on the meeting. The Department had requested that a representative from the Executive Team would be part of the discussions and planning of the new structural reform of the Department where it involved PBNI.

The (Acting) Director advised that there would be more discussions at the upcoming Senior Civil Servants (SCS) Forum and through the Chairman the Members would be kept up to date on developments. She advised Members that Nick Perry expressed an interest in visiting the rural offices.

Action: Head of HR to meet with Mark Adams regarding PBNI position within new DoJ structures.

Action: Visit of Nick Perry to the Rural region to be arranged.

Item 9 – NICTS Consultation – the Chairman confirmed that the action had been completed and an acknowledgement had been received.

5. CORRESPONDENCE (Paper 65/12)

There was one piece of correspondence for noting which had been received by the (Acting) Director from the Attorney General for Northern Ireland in relation to Guidance for the Probation Board for Northern Ireland on Human Rights.

The correspondence was noted.

6. REVIEW OF THE ORGANISATION'S POLICY – POLICY TEMPLATE (Paper 61/15)

The Chairman welcomed the Head of Communications to the meeting.

The Members were advised that the paper had been presented to General Purposes Committee on 1 May 2015.

The Head of Communications advised Members that having listened to feedback from unions, staff and Board Members, staff were keen for the new template to be implemented. The Head of Communications thanked Dr Wilson, Dr Wardlow and Mr Brown for their input and guidance throughout the process of producing the new template.

Dr Wilson was thanked as this was his template which had been tried and tested in other environments. Dr Wilson commented that the process of consultation is important as is to engage at an early stage to ensure that people felt involved from the outset.

The Chair of the General Purposes Committee confirmed that the paper had been presented to the Committee and advised that the outcome of the General Purposes Committee was to recommend approval of the paper to the Board.

The Chairman thanked Dr Wilson, Dr Wardlow, Mr Brown and the Head of Communications for the work that they had put into this process.

The Board approved the paper.

7. FEMALE OFFENDER POLICY (Paper 67/15)

The (Acting) Deputy Director briefed Members on the background to the paper and that it had been presented to General Purposes Committee on 1 May 2015.

Members were advised that the Policy was due to be reviewed this year, however it was advised that the Policy was no longer required as this work is carried out through the Inspire Model and therefore removing the need for a bespoke policy.

The Chair of the General Purposes Committee confirmed that the Policy Schedule had been reviewed and advised that the outcome of the General Purposes Committee was to recommend the removal of this Policy from the Policy Schedule to the Board.

The Board approved the paper.

8. TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE POLICY (Paper 68/15)

The Head of Finance advised Members that the paper had been presented to General Purposes Committee held on 1 May 2015.

The Head of Finance presented Members with the background to the paper, stating that PBNI do not have a Travel and Subsistence Policy although it is listed on the Policy Schedule. Members were advised that there was no requirement for a policy as all staff now use AccountNI to process travel with guidance set out in the relevant Pay & Conditions of Service.

The Chair of the General Purposes Committee confirmed that it had been agreed by the General Purposes Committee to recommend the removal of the Policy from the Policy Schedule to the Board.

The Board approved the paper.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY (Paper 69/15)

The Head of Finance advised Members that the paper had been presented to the General Purposes Committee on 1 May 2015.

Members were provided with background to the paper and advised that following discussions with the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD), NI Environment Agency and the DOJ, PBNI had been advised that there was no requirement for PBNI to have an

Environmental Policy with the reasons for this laid out in the paper presented to the Board. Members were advised that responsibility for the Environmental and Sustainability Policies lies with the OFMDFM. Both the NI Environmental Agency and the DOJ have advised that the nature of PBNI's work does not require an Environmental Policy.

The Chair of the General Purposes Committee confirmed that it had been agreed by the General Purposes Committee to recommend the removal of the Policy from the Policy Schedule to the Board.

The Board approved the paper.

10. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2014/15 (Paper 70/15)

The Head of Finance advised Members that the Draft Annual Report and Accounts for 2014/15 had been presented to the Audit Committee on 12 May 2015. Members were taken through the Executive Summary and given an explanation on the items listed.

The Chair of the Audit Committee drew attention to the Pension and VAT issue. He complimented the Head of Finance and her team on producing such a 'clean' set of accounts and that the figures reflect the service PBNI deliver. It was also noted that PBNI had received a 'substantial' rating which is not awarded lightly by DOJ Internal Audit.

The Head of Finance advised that the Draft Report and Accounts had been passed to the Auditors on 6 May 2015 with auditors commencing on 11 May and finishing on the 15 May 2015 with no queries received from the auditors to date. The format of the document was discussed with Members.

The NILGOSC Administrative Staff Pension issue remains as it has not been fully implemented by year-end although good progress has been made. The VAT registration has yet to be completed but there is ongoing work and communication with AccountNI on this. Members were advised that the incident in Crawford Square will present pressures and financial commitment but the Head of Finance has flagged this to the Department.

The Final Report will be presented to the Audit Committee on 29 May 2015 and then presented to the June Board for approval after which the Accounting Officers can sign off the Annual Report and Accounts for 2014/15.

The Chair of the Audit Committee advised that in previous years there had not been a full set of accounts available at this stage and he congratulated Ms McCann. He did highlight one area of note which was third party transactions and asked if any Member is involved elsewhere where business is carried out with PBNI, to ensure they had notified the office for disclosure.

Action: Any Member involved in other business who carries out business with PBNI must declare this.

Mr O'Hanlon congratulated Ms McCann on the set of accounts.

The Chairman noted the significant achievements presented in the document and that it celebrates the achievements of the work carried out throughout the year across the Organisation and as a result of the work of the Management Executive Team as a whole. Full governance requirements have been delivered and the narrative developed by the

Head of Communications was noted. Receiving a 'substantial' rating was excellent together with a good set of accounts.

The Board accepted the set of accounts with the proviso of the pension assumptions and agreed the set of accounts can be authorised by the Audit Committee Members on 29 May 2015 unless there are any significant issues then the Chairman and the (Acting) Director can sign off the accounts.

Board approved the paper.

11. NIPS OPERATING MODEL – (Paper 71/15)

The (Acting) Deputy Director proceeded to take Members through the paper explaining the tables of options on staffing and service delivery. Discussion ensued

The Board noted the paper and looked forward to a further update in June.

12. BOARD EFFECTIVENESS AND PERFORMANCE UPDATE (Paper 72/15)

The Chairman advised Members that the Task and Finish Group had met to take forward the outcomes of the Board Effectiveness and Performance exercise. It was proposed that under the new structure, there would be four committees; Policy and Practice, which would look at policies, practice, caseloads and statistical information; Corporate Resource which would look at Human Resources information in more detail, financial management, Estate Management and IT; it was advised that once the committees were established they would be able to meet bi-monthly or quarterly. Remuneration Committee is an existing committee but requires formalised Terms of Reference; and finally, the Audit Committee. Members were advised that it had been proposed to pilot the new structure from August to November 2015.

The draft Terms of Reference were agreed.

Members were asked to identify interest in the new committees. It was agreed that the membership of the committees should be six with a quorum of three. A Member highlighted that there was need to ensure that this did not increase the work load for Executive Team.

The Chairman advised that she would contact Members to ascertain which committee each would like to sit on. The Chairman proposed that Mr Jardine would be Chair of the Policy and Practice Committee and Mr Mullan would chair the Corporate Service Committee initially in order to get them established. The Deputy Chairs would be appointed once membership was established.

Action: The Chairman to contact Members regarding their preference of committee membership

The Chairman asked for a one off meeting of the Task and Finish Group to discuss communications. Now that the media coverage is no longer available, it was felt that the Board needed a mechanism to keep up to date with ongoing media matters. Mr Brown and Mr O'Hanlon expressed a wish to sit on this Group.

Members were advised that the recruitment of a Board Secretary was underway and this was for a part-time post.

The Board approved the paper.

Action: The Review of Standing Orders to be updated with Terms of Reference for Committees and be presented at the June Board meeting for approval.

13. GENERAL PURPOSES UPDATE – (Verbal) – agenda items 13 and 14

The Chair of the General Purposes Committee advised Members that the Committee had met on the 1 May 2014 and that most of the business had been covered through agenda items at this meeting. There had been a presentation by Eithne McIlroy (Assistant Director) on PCSPs, it was highlighted that this was particularly timely as the Minister had stated on his visit to PBNI in April, the importance of PBNI's part in PCSPs. Gillian Montgomery (Area Manager) presented to the Committee on work in the rural areas which was also very helpful in understanding the work in this area.

At the next meeting Laura Duncan from the DOJ and Niall O'Neill, Statistician PBNI, will be presenting on figures for reoffending statistics and the current position.

Members were reminded that the next General Purposes Committee on 29 May 2015 will commence at 10 am.

The Board noted the update.

15. AUDIT COMMITTEE - (Verbal) – Agenda items 15 and 16

The Chair of the Audit Committee advised Members that the Committee last met on 12 May 2015. The Report by the Internal Auditors on Attendance Management had received a rating of 'substantial' with a cautionary note that attendance for the DOJ holds the highest rate of absence but that this may be due to the nature of work carried out across the DOJ.

Case Management received a rating of 'limited assurance' and this is now to be highlighted to the DOJ, discussion ensued on this matter. It was highlighted that the Report is in draft at this stage.

The Draft Accounts were discussed and passed by the Committee to recommend approval to the Board, as had been discussed in the earlier agenda item.

Members were advised that Delegated Limits for write offs had changed from £5k to zero – this was the case for all of DOJ. The Members of the Board were asked to approve this change with the appendix of the MSFM requiring amendment to reflect the change. Members approved the change of limits.

Mrs Erskine had feedback to the Audit Committee on Employers' Liability Insurance and that there was no requirement for PBNI to have this insurance. The Chair of the Committee advised that he was not satisfied that this is the case and has asked the Internal Auditor to look at this and feedback on whether or not PBNI self-insure.

The Board noted the update and approved the change to the Delegated Limits from £5k to zero.

Action: MSFM to be updated.**17. DRAFT 2014/15 OUTTURN AND BUDGET 2015-2016 (Paper 73/15) – Agenda items 17 and 18**

The Head of Finance took Members through the paper. There was little change from last month's update except for some maintenance costs which were now included. Members were advised of two issues at year-end, NILGOSC and VAT as previously mentioned in agenda item 10. Members were advised of the potential pressures in relation to NIPS reduction in funding and the damage in Crawford Square. The DOJ will be informed of the total costs, when quantum is known.

A Member asked how the mondy from the sale of Antrim Office would be treated, the Head of Finance informed the Board that a request to retain the receipts was made at the June monitoring round. Refurbishment was progressing through the estate planning. The Chairman thanked the Head of Finance and (Acting) Deputy Director for their work in the planning for the refurbishment given the tight timeframe and in particular Les Griffith, in meeting the works schedule deadlines

The Board noted the paper and the budget verbal update.

19. PROGRAMME AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT UPDATE (Paper 74/15)

The Head of Finance took Members through the paper highlighting Inspire and the work on Limavady Road. Members were also updated on the work at Headquarters.

The Board noted the paper.

20. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION (Paper 75/15)

The Chairman requested that items be taken by exception only.

The Deputy Director highlighted to Members page 12, the IS Strategy. PIMS (Probation Information Management System) had received a 'limited assurance' rating from the Internal Auditor. He outlined that the technology dated back to 2002, it was introduced in 2006 and work on a new Case Management System and had been ongoing since. The time that the IT Department spend trying to patch this system is disproportionate. An update on the level of IT security system required was given to the Members and that it appears that remaining at IL (Information Level) 3 is not feasible and PBNI must move to IL4 if PBNI is to operate on the PRISM (Prison Record and Inmate System Management) platform. He highlighted that there were benefits in that PBNI will have access to NI Records and an integrated payroll system. Members will be updated at the next meeting about ongoing discussions.

Attention was also drawn to page 14 – Current Developments. The Deputy Director updated Members on a recent Judicial Review outcome in relation to a risk assessment for a TPMO.

Action: The (Acting) Director is to arrange for a paper to be presented on TPMOs at the next Board meeting in June.

The Board noted the update.

21. INVESTORS IN PEOPLE REPORT AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING REPORT (Paper 76/15)

The Head of Human Resources briefed Members on the two reports presented. PBNI had been successful in retaining the IIP award.

The Board noted the paper

22. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE (Paper 77/15)

The Head of Communications presented the paper to Members which listed the activities of Internal and External Communications, Public Affairs and looking forward to 2015-16.

Members were shown the new internal and external websites. It was noted that since the public version of Probation News was uploaded the number of hits increased significantly. Members were advised that currently there are 1300 followers on Twitter and 200 on LinkedIn.

The Chairman advised the Head of Communications that a Task and Finish Group was being set up to see how best the Board can engage with the Communications Strategy.

The Chairman gave members an update on the Crawford Square incident. Clear visible leadership was demonstrated by the rapid response of the (Acting) Director and her colleagues in moving to provide support to staff and residents. There had been active engagement both internally and externally and the DOJ and staff are being continually briefed. The (Acting) Director had given a number of radio interviews directly after the attack.

Action: The Executive Team to present an updated Estate's Strategy paper as it pertains to Derry to the Board in June.

The Board noted the paper and update.

23. PROGRAMME OF EVENTS AND BUSINESS (Paper 78/15)

The Chairman highlighted a number of visits listed. In particular the breakfast hosted by the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church. 25 staff attended the breakfast and all very much enjoyed the event. It was clear that the PBNI's work across the community is valued.

The Chairman attended a dinner at the Irish Secretariat residence to welcome the US Rule of Law Fellows.

The (Acting) Director highlighted attendance at the Justice Committee Seminar on Youth Justice Innovations with the Lord Chief Justice as the keynote speaker. Richard Good, the Minister of Justice's Special Advisor, visited Alderwood. The (Acting) Director and the Deputy Director had their annual meeting with the Lord Chief Justice on 5 May 2015 with an agreement to meet again towards the end of May / June 2015

The Board noted the paper.

24. BOARD WORK PLAN 2015 (Paper 79/15)

The Board noted the paper.

25. PBNI SHARING YJA PREMISES – WARING STREET (Paper 80/15)

The Head of Finance presented the paper to the Members and gave the background to the proposal. An outcome of the Estate Strategy was to save money and therefore sharing premises with other agencies/organisations should be considered. In this context Board Members were also advised that PBNI have recently agreed to accommodate YJA in PBNI's Portadown and Newry offices.

Members were taken through the financial implications of the proposed move and how it would be funded. After discussion, the Head of Finance was requested to ensure that the VAT element is in order and the accounting meets good governance requirements.

Action: The Head of Finance to ensure that the VAT element of the proposed move is in order

The Board approved the paper

26. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None discussed

27. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS (Verbal)

- 27.1 The Chairman advised Members that she had formally written to the Minister inviting him to open the newly refurbished ground floor of Headquarters
- 27.2 The Members were advised that a meeting had been set up with the Department to discuss the recruitment of the new Board Members.
- 27.3 It is intended to introduce Board electronic papers (Minute Pad system) at the August meeting with training taking place in June. Papers will be presented for the August meeting as the two systems will work in parallel for that meeting.
- 27.4 It is proposed to hold the Social Media training and the Minute Pad training on the same day – it was put to members that this will either be the 26 June 2015 or the 3 July 2015 depending on the number of Members available.

Action: Personal Secretary to contact members reference their availability for both dates

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

- 28.1 Judicial Reviews - The (Acting) Director highlighted that the Deputy Director had already updated on this under Management of Information .
- 28.2 The (Acting) Director confirmed she has clarified with Anthony Harbinson the issue of pressures and easements at monitoring rounds. He confirmed that the DOJ expects that any pressures declared were met by PBNI and easement should also be declared at this stage.

- 28.3 The (Acting) Director advised Members that the refurbishment of the Ground Floor at HQ had been completed and invited Members to have a tour of the premises.
- 28.4 The (Acting) Board Secretary asked Members to contact Mrs Rodgers if there were any office visits they wished to take part in but had not yet put their name forward for.

The Meeting closed at 1 pm.

29. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would take place on Friday 12 June 2015 at 9.30 am, PBNI Headquarters, Conference Room.

Vilma Patterson
Chairman

Date