

## PROBATION BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

**BOARD MEETING – 24 JUNE 2016****9.30 AM – PBNI HQ****375th MEETING – 7th of THE ELEVENTH TERM OF OFFICE****ATTENDANCE**

Mrs Vilma Patterson (Chairman)	Mr D Brown
Mrs J Gillespie	Mr E Jardine
Mr I Jeffers	Ms A Matthews
Mr R Mullan	Mr G OhEara
Mr T O'Hanlon	Mr D Wall

Mr H Hamill, (Acting) Deputy Director  
Mrs G Robinson, Head of HR  
Mrs G McGreevy, Head of Communications (Items 10.3 – 10.7 and 12)  
Mr M Cox, Board Secretary  
Mrs W Rodgers, Personal Secretary (Minutes)

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

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. The Chairman thanked members and officials for accommodating the change of date for the meeting. The meeting was updated on the power outage at HQ on 20 June 2016 and Mr Hamill would brief the meeting under agenda item 6 of this meeting. Members were advised that there would be a closed session after the formal board business had been completed. The next Board meeting will be the 19 August 2016 as the 15 July had been held as a reserve date but was not required.

Items will be deferred to the committees as appropriate.

No conflicts of interests where declared.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies received from Mrs J Erskine (Deputy Chair); Mrs P Shepherd, Member; Mrs B Stuart, Member; Ms C Lamont, (Acting) Director; Mr P Doran, Deputy Director; Mrs C Teggart, Head of Finance and Mr M Cox, Board Secretary.

**3. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES (M05/16)**

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 20 May 2016 were accepted as an accurate account of the meeting.

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Paper 60/16)**

The Chairman drew attention to action number 5 and advised that the Board Secretary will update members at the August Board. All other actions had been completed.

The Board noted the matters arising.

## 5. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – VERBAL

The Chairman advised members of the forthcoming meeting with the new Minister of Justice which is scheduled to take place on 7 July 2016. The Chairman, (Acting) Director and Head of Communications will be attending. Members were provided with an update on the Department's briefing to the Minister and the briefing to the Justice Committee. The Head of Communications will provide further briefing on engagement with MLAs under agenda item 12 of this meeting.

The Chairman advised that she had written to the Lord Chief Justice on behalf of the Board with condolences on the death of Judge Corinne Philpott.

Attention was brought to the Brexit vote which may have implications for PBNI with cross border and other European organisations.

The Corporate Planning Sub-group has met on two occasions since the last Board meeting and papers are being uploaded onto Minutepad for all members' information. There is a two day event for the sub-group arranged for the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> June. Tim Chapman will be attending as facilitator and Anthony Harbinson will be attending a session to advise on the Department's view on the Programme for Government and Fresh Start.

Members were asked to read and confirm that they have read and understood the Compliance Booklet which is available on Minutepad, any queries are to be directed to the Board Secretary.

**Action: Members to confirm via email that they have read and understood the Compliance Booklet, Board Members.**

Members were advised that Assembly Questions relevant to PBNI where being posted on Minutepad for their information. Members were requested to wear their PBNI passes whilst on any PBNI property so they can be identified as members of the Organisation.

The Board noted the update.

## 6. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE – VERBAL

In the absence of the (Acting) Director, Mr Hamill, (Acting) Deputy Director updated members on the power outage which occurred due to contractors working for NIE cutting a power cable outside the HQ building. The Continuity Plan will be revisited for any learning points from this episode which the Deputy Director will take forward.

A formal response has now been received from Lianne Patterson SRO for the Shared HQ project. Members were advised that the Estate Programme had been closed and a wider NI Civil Service programme which will be overseen by DoF will be set up. Lianne Patterson will be the DOJ representative on the new programme.

It was noted that the Fresh Start Panel mentioned PBNI in three recommendations. It was advised that a high level submission for a Young Men's Project had been submitted.

The Board noted the update.

## 7. CORRESPONDENCE (Paper 61/16)

There were four pieces of correspondence for members to note:

7.1 Letter from the Chair of CRC to the Chairman reference PBNI's Case Management System

7.2 Letter from Anthony Harbinson to Cheryl Lamont reference – PBNI's Case Management System

7.3 Letter from Minister of Justice, Claire Sugden MLA

7.4 Letter to Glyn Capper from Cheryl Lamont reference PBNI Budget 2016

Discussion ensued on the letter sent to Glyn Capper around the objective of reducing the rate of sick absence by 5%. It was advised the CRC will continue to monitor the sick absence statistics.

The Board noted the correspondence.

## 8. CORPORATE RESOURCE COMMITTEE UPDATE

- 8.1 Members were advised that the recent survey completed by IT was available to view on Minutepad. The Chair of the Committee advised members of software that can be downloaded to their tablets to allow meeting papers to be downloaded prior to a meeting in the case of wifi not being available.

The Chair of the Committee updated members on the Case Management System (CMS) and that a new business case will be presented to SMT in July and thereafter to the CRC. The correspondence that the Chairman had received from the Committee with reference to their concerns of the CMS was highlighted to Anthony Harbinson at the Overview Meeting. Discussion ensued around the way forward with the CMS and the options available. Procurement of a system was discussed.

**Action: Advice on procurement to be passed back to Procurement Department, IT Department.**

**Action: Member's Minutepads to be updated with new software, Board Members and IT**

The meeting was advised that Estates had been discussed at Committee and a business plan for Londonderry office will be dealt with under agenda item number 11.1 of this agenda.

The Board noted the update.

- 8.2 National Negotiating Council (Paper 62/16)

The Head of HR gave the meeting background to the paper and advised that the paper had been delegated to the Committee for discussion from the last Board meeting held on 20 May 2016. It was advised that the Committee had a full discussion on the recommendations proposed in the paper. The Committee agreed to recommend the approach laid out in the paper to the Board for approval. Following discussion the Board approved the approach laid out in the paper.

The Board approved the paper.

- 8.3 Minutes – 27 May 2016

Minutes from the 27 May 2016 Committee meeting where included for the Members' information.

The Board noted the minutes.

## 9. AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE (ARAC) – UPDATE 4 MAY 2016

- 9.1 Update from the meeting held 27 May 2016

In the absence of the Committee Chair, Mr Jardine updated the members on the meeting held on the 27 May 2016.

The meeting was the annual meeting to approve the Annual Report and Accounts as approval had been delegated to the Committee from the Board meeting held on 20 May 2016. The Committee approved the Annual Report and Accounts.

Members were advised that the preparation of the Annual Report and Accounts was a positive reflection the work by the Head of Finance and the Senior Management Team. The External Auditor suggested that they would be providing unqualified accounts.

There was one Internal Audit report (Procurement and Contract Management) presented to the Committee which had received a 'satisfactory' rating.

Members were advised that there had also been a closed session with the Internal and External Auditors.

There was one item for decision by the Board:

9.2 Risk Management – Strategic Risk Register 2016/17.

The Strategic Risk Register 2016/17 was discussed at Committee with agreement that it should be recommended for approval to the Board. Following discussion the Board agreed to approve the Strategic Risk Register 2016/17.

The Board approved the Strategic Risk Register 2016/17

9.3 Minutes – 27 May 2016

Members were advised that the draft minutes from the meeting on 27 May 2016 were included for information and will be discussed and agreed at the ARAC on 9 September 2016

## 10. POLICY & PRACTICE COMMITTEE – UPDATE 17 JUNE 2016

10.1 The Chair of the Committee updated members on the meeting that took place on 17 June 2016. Members were advised that there were three policies passed from Committee to the Board with recommendations to the Board to approve.

10.2 **Domestic Abuse Policy & Procedures (Operational)** – The policy is an operational policy and procedures on how PBNI deal with clients and victims in relation to domestic abuse. Following a full discussion at Committee it was agreed to recommend approval to the Board. A member asked if there was also a staff policy to which the Chair of the Committee confirmed there was a separate policy.

The Board approved the Domestic Abuse Policy & Procedures (Operational).

10.3 **Complaints Policy** – The Chair of the Committee advised that following full discussion at Committee, some wording changes had been requested and these could be seen by the members as tracked changes. The Board then discussed the policy and requested a further change to the first paragraph – 'welcome complaints and learn from it'. The Head of Communications confirmed that the change would be made. The Board approved the policy subject to the wording change requested.

10.4 **PBNI Statement of Policy on Employer Discretions** – The Chair of the Committee advised the members that it had been agreed at Committee that if there was further feedback from the unions between Committee and Board then changes would be tabled. It was confirmed to members by the Head of HR that further comment had not been received from the unions - NAPO advised they had insufficient time. The Head of HR advised the Board that NAPO had been advised that the timescale had been imposed but that if NAPO had subsequent issues they could raise for discussion with Head of HR in the first instance. It was advised to members that the policy context was purely financially based considering affordability. The Board agreed to approve the Statement of Policy on Employer Discretions.

The Board approved PBNI Statement of Policy on Employer Discretions.

**10.5 Feedback on Staff Engagement Days** – There was positive feedback from staff on the engagement days. The paper was discussed at Committee and was presented to the Board for information.

The Board noted the paper.

**10.6 Evaluation of Social Media Campaign** – The purpose of using social media is to get the Probation message out to a wider audience. The evaluation showed that this has been successful and the Campaign had met its goals. The paper was discussed at Committee and was presented to the Board for information.

The Board noted the paper.

**10.7 Implementation of Service User App** – It was advised that the Service User App was now available but it was hoped that the Minister would formally launch it. The App is innovative and was developed using research of similar Apps. The cost of the App and its maintenance were discussed. The Members were given a demonstration of the App and its contents. There was a discussion on suggested content. The members agreed that it was an innovative tool for Probation.

The Board noted the paper and demonstration.

## **11. ESTATES**

### **11.1 Business case for the Londonderry office (Paper 71/16)**

The (Acting) Deputy Director introduced the business case to the members and advised that it had not been to CRC prior to Board due to the timeframes required to progress the case. Members were advised of the process of identifying a suitable property and the options open to PBNI. The costing of the suggested premises was discussed and it was confirmed that the property would be DDA compliant. It was also advised that the two current properties would be sold and the monies from the sales would be used to fit out the new premises.

In answer to a question from a member on the reason for moving, it was confirmed that it had been the intention, as detailed in the Estates Strategy (approved by the Board in 2014), to find a suitably located single premise in Derry to serve the City prior to the incident at Crawford Square.

The Board approved for the business case to be progressed.

## **12. COMMUNICATIONS – LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT (PAPER 73/16)**

The Chairman introduced the paper and gave members the background to the current engagement with stakeholders and politicians. Again PBNI have offered premises for the Justice Committee to hold a Committee session outside of the Assembly. The Chairman advised of the meeting scheduled with the Minister of Justice on 7 July 2016.

Moving forward, there is a need to ensure there is no duplication of stakeholder engagement already undertaken. Building on engagement with key stakeholders through member contact would be a helpful ambassadorial role for PBNI and building confidence in the criminal justice system. Using members' levels of influence and interest would contribute to developing an understanding of the work PBNI carries out. With this in mind members were asked if they would complete a form that will be sent via email on their spheres of influence and areas of interest. This would help to develop a more structured approach of engagement planning for the coming months.

**Action: Form to be sent to Members via email and completed and returned to the Personal Secretary.**

The Board noted the paper.

### **13. FINANCE OUTTURN – MAY 2016 (PAPER 74/16)**

In the absence of the Head of Finance and the (Acting) Director, members were advised that any queries they had on the paper presented were to be sent to the Board Secretary who will in turn secure an answer from the Head of Finance on her return from annual leave. The Chairman noted the good narrative provided. A member asked if NIPS was paying for the two additional staff. The (Acting) Deputy Director advised that they were not paying: this had been flagged as a pressure to the DOJ and the cost has been met in the June Monitoring Round.

The Board noted the paper.

### **14. COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW (CSR) (PAPER 75/16)**

In the absence of the Head of Finance, prior to going on leave, she had provided a paper by way of an update for members. A further update will be provided to the CRC on 29 July 2016.

The Board noted the paper.

### **15. PROGRAMME AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT UPDATE (PAPER 76/16)**

The (Acting) Deputy Director advised members that the first tender exercise for the Graffiti Bus Project, was not successful as it required a redesign of the van due to the weight to be carried in it. An updated tender had now gone to Procurement.

The Board noted the paper.

### **16. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION REPORT (PAPER 77/16)**

The caseload statistics were deferred to the PPC. A member made reference to the reduced caseload but was advised that this was not typical as the backlog from the Crown Court dispute will not be cleared until September.

The Sick Absence report was deferred to the CRC.

There was one SFO (Serious Further Offence) reported to members with the (Acting) Deputy Director advising that there were no adverse Practice Standard's issues with the case.

The Board noted the paper.

### **17. PROGRAMME OF VISITS AND BUSINESS (PAPER 78/16)**

It was noted that Board Members, Ian Jeffers and Robin Mullan, had visited Programmes based at Alderwood and they briefed the other members on their visit. Discussion ensued on qualifications for and acknowledgement of skills for the work that Programmes do, and an appreciation of the challenging work which staff carry out. There was a discussion around an awarding body for skills and training courses that could be done locally.

**Action: The (Acting) Deputy Director to speak to the Head of Psychology and Intervention on training and awarding bodies for Programme work.**

The Board noted the paper.

**18. BOARD WORK PLAN 2016 – 2017 (PAPER 79/16)**

Upcoming meetings will be the CRC on 29 July 2016; the Board on 19 August 2016 and PPC on 26 August 2016.

Updated versions of the paper are available to view on MinutePad under 'documents'.

The Board noted the paper.

**19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

**20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on Friday 19 August 2016 at PBNI HQ, Conference Room at 9.30 am.

**21. CLOSED SESSION**

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Vilma Patterson  
Chairman

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Date