

PROBATION BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

BOARD MEETING – 19 MAY 2017

9.30 AM – PBNI HQ

385th MEETING – 17th of THE ELEVENTH TERM OF OFFICE

ATTENDANCE

Mrs Vilma Patterson (Chairman)	Mrs J Erskine (Deputy Chair)
Mrs J Gillespie	Mr E Jardine
Mr I Jeffers	Ms A Matthews (Items 1-12 and 14-22)
Mr T O'Hanlon (Items 1 – 12)	Mr G OhEara
Mr D Wall	

Officials

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

Mrs W Rodgers, Personal Secretary (Minutes)

Observer

Mrs Roisin Leckey, Area Manager

1. OPENING REMARKS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. In particular she welcomed Mrs Roisin Leckey, Area Manager, as an observer and expressed the hope that she would find the meeting informative.

The Chairman set out the timetable for the meeting. Members were advised that there will be a presentation on Shared Services by the Transformation and Stakeholder Engagement Manager for Public Sector Shared Services. The agenda would be amended to allow this presentation to take place around 10.45 am.

Items will be deferred to committees as appropriate.

Mrs Erskine declared that, as Chair of the Business Services Organisation, she may have a conflict of interest under the Shared Services item. Also as a member of the Northern Ireland Local Government Superannuation Committee she may have a conflict of interest under agenda item 9.3, Pension Valuations and Assumptions.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from: Mr D Brown, Member; Mr R Mullan, Member; Mrs P Shepherd, Member and Mrs B Stuart, Member.

3. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES (M04/17)

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 21 April 2017 were accepted as an accurate account of the meeting, with one amendment to page 5.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (PAPER 37/17)

It was noted that all actions have been completed. Action 2, the Chairman will be covering in her update at this meeting.

The Board noted the position.

5. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – VERBAL

The Chairman thanked the Members for returning their Annual Appraisal forms and requested that they be signed before leaving today.

The Chairman briefed the Members on the meeting that had taken place with Nick Perry, the Department of Justice's Permanent Secretary, on 11 May 2017. Mr Mullan attended as Chair of the Corporate Resources Committee with the Chief Executive attending to answer any queries on the operational impact. The Chairman advised that a lot of preparation work had gone into the meeting and she wished to thank the Chief Executive, MET Colleagues and the Board Secretary.

The Chairman informed the meeting of the main points made to the Permanent Secretary and commented that it had been a frank and robust exchange. The Chairman pointed out the reducing budget that PBNI had received over the last five years and the impact that this has had on the risk to the public and victims, not to mention PBNI staff. The Permanent Secretary advised that the budgets of all organisations and agencies across the DOJ were being reduced and no organisation or agency could be protected at the expense of others.

The Chairman advised that there was Departmental support for the research project previously proposed by the Board.

The Board noted the update.

6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UPDATE – VERBAL

The Chief Executive advised that the meeting with the Permanent Secretary was direct, candid and purposeful with the Chairman delivering the key messages. She had not been aware of the £1.7m allocation. While the monies are welcome it was noted that it would not help with the budgetary pressures over the longer term. The Permanent Secretary made reference to changing the workforce model. Reference was made to the English model which the Chief Executive pointed out had not worked.

The Chief Executive advised the Members that MET had a pre-arranged meeting with the Permanent Secretary at PBNI HQ on 15 May 2017. This gave an opportunity to follow up on budget and the impact of the cuts to PBNI's work. It gave an opportunity to remind the Permanent Secretary of the changes carried out throughout the Organisation over the past four years.

The Chief Executive advised the Members of Mrs Robinson being awarded the 'Highly Commended Award for HR Director of the Year' at the CIPD Awards ceremony last evening. The Board congratulated Mrs Robinson on her achievement.

The Shared Services presentation today is timely as the project is looking at the NICS as a whole to have shared services for IT, HR and Finance. The aim is to provide high quality for lesser cost.

NICS Live is taking place on 24 May 2017 with PBNI taking part in two of the workshop presentations, Problem Solving Justice and Digital Justice. The Director of Rehabilitation will be

participating in the Problem Solving Justice and Gail McGreevy will be leading on the Probation App. Both workshops have been oversubscribed so they will be run again.

The Chief Executive referenced recent cyber-attacks and informed that PBNI had not been affected.

The Board noted the update.

7. CORRESPONDENCE (Paper 38/17)

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

7.1 Letter received from Nick Perry to Cheryl Lamont on 2017-18 Indicative Budget Allocation

7.2 Letter received from Glyn Capper to Cheryl Lamont on 2017-18 Indicative Budget Allocation

The Board noted the correspondence.

8 POLICY & PRACTICE COMMITTEE (WORKSHOP)

8.1 Update from Committee Chair

The Chair advised that there was not a quorum on 28 April 2017 and therefore the meeting took the form of a workshop on the Evaluation and Monitoring Framework which looked at the outputs of the objectives from the Business Plan. It is hoped that a representative from Analytical Services will attend the next Committee meeting to give an insight into what data is available from the Department.

The Board noted the update.

8.2 Terms of Reference for the Committee

The Terms of Reference have been provided to the Board for comment and approval. The changes have been tracked for ease of review by the Members. There have been two additional points added at numbers 6 and 7 of the objectives to take account of practice outcomes and the annual conference. The PPC Chair advised that Mr Wall had agreed to co-ordinate the Annual Conference. The Chairman made two suggested amendments; to number 6 'focus on the work of Probation' and to number 7 'Policy & Practice Committee to measure the performance against the Corporate Plan and Business Plan'.

The Board approved the revised Terms of Reference for the Policy & Practice Committee with the two amendments included.

8.3 Notes of the meeting on 28 April 2017

The notes were provided for members' information. The next meeting of the Committee will be on 2 June 2017.

The Board noted the notes of the meeting.

9 AUDIT & RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

9.1 Update from the Deputy Chair

The Deputy Chair provided an update on the meeting held on 5 May 2017. The three outstanding final reports from Internal Audit were received with all receiving a 'satisfactory' assurance. The main business of the Committee was to discuss the Draft Annual Report and Accounts and the Pension Valuation and Assumptions Report. The Deputy Chair thanked the Head of Finance and her team for their work.

The Head of Internal Audit tabled the Annual Report and Opinion which received an overall assurance of 'satisfactory'. The Case Management System remains as 'limited' assurance and one other item, Health & Safety, is listed as 'limited' but this has been resolved and this area is on the plan for audit in the incoming year. There were no new cases of fraud / losses to report. The theft write-off, as previously, approved by the Board is with the Department for approval. Again there was discussion around the delegated limit and it was confirmed that this would be looked at when the MSFM is being reviewed later in the year.

The Board noted the update.

9.2 Draft Annual Report and Accounts 2016/17 (Paper 52/17)

The Head of Finance advised the Board that the Auditors had finished their desktop work and had come back with no recommendations or changes to be made. She advised of the papers outstanding at this time but the final document will be ready for the ARAC meeting on 26 May 2017. The Head of Finance was congratulated on the Report and that she had met with the timeframes laid down.

The Board agreed to delegate final sign off of the Annual Report and Accounts to the ARAC meeting on 26 May 2017 with any minor amendments being approved by the Chairman and the Accounting Officer.

The Board approved the Draft Annual Report and Accounts.

9.3 Pension Valuations and Assumptions (Paper 53/17)

Mrs Erskine left the meeting as she had declared a conflict of interest. The Head of Finance advised members of the pension valuation and explained that assets had improved but liabilities had decreased showing a current shortfall of £13.7m. She is content that the assumptions of the Actuary are fair. It was confirmed that pension valuations does not come under PBNI's budget and is totally separate, the fund is managed by NILGOSC.

The Board approved the paper.

Mrs Erskine returned to the meeting after the meeting had discussed and approved the paper.

9.4 Draft Minutes from 5 May 2017

The draft minutes were provided for information to the Members. The next meeting of the Committee will be on 26 May 2017.

The Board noted the minutes.

10. CORPORATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

10.1 Update by the Deputy Chair

In the absence of the Chair the Deputy Chair provided the update to the Board on the meeting held on 5 May 2017. The main business of the meeting was an update on the Workforce Modernisation Project (WFM). The Committee was provided with a detailed update on where the Organisation was with the WFM project. There was debate and discussion around the project and the Members were assured that it could stand up to robust scrutiny. It was suggested that a presentation to the Board on WFM would be useful. The Deputy Chair thanked the Officials for the work they have put into the project.

Due to time constraints in the meeting a full update on IT was requested to be brought to the Board for noting. This will be given under the Management Information Report. Sickness absence figures remain a concern. It was noted that the incidence of work related stress is increasing.

It was advised that in view of the recent Condition Survey the upkeep of the Estate in 2017/18 will be challenging due to budget constraints.

The Board noted the update.

10.2 Draft Terms of Reference for the Committee (TORs) (Paper 60/17)

The Committee has reviewed the TORs. The importance of ensuring that there were no overlaps with other committees and the importance that the TORs were aligned to the Corporate Plan and Business Plan were discussed. The Deputy Chair thanked the Board Secretary for his work in reviewing the TORs.

The Board approved the revised Terms of Reference for the Corporate Resources Committee.

10.3 Draft Minutes form 5 May 2017

The draft minutes were provided for information to the Members. The next meeting of the Committee will be on 25 August 2017.

The Board noted the minutes.

11. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION REPORT (PAPER 54/17)

The Director of Rehabilitation took the Members through the caseload data highlighting a number of areas. The Director of Operations provided the meeting with an update on IT. The Outline Business Case for the Case Management System is with the DOJ, who had come back with some minor queries. The ICT Delivery Strategic Outline Case has been approved by the DOJ. A review of the 'tablets' has commenced with resource from DOJ helping with this. The main issues are connectivity, security, authenticity and improved usability. The review should be completed by June and will go to SMT, thereafter the Board will be advised of the findings of the review.

The Director of Rehabilitation highlighted a 'Newsletter' article by the Chief Executive and advised that this had received good feedback and interest from MLAs. Mr Wall commended the article and the intelligent use of language.

It was requested by the Chairman that the CRC look at Health & Safety statistics and trends. There was also discussion around the most up to date data going to committees and Board.

It was agreed that the most up to date data should be presented to the next available appropriate meeting whether that be committee or Board.

The Board noted the paper.

12. PRESENTATION ON SHARED SERVICES (VERBAL)

The Chairman welcomed Mr C Doran, Mr R Logan and Ms K Murray from The Shared Services Transformation Team to the meeting with each introducing themselves to the Members.

Mr Doran is the lead in the project on Shared Services within the NICS. He provided the Members with background into the project and its aims and objectives. He advised that the project is being considered as a 5 – 7 year project.

A member asked what consideration is being given to the cultural change. It was advised that the project had looked at other organisations in the private sector that had carried out similar change to see what had and what had not worked. The setting up of HR Connect was discussed and it was noted that having the right technology and systems were important. All organisations and agencies would have different needs and these will have to be individually assessed. Mr Doran advised that there were four objectives to the project: Lower costs; improved quality; extend scope across the public sector and re-balancing the economy. There is no specific weighing against any of the four, reducing cost but not reducing quality was the aim.

The Chairman thanked the presenters for attending the meeting and giving the Members an insight into the project.

13. REVIEW OF YEAR-END SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORT (PAPER 55/17)

The Head of HR provided the Members with an update on the sickness absence data. March has ended with working days lost per staff as 19.3 days. Revised Policy & Procedures are due to be presented to the PPC in June. April is looking better with a projection of 15.4 days lost, although this is still high. Staff, managers and the HR Team have worked hard to reduce the absence with managers taking ownership. Assurance was provided to the Board that procedures are being followed and all are working hard to reduce the levels of sickness absence.

The Board noted the update.

14. PROGRAMME OF PROJECTS AND BUSINESS CASES (PAPER 56/17)

The Head of Finance advised that there was little change to the paper since the last meeting. The business cases for the Omagh and Coleraine offices, when ready, will be presented to the SMT and then onward to the committee and Board.

The Director of Rehabilitation advised that the CRC had covered the WFM in detail earlier in the meeting.

The Board noted the paper.

15. GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN (PAPER 57/17)

The Board Secretary introduced the paper to the meeting. It was advised that this was a follow up to the workshop held earlier in the year and provides an update on the actions. It is planned to bring a paper on Managing Board Business to the June Board for consideration. There will be a Board development day in February 2018, with details to follow. One of the outcomes is to set meetings and not to change them. The wording of action 1 was discussed and noted that perhaps it could have been worded differently.

The Board accepted the paper.

16. BUSINESS CASE FOR 'ASPIRE' (PAPER 58/17)

The Chairman advised that due to the urgency of this business case she had agreed for it to be presented directly to the Board without going through the Committee.

The Director of Operations presented the paper to the meeting, giving background into the project and its aims. This project forms part of the 'Fresh Start' initiative, Recommendation B12, which PBNI are leading on, the action focuses on young men. There are three stands to the recommendation but this relates solely to Stand 1 (b). It was advised that Option 5 was the preferred option. A member asked what other organisations are carrying out this work in relation to directing young men away from crime; the Members were advised of those organisations which are involved in this work. There was discussion on the length of the project and the affordability. Following discussion the Board approved the Business Case.

The Board approved the Business Case for 'Aspire'.

17. FINANCIAL OUTTURN – (VERBAL)

The Head of Finance advised the meeting that there was no report for April as there is no budget to profile. The meeting was assured that MET was looking at all aspects of the budget and staffing. It was advised that the Department had a fund of £1.6m that could be bid for. They have also held back £3.3m of capital monies which could also be bid for.

The Board noted the update.

18. STAKEHOLDER MAPPING (VERBAL)

The Chairman advised that there had been a meeting of a sub-group to discuss Stakeholder Mapping and there will be a follow up meeting arranged. She thanked Mrs Gillespie, Mr Jeffers and Mrs Shepherd for attending and their input. Discussion was around who and when to communicate with the key stakeholders. The Head of Communication is looking at the stakeholders who were categorised as supporters, the neutrals and the opponents and how to communicate with all categories in a meaningful way. It had been a useful meeting and the Chairman thanked the Chief Executive and the Head of Communication for their work and participation.

The Board noted the paper.

19. PROGRAMME OF VISITS AND BUSINESS (PAPER 59/17)

The Chief Executive highlighted a number of visits that had taken place during the reporting period. She and the Head of Psychology and Interventions visited the North East of England at the beginning of May on the back of Sonia Crozier's visit to Belfast. The North East is regarded as a high performing region. Interestingly it was advised that more social work qualified probation officers are going back into prisons in the region due to their capabilities in assessing and managing complexities.

The Director of Operations and Assistant Director, Urban visited a Violence Reduction Unit in Glasgow.

Following a meeting with Mr Ronnie Armour, Director of Reducing Offending Directorate, he agreed that in Programme for Government Indicator 39, Probation should be more appropriately referenced in the document. The document is being revised.

The Director of Rehabilitation advised that the scheduled meeting of the Good Relations Group had to be postponed and would be rearranged.

The Board noted the paper.

20. BOARD WORK PLAN 2016 – 2017 (PAPER 48/17)

The Board Secretary advised that the Board Work Plan continues to evolve and is updated each month.

The Board noted the paper.

21. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (VERBAL)

The Chairman thanked Mrs Leckey for attending the meeting and hoped that she found it informative.

22. BOARD SECRETARY'S BUSINESS

The Board Secretary advised that a review of the 'tablets' is currently being carried out and he will be writing to members asking for their feedback.

He will also be writing to members asking if they have 'winzip' facility on their computers – this would allow password protected documents to be opened.

A list of Policing Board lunchtime seminars has been sent to members, any member wishing to attend can contact the organisers directly.

Board meeting dates for January, February and March have been set as the third Friday of each month. Following review of the TORs, the Committees' dates will be set so they fit the needs of the TORs of the Committees in supporting the Board to deliver an adequate and efficient Probation Service by the delivery of the Corporate and Business Plans.

The Board noted the update.

23. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on Friday 16 June 2017, PBNI HQ, Conference Room, 9.30 am.

Vilma Patterson
Chairman

Date _____