

## PROBATION BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

**BOARD MEETING – 24 MARCH 2017****9.30 AM – PBNI HQ****383rd MEETING – 15th of THE ELEVENTH TERM OF OFFICE****ATTENDANCE**

Mrs Vilma Patterson (Chairman)	Mrs J Erskine (Deputy Chair)
Mr D Brown	Mrs J Gillespie
Mr E Jardine	Mr I Jeffers
Ms A Matthews	Mr T O’Hanlon (Items 1 – 9)
Mrs P Shepherd	Mr D Wall (Items 1 – 8.1)

**Officials**

Ms C Lamont, Chief Executive  
 Mr P Doran, Director of Rehabilitation  
 Mrs G Robinson, Head of HR  
 Mrs C Teggart, Head of Finance  
 Mr M Cox, Board Secretary

Mrs W Rodgers, Personal Secretary (Minutes)

**Observer**

Ms J Mercer, Deputy Principal, Statistician

**Presentation by Mark Dougan, Northern Ireland Director at Princes Trust**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Dougan to the meeting and commented that the Board welcomed the presentation from the Prince’s Trust on their work in Northern Ireland and the wealth of experience that the Prince’s Trust brings.

Mr Dougan gave the Members background into the work of the Prince’s Trust and the work that it is currently doing together with its work with young people in schools. The Prince’s Trust works in partnership with the Public Sector, schools and EOTAS Centres. They have 400 referral partners and currently there are 6,500 13 – 30 years olds across Northern Ireland receiving support from the Trust. 80% of those supported end up in education, training or employment. It was noted that 11% of young people supported by the Trust in Northern Ireland have an offending background, 24% have mental health needs and 8% are homeless. PBNI and the Prince’s Trust signed a Memorandum of Understanding in November 2016 and since then there has been 21 referrals from PBNI, 11 of which are from North Belfast and the Newtownards Road office.

The presentation was followed by a question and answer session where employment success was discussed as well as retention rates. Funding for the Trust was discussed with 80% of funding coming from the Public Purse in Northern Ireland. The current Assembly issues is reflecting on the funding for the Trust as well as for many organisations. The Trust is focusing on Programme for Government and its outcomes.

The Chairman thanked Mr Dougan for his presentation and welcomed the outcome based work and good collaborative outcomes. The Board wished the Trust well in its work and hoped for continued successful working with PBNI.

## 1. OPENING REMARKS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. She particularly welcomed Ms Joyce Mercer, DP Statistician, to the meeting as an observer and expressed a hope that she would find the meeting informative.

Items will be deferred to committees as appropriate.

No conflicts of interests were declared.

## 2. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from: Mr G OhEara, Member; Mr R Mullan, Member; Mrs B Stuart, Member and Mr H Hamill, Director of Operations.

## 3. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES (M02/17)

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 17 February 2017 were accepted as an accurate account of the meeting.

## 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Paper 25/17)

The Chairman drew attention to outstanding actions for members and advised that the Board Secretary will follow up individually on these. Action 6 (b) – an update was given to members as laid out in the paper. Action 7 (b) was noted as an ongoing action for the Committees. All other actions from the 17 February 2017 were noted as being completed.

**Action: Board Secretary to follow up individually on outstanding members' actions.**

The Board noted the Matters Arising.

## 5. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – VERBAL

The Chairman advised that there had been three office visits by members; Inspire, Lisburn and Hydebank, since the last Board meeting. The visits for Q1 are currently being looked at with advice from the Management Executive Team (MET). Members are encouraged to take part in office visits.

The Corporate Plan is receiving its final proof reading. The Chairman advised that she considered it an exceptionally good document, setting out the work of the Service. It was also a useful document for the Department to refer to. The Chairman advised members of the issues around the approval of the document due to the elections and the Assembly having been dissolved. The result of this, and advice from the Director of Safer Communities, is that the document cannot be sent for printing until a new Minister is in post. Without being published, the document will however give the Service its direction of work. The document will be put on minutepad for members' reference.

**Action: Corporate Plan 2017/20 to be posted on minutepad, Secretariat.**

The Probation Seminar will be discussed under agenda item 12 of this meeting together with the Staff Awards which are taking place on the same day.

Members were advised of the Board Room Apprentice initiative which is being headed up by Eileen Mullan of Strictly Boardroom. This is to encourage diversity on Boards. Young people will sit on boards and receive training on being a board member. Clarification has been sought from the Chief Executive and the Department with neither seeing any difficulty in PBNI participating.

The Chairman sought the Board's approval to participate in this scheme. The Board approved participation.

The Board noted the update.

## **6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UPDATE – VERBAL**

The Chief Executive informed the meeting that recruitment at senior level had been concluded with the appointment of two Assistant Directors. Stephen Hamilton and Liz Arthur were the successful candidates; both had been acting up to the position.

It was advised that monies for Fresh Start had been received which will cover six months.

The Charity Ball held on 4 March 2017 raised over £3,500 for the two charities, Alzheimer's and Marie Curie. Thanks to all the staff and members who attended.

Members were advised that the Chief Executive has been asked to present at the 42nd Annual Training Institute Probation and Parole event in America, in August on RESET. Both the Chairman and Department have been informed of the Chief Executive's proposal to travel and both have supported and endorsed her participation at this event.

Gillian Robinson advised that PBNI have been shortlisted for the Diversity and Equality awards which are being held next Friday.

The Chairman thanked the Charity Ball organising committee for their efforts in arranging the Ball and it was a very enjoyable evening.

The Board noted the update.

## **7. CORRESPONDENCE (Paper 26/17)**

The Chairman advised members that there were three items of correspondence for members to note.

- 7.1 Letter received from Ian Lawrence, NAPO, congratulating Cheryl Lamont on her appointment
- 7.2 Letter received from Professor Monica McWilliams reference PBNI training of Domestic Violence
- 7.3 Letter received from Nick Perry, Northern Ireland Executive review of financial process

The Board noted the correspondence

## **8 CORPORATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

In the absence of the Committee Chair, Mrs Gillespie provided the update to the Board.

### **8.1 Update from Committee Deputy Chair**

In the absence of the Committee Chair Mrs Gillespie chaired the meeting held on 3 March 2017. The key issues were the budget and the scenario planning for a total cut in budget of 6.8% (profile of 4%). The Committee wanted to reflect to the Board its concerns regarding the cut which would lead to unsafe working levels. Caseload has remained static but the cut would equate to a reduction of 21 FTE from the front line. This would impact on projects and the good work of the Service. The Committee had asked for five bullet points of key facts for Board Members thus allowing them to promote the work of Probation and what a reduction of budget would be to the Service.

Discussion ensued on the impact of the current political process and the delays that this will lead to financially. It was noted that from 2011 – 17 PBNI have received a 17.5% reduction in budget. As 80% of expenditure is staffing costs deferral of costs to later

quarters in the year was not possible. There was discussion around caseload figures remaining steady but other areas of the Criminal Justice System having had reduction in numbers. There was discussion on understanding the risks for the Organisation and the impact on practice.

The Chief Executive requested that the CRC and Board continue to represent the impact at a strategic level of budget deficit with the Department, so as to influence the final budget position. The Chief Executive expressed her sense that the issue was an ideological one as to where Probation sat in terms of value within the Criminal Justice System in Northern Ireland.

The Members were advised that the Committee had discussed the Terms of Reference of the Committee. The Committee discussed how it can focus on delivery of the Corporate Plan with more strategic attention to HR and finance planning. No decisions were made in the absence of the Chair of the Committee and it will be discussed again at the next committee meeting.

The Board noted the update.

#### 8.2 Terms of Reference for NNC / SCCOG Working Group (Paper 27/17)

The Head of HR introduced the paper to the Members advising that it had been presented to the Corporate Resources Committee who, following a full discussion, recommended approval to the Board. The Head of HR advised that the Department had come back with some queries, which involved differences in pay remit and increments between the NICS and NNC TORs. It was advised that legal advice had been sought and the costs of the changes were to be calculated. There are ongoing discussions with the unions.

The Board approved the TORs for NNC / SCCOG Working Group.

### **9. AUDIT & RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE**

#### 9.1 Self-Assessment Survey for ARAC (Verbal)

The Committee Chair provided the Board with an update on the ARAC Self-Assessment Survey. From the results of the survey the Committee were content that best practice was being followed in all areas of the Committee's work and wished to assure the Board of same.

The Board noted the update.

### **10. BUSINESS PLAN 2017/18 (PAPER 28/17)**

The Draft Business Plan for 2017/18 was presented to the Board at its last meeting in February 2017. Members had requested that the matrix behind the Plan be brought to the Board to provide more understanding and assurance on how the Plan would be delivered. The Director of Rehabilitation advised that the wording of the Plan was fixed wording from the Corporate Plan and the targets were about completion with measurable objectives. This can be used to demonstrate to the Department Probation's performance.

The Chairman thanked the Management Executive Team for their work and the Board looks forward to the quarterly updates and the Committee updates.

The Board approved the Draft Business Plan 2017/18.

**11. ESTATES UPDATE: 25 SHIPQUAY STREET (PAPER 29/17)**

The Head of Finance introduced the paper to the Members, advising that the paper had been presented to the Corporate Resources Committee at its meeting on 3 March 2017. The Members were advised of the background to 25 Shipquay Street. The Members were reminded that both the Board and the Department had approved the Business Case for the property previously. As the approved Business Case was within the 2 year period there is no need for re-approval. It was confirmed, in answer to members' questions, that the property has been assessed in relation to Health & Safety and Section 75 requirements. The timeline for the property was discussed.

The Board endorsed work to commence to secure a lease for 25 Shipquay Street.

**12. PROBATION SEMINAR – 30 MARCH 2017 (Verbal)**

The Chairman advised that there were eight members attending the Seminar on 30 March 2017. The theme is: what can Probation do to contribute to the Criminal Justice System and in particular Problem Solving. Members were asked to be at Malone House by 10.45 am. There has been a very good response for attendance with a waiting list of people wishing to attend. The Staff Awards will also take place on the same day, commencing at 2.30 pm, all members are invited to stay for the Awards if they are available. The Chairman thanked the Deputy Chair for sitting on the panel and representing the Board.

The Board noted the update.

**13. BUDGET 2017/18 (Paper 30/17)**

The Head of Finance introduced the paper to the Members. It was noted that the paper had been discussed under agenda item 8.1 of this meeting. It was advised that there was uncertainty over the next year's budget with no information received in writing from the Department on the budget. Fresh Start monies of £561k for a half year has been allocated, this will enable RESET and ECO to continue to 30 September 2017.

The Board noted the paper.

**14. DIVERSITY CHAMPION – TEMPORARY (Verbal)**

The Chairman requested that a member volunteer for the role on a temporary bases. Mrs Gillespie put her name forward. The Chairman thanked her for this.

The Board approved Mrs Gillespie as the Temporary Diversity Champion.

**15. DRAFT WORK PLAN 2017/18**

The Board Secretary introduced the paper to the Members. The Work Plan is to plan ahead and identify when and what needs to come to the Committees and Board. There should therefore be no surprises in workflow. It also shows the separation of roles of the Committees. It will facilitate planning and avoid unnecessary duplication. The sequence of Committees will ensure the workflow meets the Organisation's needs.

**Action: Where should 'evaluation' appear in the sequence of meetings, to be discussed at the next Policy & Practice Committee.**

**Action: Chairs of the Committees to discuss what papers would be useful and what evidence is required.**

The Chairman thanked the Board Secretary for his work on the Plan.

The Board noted the paper.

**16. FINANCIAL OUTTURN – FEBRUARY REPORT (Paper 32/17)**

The Head of Finance presented the paper to members. The year to date is showing a slight overspend of £2k. This is because the January Monitoring has not been profiled into the budget. Assurance was given to the Board that it is expected that the budget is to come in below the 1% underspend. The Director of Rehabilitation advised of Asset Recovery Community (ARC) monies received, a total of £40k. The Department had advised of monies being available through ARC and asked for bids. PBNI, having contacted their Community and Voluntary Sector partners, received 11 bids for this money. A panel was convened, with 7 of the bids receiving money.

The Board noted the paper.

**17. PROGRAMME OF PROJECTS AND BUSINESS (PAPER 21/17)**

The Head of Finance presented the paper to members and highlighted a number of items. The 'Graffiti' Van will be ready and operational mid-April once it is roadworthy and training has taken place. The Case Management System is progressing on target with the OBC being ready at the end of March. Gillian Colhoun is continuing to work on the IT Support Project with the SOC having been completed. The Cultural Survey is due to be launched on the 30 March 2017 and there was some discussion around the outcomes of this.

The Board noted the paper.

**18. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION PAPER (Paper 18/17)****18.1 Management Information paper (Paper 18-1 and 2/17)**

The Director of Rehabilitation highlighted a number of areas. The Print Management Service had now been installed. To note, the Organisation has no longer a fax facility. There were no Serious Further Offences (SFOs) to report. Under the Communications update it was noted that Ms McGreevy, Head of Communications had attended and presented at the Confederation of European Probation (CEP) on the development of Apps.

**18.2** The Head of HR reported on the sick absence statistics which had been discussed at length at the Corporate Resources Committee. The Board was given assurance of the processes which are being followed.

The Board noted the paper

**19. PROGRAMME OF VISITS AND BUSINESS (Paper 35/17)**

The Chairman commented on the level of engagement by staff noting that the Head of HR had attended the Butler Trust Awards in London.

The Board noted the paper.

**20. BOARD WORK PLAN 2016 – 2017 (PAPER 36/17)**

The Chairman noted the amount of work that the Board had covered in the 2016/17 year and thanked the Chief Executive and the Management Executive Team for their support of the Board.

The Board noted the paper.

**21. BOARD SECRETARY’S BUSINESS**

21.1 The Board Secretary reminded members of the need for timely submission of expenses, particularly around year-end. He advised that the Internal Audit on Corporate Governance appeared to have gone well.

21.2 As the next meeting is during the Easter period, members were asked to submit apologies in advance to ensure there will be a quorum.

**Action: Members to advise of any apologies for the Board meeting on 21 April 2017 to Secretariat, Board Members.**

21.3 The meeting in April will take the form of a strategic session where the Self-Assessment of the Board which was completed in January 2017 will be discussed.

**22. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman thanked Ms Mercer for attending the meeting and hoped that she found it informative.

The Chairman thanked all attendees for attending the meeting and wished everyone a happy Easter.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on Friday 21 April 2017, PBNI HQ, Conference Room, 9.30 am.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Vilma Patterson

**Chairman**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date