

PROBATION BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

BOARD MEETING – 19 FEBRUARY 2016**9.30 AM – PBNI HQ****371st MEETING – 3rd of ELEVENTH TERM OF OFFICE****ATTENDANCE**

Mrs Vilma Patterson (Chairman)	Mr R Mullan (Deputy Chairman)
Mr D Brown	Mrs J Erskine
Mrs J Gillespie	Mr E Jardine
Mr I Jeffers	Ms A Matthews
Mr G OhEara	Mrs P Shepherd
Mrs B Stuart	Mr D Wall

Ms C Lamont, (Acting) Director
Mr H Hamill, (Acting) Deputy Director
Mrs G Robinson, Head of HR
Mrs C Teggart, Head of Finance
Mr B McCutcheon, Head of IT (Item 10)
Mr M Cox, Board Secretary
Mrs W Rodgers, Personal Secretary (Minutes)

1. OPENING REMARKS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chairman welcomed Members to the meeting and advised of the running order of the agenda.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr T O'Hanlon, Member and Mr P Doran, Deputy Director.

3. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 15 January 2016 were accepted as an accurate account of the meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Paper 1/16)

Action 3 - Members were requested to have their choice of office visits with Secretariat by the end of February.

Action 4 – Members were advised that an invitation had been sent to the Director of Reducing Offending Directorate inviting her to the April Board Meeting. There has been further correspondence in this regard and the Board will be advised when arrangements for attendance are agreed.

Members were advised that the Board Work Plan for 2016-17 was currently being worked upon and would be presented to Members at the March meeting.

5. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – VERBAL

The Chairman advised Members that Ronan Costello of Twitter was running a training session for a number of companies with PBNI securing a number of places with four places available for Board Members. Members are to advise Secretariat if they wish to express an interest in this training. The Chairman assured Members that all Members would receive training in social media at a later stage.

Action: Members to advise secretariat if they wish to attend the Twitter training.

The Chairman updated Members on the arrangements for the 11 March 2016. The day was originally scheduled to have governance training followed by a strategic session. An opportunity had presented for Probation to hold a seminar focusing on Rehabilitation and Resettlement. The Minister was available on the 11 March together with a number of high profile guest speakers amongst whom is Keir Starmer, former Director of Public Prosecutions. Key stakeholders have been invited and the response has been positive. The seminar will commence at 11 am through to 1 pm (coffee will be served at 10.30 am) and will be held at Malone House with light finger buffet being provided. Governance training will follow the seminar at 1.30 pm and will finish at 5 pm, at the latest. A Member requested a list of the attendees to be circulated to Members, the Chairman advised that this will be done when the list is finalised together with key points.

Action: List of attendees at the seminar to be circulated to Members when complete.

Members were advised that the Overview Meeting held in January, with Anthony Harbinson and other Department officials, went well with no issues arising.

The Chairman advised Members that she had written, on behalf of the Board, to Dr Geraldine O'Hare to congratulate her on receiving her doctorate.

The Board noted the update.

6. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE – VERBAL

The (Acting) Director advised Members of staff events that were taking place across the region over the next number of weeks. These will focus on achievement and engagement of staff at the front line.

On 9 February 2016 a follow up review of life sentences was published by CJINI with a number of recommendations which will go to the Audit Committee. The (Acting) Director expressed a level of dissatisfaction with regard to the content of the Foreword and Press Release and advised that she had discussed this with CJINI. A Member expressed his disappointment also and suggested that the Board should formally indicate the Board's disappointment. It was advised that Probation does have a good relationship with CJINI but the recommendations will be taken to the Audit Committee and if there are concerns then these will be brought back to the Board.

Action: Relevant CJINI reports are to be sent for Members going forward.

The Board noted the update.

7. CORRESPONDENCE (Paper 11/16)

The Board noted correspondence presented.

8. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Audit Committee Update - Minutes

The Chair of the Committee updated Members on the meeting of the Committee which was held on 22 January 2016. It was advised that this was the first meeting of the newly constituted committee. Draft Terms of Reference will be discussed at the Committee meeting in March and when agreed will then be presented to the Board for approval. The Internal Audit assessment on 'Receipts' system has now been upgraded to 'substantial' from 'satisfactory'. Of the internal audits received two have been categorised as 'substantial' and one as 'satisfactory'. The Chair of the Committee congratulated the staff on this achievement.

The (Acting) Deputy Director advised that Q2 and Q3 Risk Management Reports were presented to the Audit Committee. When presented to the Audit Committee the reports show the tracked changes. However when presented to the Board these are removed. Members noted both papers.

The Board noted the paper and update.

Corporate Resources Committee and Policy & Practice Committee

The Chairman advised that as there had not been a Corporate Resources or Policy & Practice Committee since the last Board, there were no updates. Due to the Corporate Resources Committee not being held there was a backlog of work. Papers which would normally go to the Committee are coming directly to the Board for full discussion and approval.

9. NATIONAL NEGOTIATING COUNCIL (NNC) TERMS AND CONDITIONS (Paper 13/16)

Members were advised that NNC Terms and Conditions had previously been to the Board in June 2015. It was explained that staff have different Terms and Conditions although a significant proportion of staff are on the NNC Terms and Conditions. The paper laid out three options and the Head of HR took the Members through these and explained the findings of the review. Following a full discussion, a Member asked what implications there were on our qualification requirements to that of England and Wales. It was advised that they are aligned and therefore no difference. The Head of HR advised that she would keep the Board advised of any progress or changes.

The Board approved option 1 as laid out in the paper.

10. PBNI INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS (Paper 14/16)

The Head of IT advised Members that normally the paper would have gone to Corporate Resources Committee but on this occasion the paper was being brought to the Board for consideration due to the Committee not meeting at the end of January. Members were taken through the paper and the options open for developing a business case. Discussion ensued with the area of security restrictions being discussed and at what level of security is required. It was noted that if PBNI take up the option of using the NIPS case management system (PRISM) then the option could be dictated by this although there may be discussion at NIPS as to whether they need to remain on the Impact Level 4 network. Cost indicators and Service Level Agreements (SLAs) were discussed.

The Board approved the recommendation to develop an outline business case. This will be considered by the Corporate Resources Committee in the first instance.

11. DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN 2016-17 (Paper 15/16)

The (Acting) Deputy Director advised Members that this was the third and last Business Plan 2016/17 to deliver from the current Corporate Plan 2014/17.

There are nine objectives identified and the Members were taken through these. The objectives had been developed through a number of Senior Management Team and middle management consultation workshops. Discussion ensued on achievement of the Business Plan with the restrictions of the budget and how this has affected the drafting of the objectives; reference was made to the Nick Perry letter on RESET as noted in agenda item 7 of this agenda. It was discussed also in the context of the significant cuts and it was articulated that there were concerns around budget cuts and achievement. The (Acting) Deputy Director agreed that the narrative in the business plan will reflect the challenging financial situation in which the objectives were set. In relation to outcomes and SMART objectives, the (Acting) Deputy Director confirmed that each objective had a key outcome – which will be reported on to the Board. In addition, there will be a supporting matrix underpinning the actions. The matrix details measurable action; time lines for the actions and designates senior management responsibility for the actions.

The launch date of the Business Plan was discussed as to whether it would be ready for launch by the Minister at the seminar being held on 11 March 2016.

Action: The (Acting) Deputy Director is to advise the Board Secretary when the final document will be finally drafted and printed.

The Board approved the Business Plan with amendments as discussed.

12. NIHRC STRATEGIC PLAN 2016 – 2019 – CONSULTATION (Paper 17/16)

The Chairman presented the paper to the Members. After brief discussion the Board agreed the consultation response and this was to be sent on their behalf. It was noted that response was due today.

The Board approved the response.

13. FINANCIAL OUTTURN – JANUARY 2016 (Paper 17/16)

The Head of Finance took Members through the presented paper, highlighting a number of areas.

The budget had now been re-profiled in January to reflect the January monitoring round, showing a underspend of 1% to date. Prompt payment had fallen from 95% in December to 91% in January, this was due to problems with two suppliers.

The Chairman thanked the Management Team for the work that had been carried out on the finances and the reassurance that this gave the Board.

The Board noted the paper.

14. BUDGET SCENARIO PLANNING (Verbal)

The Head of Finance advised Members that an indicative cut of 2.9% which equates to a cut of £485k had been notified on the 5 January 2016. However, she is awaiting final confirmation of this. Members were advised of a number of budget pressures which will present. A balanced draft budget for 16/17 will be presented to the Board when confirmation of the cuts is received.

The Board noted the update.

15. PROGRAMMES AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT UPDATE (Paper 18/16)

Items taken by exception.

The Head of Finance updated Members on the Crawford Square and Limavady Road properties advising that Land Property Services (LPS) had identified some private sector properties which Mr Hamill was going to view today.

The Head of Finance gave Members background into the DOJ Estates Strategy in respect of a shared HQ involving a range of Criminal Justice organisations business case. This had been presented initially to the Board in June 2014. It was agreed that there was a need to clarify what accommodation PBNi requires as a NDPB. It was agreed that there should be a discussion at the Corporate Resources Committee in April and then potentially it could be discussed at the full Board meeting in April. An outline Business Case has been approved. Work is ongoing in respect of submitting on OBC2 by June 2016.

The Board noted the paper.

16. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION REPORT (Paper 19/16)

The Management Information Report was due its quarterly discussion.

The Head of HR took Members through the HR information of the paper, advising that the workforce had remained largely unchanged. Once the budget is known work will commence on succession planning and the associated recruitment plan. NISRA will be producing the sick/absence figures from the new financial year. NISRA calculate figures

on FTE opposed to how the figures are currently calculated in house as headcount, however the new method will be more robust and defensible. It is anticipated that the starting figure will be higher than currently due to the change in calculation. Discussion ensued on the make-up of the figures and what figures were shown. Further discussion on HR was deferred to the Corporate Resources Committee.

The (Acting) Deputy Director took Members through the caseload figures. A Member asked that now the legal aid issue has been settled, how would that affect PBNI's budget as it is a risk to the DOJ budget with legal aid always being in overspend. The Head of Finance noted that DOJ had allocated additional money to cover legal aid.

The Communications and Complaints update was as laid out in the presented paper.

There were two cases of Serious Further Offences (SFOs) that have been reviewed by an independent assessor. The findings of the independent assessor and his recommendations will be discussed at the next Operations meeting. The (Acting) Deputy Director confirmed that there were no significant practice issues identified in either of the reviews.

The Chairman thanked Mr Brown for attending the Business Planning day on her behalf.

A Member asked if it were possible for Assembly Questions to be put on MinutePad as it would be useful when meeting politicians to know where their areas of interest lay. The (Acting) Director advised that this would be discussed at the Management Executive Team meeting prior to the next Board meeting in April.

Action: The (Acting) Director to discuss with the Management Executive Team putting AQs on Minutepad.

The Board noted the paper.

17. PROGRAMME OF VISITS AND BUSINESS (Paper 20/16)

The Chairman presented the paper to the Members. Particular attention was brought to a number of meetings that the Chairman and (Acting) Director have attended with members of the Justice Committee. There have also been meetings with mayors which have proved useful in relation to the role of PCSPs.

18. BOARD WORK PLAN 2015-2016 (Paper 21/16)

The Work Plan for 2016-2017 is currently being worked upon and will be provided to the Board for discussion in March. Looking forward, next month, the Chairman will be requesting expression of interest from Members to sit on a sub-group for the Corporate Plan.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None noted

20. BOARD SECRETARY'S BUSINESS

The Board Secretary advised Members of the following:

- The Corporate Resources Committee has been moved to the 8 April 2016.

- Please ensure that all Members submit the Register of Interest forms to Secretariat so these can be published, ensuring openness and transparency
- The next Board Meeting is on the 18 March 2016. Members were asked if they were available to attend as there was a full agenda. No apologies given at the time.
- Members were asked to volunteer for a discussion with CJINI to discuss the CJINI Inspection of the Availability and Use of Management and Performance Management Information in Northern Ireland Criminal Justice System. The discussion would last for one hour and would be scheduled between 22 February and 16 March. Mrs Erskine, Mr Brown and Mr Jardine volunteered to participate.

Action: Any outstanding Register of Interest forms to be submitted to Secretariat, Board Members by 31 March 2016.

21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on Friday 18 March 2016 at PBNI HQ, Conference Room at 9.30 am.

Vilma Patterson
Chairman

Date