

PROBATION BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

BOARD MEETING – 21 October 2016**9.30 AM – Ballymena Office****378th MEETING – 10th of THE ELEVENTH TERM OF OFFICE****ATTENDANCE**

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

Officials

Mr P Doran, Deputy Director
Mr Hugh Hamill, (Acting) Deputy Director
Mrs G Robinson, Head of HR
Mr T Gilliland, Accountant
Mr M Cox, Board Secretary
Mrs W Rodgers, Personal Secretary (Minutes)

Observer

Ms Anna Egner, Business Development Manager

1. OPENING REMARKS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the Ballymena office. Mr Doran advised the Members of the functions that worked out of the Ballymena Office and the corporate functions that were housed there. The Deputy Chair advised that the training room where the Board meeting was being held was the room that the Justice Committee met in when they held their meeting in the PBNI's office.

The Chairman welcomed Tom Gilliland, Accountant to the meeting; he is covering financial matters for Catherine Teggart whilst she is on leave and until Maria Bowers returns from leave. Anna Egner was also welcomed to the meeting as an observer.

The Members were advised that following the competition for the position of Chief Executive of the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, Cheryl Lamont had been the successful candidate. The recruitment process had been thorough and robust. Ms Lamont brings a wealth of experience to the role and the Chairman and Board look forward to working closely with her.

Members were advised that following the conclusion of the governance business of the Board, a strategic session would follow.

No conflicts of interests were declared.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from: Mrs B Stuart, Member; Mrs P Shepherd, Member; Ms C Lamont (Acting) Director.

3. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES (M08/16)

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 16 September 2016 were accepted as an accurate account of the meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Paper 109/16)

The Chairman advised of the change in format of the Matters Arising paper. Members were again advised of their outstanding actions and asked that these be completed as soon as possible. All other actions were noted.

Action: Members to respond to actions, Board Members.

The Board noted the Matters Arising.

5. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – VERBAL

The Chairman advised members of the PBNI choir that had been formed and any member who would like to join will be most welcome. The choir meets every Wednesday from 5.30 – 6.30 pm in the Conference Room at PBNI HQ.

The meetings with MLAs and key stakeholders continue with a list of meetings enumerated on the Programme of Visits and Business paper, agenda item 15. A meeting has been arranged to meet with David Lavery (DOJ) on the Corporate Plan. Mr Lavery is also the nominated lead official to deliver Outcome 7 of the Programme for Government (PfG) and the meeting will be an opportunity to ask Mr Lavery how the work on Outcome 7 will be delivered. Anthony Harbinson as the Director of PBNI's sponsoring department has been advised of the meeting.

There have been a number of initiatives and launch events in the past number of week such as Accepting Differences which is to tackle hate crime and the launch of the PBNI App. These have all received good media coverage on social media and newspaper coverage.

Ms Matthews and Mr Cox visited the Andersonstown Road office recently. Ms Matthew briefed Members on the visits and advised of the issues raised by the staff, for example, ECOs and the work involved in the supervision of these Orders. It was an enjoyable and valuable visit. Mr Cox advised that he thought the visit had been appreciated by the staff and made the Board more visible. The Chairman and Mr Jardine visited the Newtownards Road office. Mr Jardine advised that it was also a useful visit and would concur with the comments made on the visit to Andersonstown Road. He described Newtownards Road as a 'feel-good' office, although staff did voice their concerns on funding. Mr Mullan and Mrs Gillespie will be visiting Maghaberry on the 25 October 2016 and the Board looks forward to their feedback.

Dates of meetings in the 2017/18 year will be covered by the Board Secretary under agenda item 18 of this meeting. The Corporate Planning Sub-group will be meeting on the 25 October at 9.30 am – 12 noon.

Following the appointment of the Chief Executive, all other acting up roles can now be addressed.

The Board noted the update.

6. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE – VERBAL

In the absence of the (Acting) Director, the Deputy Director provided the update to members. On behalf of the Management Executive Team, Mr Doran advised of the team's pleasure at the appointment of Ms Lamont to the Chief Executive position.

The Members were advised of a number of questions asked by Lord Morrow with one particularly of relevance to the Board, asking who the Board were accountable to. The Members were given

a summary of some of the questions asked and the responses. Following discussion it was suggested that the PBNI may wish to seek engagement with Lord Morrow.

The Victim Information Scheme has had a change in practice from 19 September 2016 and now PBNI can make direct contact with victims to advise of PBNI's service.

The Deputy Director attended a conference on 'Criminal Justice since 2015' in London. This was Minister Sugden's first major speech on Criminal Justice. She was asked two questions, one of which was in reference to the requirement in Northern Ireland for Probation Officers to have a social work qualification, this was well received by those in attendance.

The recruitment process for Probation Officers continues and the process for appointing Area Managers had completed.

The Board noted the update.

7. CORRESPONDENCE (Paper 110/16)

The Chairman advised members that there was one piece of correspondence for members to note.

- 7.1 Correspondence received from Paul Frew, Chair of the Justice Committee, thanking PBNI for hosting the Justice Committee meeting in Ballymena.

The Board noted the correspondence

8. CORPORATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

8.1 Committee Update

The Chair of the Committee gave members an update on the Committee meeting held on 30 September 2016. It was advised that the business case for Shipquay Street has had to be withdrawn due to an issue with a rear exit, the search for other premises that meets PBNI's requirements continues. Discussion ensued on the use of the capital monies allocated for this project. With regard to IT, the business case on the Case Management System continues with Gillian Colhoun, seconded from DOJ, working through the process. The sick absence figures received an in-depth discussion, and members advised, that sick absence is now on the Operational Risk Register. The Head of HR briefed the Members on the types of illness that were causing the figures to be high. The Chairman commented that there is sympathy and understanding of the illnesses and in particular serious illness, but the Board were looking for assurance that the policies are followed fairly and equally. The Head of HR confirmed that this was the case.

The Board noted the update.

8.2 Draft Minutes – 30 September 2016

The Chair of the Committee advised that draft minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2016 were included for members' information and these would be agreed at the next Committee meeting on 25 November 2016.

The Board noted the draft minutes.

9. AUDIT & RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

9.1 Committee Update

The Chair of the Committee provided members with an update on the meeting held on the 7 October 2016. PBNI had received a 'satisfactory' rating on two Internal Audit reports. It was advised that there had been a change to the rating of reports, 'substantial' was no longer in use. The Chair of the Committee advised that there may be a move to an independent centralised audit organisation that would service all divisions of the Civil Service. The concerns that this caused were discussed with an agreement that the ARAC will report to the Board after their next meeting in January. A decision will then be made as to the way forward for PBNI.

Action: ARAC to report back to the Board in February 2017 on any update on centralisation of Internal Audit

Members noted the update.

9.2 Public Accounts report on Northern Ireland Events Company (Paper 111/16)

Members were advised that the Public Accounts report into the Northern Ireland Events Company had been discussed at ARAC. It had been recommended by both internal audit and external audit that this be made available to all non-executive directors as there were a number of recommendations that relate to Arm's Length Bodies. Members were asked to note the paper.

The Board noted the paper.

9.3 Draft Minutes – 7 October 2016

The Chair of the Committee advised that draft minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2016 were included for members' information and these would be agreed at the next Committee meeting on 27 January 2017.

The Board noted the draft minutes.

10. PBNI Managed Print Service Replacement Contract (Paper 112/16)

The Deputy Director advised the meeting that the paper on PBNI's Managed Print Services Replacement Contract had come directly to the Board due to time constraints as the current contract was due to cease in December 2016.

The Members were provided with background into the contract. At the last procurement of print services in 2009 there was no shared services contract that PBNI could use. IT Assist now have a shared service contract that PBNI has been named on and therefore PBNI can avail of the terms and conditions of the contract. It was advised that there were three options laid out in the paper. The recommendation was that option 3 was the most appropriate (the IT Assist contract option). Following discussion the Board agreed to approve option 3 of the paper.

The Board approved option 3 as set out in the paper.

11. BUSINESS PLAN Q2 UPDATE 2016/17 (Paper 113/16)

The (Acting) Deputy Director provided the Members with an update on the Q2 Business Plan. There were nine objectives, 8 receiving a 'green' rating and 1 receiving a 'red' rating. The 'red' rating referred to the sick absence target for the year. The Chairman advised that the Business Plan reflected the activity that had taken place over the first six months of the year and provided assurance to the Board. Following discussion the importance of 'cost modelling' was agreed.

The Board noted the paper.

13. FINANCE OUTTURN – September 2016 (Paper 114/16)

Mr Gilliland presented the paper to the Members, highlighting a number of areas. The underspend is sitting at £44k as of the 30 September 2016. The forecast variation of £528k reflects the recent increase in budget approved by the DOJ to RESET of £100k and ECO £30k. It also reflects funding received from Fresh Start.

The Board noted the paper.

14. PROGRAMME AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT UPDATE (Paper 115/16)

Mr Gilliland presented the paper to the Members and highlighted a number of areas. As previously discussed in the meeting, the Shipquay Street business case had been withdrawn. The contract for the Managed Print Services had also been discussed and approved under agenda item 10. The 'graffiti van' should be delivered by March 2017. Discussion ensued on promoting the launch of the van.

The Board noted the paper.

15. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION PAPER (Paper 116/16)

The Members were provided with an update on the Management Information Paper. The case load statistics will be discussed at the next meeting of the Policy and Practice Committee. It was advised that PIMS, the current Case Management System, had been enhanced with a new server and testing had worked well. The PBNI network had received its accreditation from the DOJ Lead Accreditor. Attention was brought to page 5 of the report on the Communications update and the activity undertaken in the month particularly with MLAs. It was also noted that the Head of Communications had attended the Confederation of European Probation (CEP) Annual Conference in Bucharest and provide an input on the PBNI App. PBNI was also presented with two awards by the CEP: one for the Public Protection Team and one for Jean O'Neill, Area Manager on Inspire Research.

The Board noted the paper

16. PROGRAMME OF VISITS AND BUSINESS (PAPER 117/16)

The Board noted the paper.

17. BOARD WORK PLAN 2016 – 2017 (PAPER 118/16)

The Board noted the paper.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

18.1 Mrs Gillespie advised members that she had been making a documentary on Domestic Violence and it is due to be aired on the BBC. The Chairman and (Acting) Director had been kept advised at all stages. Dr O'Hare has also taken part in the programme.

18.2 The Chairman asked members if they were willing to continue the Christmas gift of chocolates to the offices. The Members agreed.

18.3 The Chairman asked if members wished to go for Christmas lunch prior to Christmas or in January.

Action: An email to be sent to members for their thoughts on lunch.

18.4 An update on a matter arising was provided by the (Acting) Deputy Director. Action 4 (a) of agenda item 4. SBNI had received 11 recommendations with the main focus being on child protection over a range of areas. The Chair of SBNI had written to the Department of Justice committing to giving more focus to child protection.

The Board noted the update.

19. BOARD SECRETARY’S BUSINESS

The Board Secretary advised that dates of Board and Committee meetings had been distributed for January to March 2017. It was advised that the current practice for Board meetings will continue. The Board Secretary will write to the Committee Chairs to gauge their thoughts on the frequency and timings of meeting, ensuring that the committees met the number of times as laid out in the Standing Orders.

Action: Board Secretary to write to Committee Chairs.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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

 Vilma Patterson
 Chairman

 Date