

PROBATION BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

BOARD MEETING – 16 December 2016**9.30 AM – PBNI HQ****380th MEETING – 12th of THE ELEVENTH TERM OF OFFICE****ATTENDANCE**

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| Mrs Vilma Patterson (Chairman) | Mrs J Erskine (Deputy Chair) |
| Mrs J Gillespie | Mr E Jardine |
| Mr I Jeffers | Ms A Matthews |
| Mr R Mullan | Mr T O’Hanlon |
| Mr G OhEara | Mrs P Shepherd |
| Mr D Wall | |

Officials

Ms C Lamont, Chief Executive
 Mr P Doran, Deputy Director
 Mr Hugh Hamill, (Acting) Deputy Director
 Mrs G Robinson, Head of HR
 Mrs M Bowers, (Acting) Head of Finance
 Mr M Cox, Board Secretary
 Mrs W Rodgers, Personal Secretary (Minutes)

Guests Presenters

Dr Nicola Carr
 Dr Clare Dwyer

1. Presentation on Risks, Rights and Justice focus in on young people’s (16 – 24) experience of paramilitary violence

The Chairman welcomed Dr Carr and her colleague, Dr Dwyer, to the meeting. She set the scene for the research from Probation’s perspective, most obviously its role in the delivery of some of the ‘Fresh Start’ Agreement’s recommendations.

Dr Carr set out the background to the research together with the study’s aims and the methodology used. The presentation covered young people’s views and experience of paramilitaries in their areas. The research has identified that young people – from across the community – have similar views which can be both ambivalent and contradictory. Dr Carr also covered the views of young people towards formal institutions. The research has shown that there are some inter-generational patterns of behaviour, which demonstrate the strength of the prevailing culture to be addressed and changed.

Dr Carr explained that the research has not yet been published. She offered to provide a summary of the main points and that was accepted.

The Chairman thanked Drs Carr and Dwyer for their informative presentation. She also thanked Dr Carr for the help and advice she had given Probation over a number of years and extended best wishes in her new post in England.

Dr Carr and Dr Dwyer left the meeting at about 10.15am

OPENING REMARKS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. The Chairman welcomed Mrs Bowers to the meeting now that she has returned from leave. It was placed on record the Board's thanks to Mr Gilliland who acting up during Mrs Bowers' leave.

No conflicts of interests were declared.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from: Mr D Brown, Member; Mrs B Stuart, Member.

3. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES (M10/16)

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 18 November 2016 were accepted as an accurate account of the meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Paper 132/16)

The Chairman drew attention to outstanding actions for members and asked that these be completed as soon as possible. Action 5 (a) is due to be brought to the Board in February 2017. All actions from the 18 November 2016 were noted as being completed.

Action: Members to respond to actions, Board Members.

The Board noted the Matters Arising.

5. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – VERBAL

The Chairman congratulated Mrs Erskine on her appointment as Chair of the Business Services Organisation.

Members were advised that office visits were in the process of being arranged and that it was a requirement for members to make visits each year to the teams. This gives the members an opportunity to see the work of the teams first hand so they can be more informed and that staff will have the opportunity to meet members of the Board and engage with them. This is a recommendation within Best Practice for Board Effectiveness.

The Chairman advised members of the lifetime achievement award presented to Jean O'Neill, Area Manager, at the Annual Social Work Awards Conference. It was advised that she had written to Ms O'Neill on behalf of the Board to congratulate her.

Mr Sammy Douglas MLA, at the Oral Hearing on 29 November 2016, had congratulated the Chief Executive on her appointment and invited the Minister to do likewise. The Chairman read the transcript of the Minister's comments. This shows the level of engagement with MLAs has been productive in promoting PBNI.

The Chairman attended the CIPFA Annual Governance and Leadership event. It was particularly interesting in regard to the Programme for Government (PfG).

The Minister visited the Coleraine Office on 15 December 2016. The Chief Executive will provide an update on this under agenda item 7 of the agenda.

There have been four PfG events run by the Department and there was PBNI representation at all events. The Chairman thanked Mr Jardine for attending one of the events on behalf of the Board.

The Management Executive Team, the Chairman and Board Secretary were due to meet with the Special Adviser on 15 December 2016 but the meeting was cancelled at the last minute due to Ministerial business. This meeting will be rescheduled for January.

Members were advised that the chocolates from the Board had been distributed to offices and staff and were very much appreciated with notes of thanks being received.

The Board noted the update.

6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UPDATE – VERBAL

The Chief Executive advised that the first operational visit by the Minister of Justice to Probation had taken place in the Coleraine office on 15 December 2016. The visit was hosted by Stephen Hamilton, Assistant Director and Grainne Teague, Area Manager. Four to five community partners were also invited to attend and meet the Minister. The Minister met with staff and reiterated her support for Probation. She commented that she wishes to do more with Problem Solving Courts. The visit was a successful and positive event.

As an update on recruitment, the Chief Executive is continuing to work with the Head of HR to recruit for the outstanding posts which have acting positions currently. The post of Deputy Director which will be known as Director of Operations will be recruited in January with the posts of Assistant Director following that. It is anticipated that the recruitment will be completed before the end of the financial year.

The Chief Executive thanked Mr Doran and Mr Hamill for attending the PfG events on her behalf.

The Chief Executive advised that Jean O'Neill, Area Manager, was the first colleague from Probation to receive an award from the Social Work Awards. Jean received a lifetime achievement award for her work with female offenders. The Head of HR advised that the panel of Legal Island had shortlisted PBNI for the Equality and Diversity Award for PBNI's Dignity at Work and Hate Crime policies. The Chairman congratulated the Head of HR on being shortlisted for the awards.

Members were advised of a charity ball being organised for the 4 March 2017 at the Europa Hotel. If members wish to purchase tickets please contact secretariat.

The Chief Executive thanked the Chairman and Board for the chocolates which had been distributed throughout the Organisation and were very much appreciated by staff. She wished the Board a Happy Christmas and 2017.

Mr Wall advised members that he had been in Macedonia with Mr Ian McGlade, Probation Officer, and wished to record how impressed he was with Mr McGlade's work and his work with domestic violence. The Chief Executive advised she would pass on Mr Wall's comments.

Action: Chief Executive to pass on Mr Wall's comments to Mr McGlade, Chief Executive.

The Board noted the update.

7. CORRESPONDENCE (Paper 133/16)

The Chairman advised members that there were six pieces of correspondence for members to note. One further item had been received and was tabled. All correspondence was congratulating Ms Lamont on her appointment as Chief Executive. This is a great endorsement of Probation's work.

- 7.1 Letter received from Sir Declan Morgan, LCJ by the Chairman – congratulating Cheryl on her appointment
- 7.2 Letter received from Geraldine Hanna, Chief Executive of Victim Support NI by the Chairman – congratulating Cheryl on her appointment
- 7.3 Letter received from Vivian Geiran, Director of Probation Service by the Chairman – congratulating Cheryl on her appointment

- 7.4 Letter received from Claire Sugden MLA, Minister of Justice by Cheryl Lamont – congratulating her on her appointment
- 7.5 Letter received from John Larkin QC, Attorney General for Northern Ireland by Cheryl Lamont – congratulating her on her appointment
- 7.6 Letter received from Amanda Stewart, Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Policing Board by Cheryl Lamont – congratulating her on her appointment

TABLED – Letter from Secretary General of Confederation of European Probation (CEP) – congratulating Cheryl on her appointment.

The Board noted the correspondence

8. CORPORATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE (CRC)

8.1 Committee Update

The Chair of the Committee gave members an update on the Committee meeting held on 25 November 2016. It was advised that there were two papers coming to the Board for approval at this meeting.

There was an update from IT on the Case Management System (CMS) with the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) currently with the DOJ. There are no difficulties anticipated.

The Financial Outturn report was discussed. There was discussion around the current underspend and spend required on the Estate. The Committee discussed the issue of Antrim Road which had to be vacated and staff relocated due to a health and safety issue with the chimneys. The 23 staff from Antrim Road will be relocated with 72 North Street (the old Inspire office) identified as the preferred short term option.

The Committee had discussed its effectiveness and it was timely to look at this in the context of the Board. The Committee will report back to the Board when their deliberations are completed.

The Board noted the update.

8.2 Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Service Delivery (Paper 134/16)

The Deputy Director introduced the paper and gave the definition of a SOC. The Members were given the background into the paper and that there was need to future proof delivery of ICT. It was advised that page 1 of the paper covered the full range of services provided and page 2 outlined the five options available. It was advised that there had been consultation with the unions who did make responses.

The Corporate Resources Committee discussed the five options at its meeting on 25 November 2016 and agreed to recommend approval to the Board to move to the next stage of the Outline Business Case (OBC). A project team would be set up with the Chief Executive being the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO). The DOJ have agreed to extend the secondment of Gillian Colhoun who will work two days a week for PBNI until 30 April 2017. The five options now require to have the associated costs put to them and the private sector must be included.

The Board approved that the SOC could proceed to the OBC stage.

8.3 NNC Terms and Conditions (Paper 135/16)

The Head of HR presented the paper to the Members advising on the background for the need to review the Terms and Conditions of Probation staff. NNC are reviewing their

procedures, which, if these go through then Northern Ireland cannot follow. The paper had been presented to the CRC at its meeting on 25 November 2016 where it was agreed to recommend the prescribed approach to the Board. An interim pay structure for 2017/18 is being looked at and then a business case for the Terms and Conditions for Probation staff will be brought through committee and Board at each stage.

The Chairman noted that this did have implications for the Board and would be a considerable piece of work to be carried out. Different options need to be considered particularly to lead to the best outcome.

The paper was approved by the Board to proceed as described. The Committee and Board will be kept informed of progress.

8.4 **Draft Minutes – 25 November 2016 (Draft Minutes)**

The Chair of the Committee advised that draft minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2016 were included for members' information and these would be approved at the next Committee meeting on 3 March 2017.

The Board noted the draft minutes.

10. GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY, POLICY AND PROCEDURES (Paper 136/16)

The Board Secretary advised that the Gifts and Hospitality Policy and Procedures had been presented to the Board at its last meeting on 18 November 2016. Following a query on the provision of alcohol and was the policy consistent with that of the DOJ, the Board had deferred approval until the queries had been answered. The presented paper provided confirmation that the correct controls were in place and that the policy and procedures did match that of the DOJ.

The Board approved the Gifts and Hospitality, Policy and Procedure.

11. PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION RESPONSE (Paper 137/16)

The Chairman introduced the paper and thanked the Board Secretary and the Executive Team for their work on the response. The Members were advised that this was the second request for a response to the PfG. PBNI had responded to the first consultation call. Following this there was a second consultation call on the Government's proposed action plan. The Board Secretary advised that the 'action plans' were the most important part of the PfG to respond to. This gives PBNI an opportunity to promote Probation and what it can do.

Discussion ensued on the compatibility with the Corporate Plan and where PBNI sat within the Outcomes set out in the PfG. Cost Modelling and effectiveness and efficiency were discussed. The comparative cost of running Enhanced Combination Orders (ECOs) and other sentencing options was discussed. Members were informed that work is being undertaken by PWC on cost modelling. During the discussion, reference was made to Prof Neil Gibson's comments at the September Board meeting on demonstrating the hidden cost savings and costs in social value and human potential across the various types of sentences. A lengthy discussion ensued on cost analysis of different sentencing options. It was acknowledged that some savings would be marginal in the short term, although these would be progress in the right direction as greater savings and with better outcomes would require significant changes in the current resource distribution priorities.

Suggested wording changes were noted by the Board Secretary and he agreed to incorporate the changes to the document which had to be submitted to the Executive Office by 23 December 2016.

Action: Board Secretary to include word changes to the document as agreed, Board Secretary

The Board approved the PfG response with the suggested wording changes being made.

12. DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2017-20 (Paper 138/16)

The Board Secretary presented the Draft Corporate Plan to the Members and highlighted the changes made from the last draft presented to the Board. The launch of the Plan is due to take place in March 2017. It was advised that the Sub-group will be convened at the end of January, beginning of February 2017.

Discussion ensued on the contents of the Plan with a member asking for a paragraph on Probation's unique and challenging role together with working between the Criminal Justice and the Community. Mr Wall suggested a change to the wording on page one, which was agreed by the Members.

Action: Mr Wall to provide wording change to the Board Secretary, Mr Wall

A member asked that at point 15 of the document that the term 'service user' be defined

Action: Board Secretary to complete.

The Chairman thanked the Board Secretary, Mr Hamill and Ms McGreevy for the work on the document thus far.

The Board approved the Draft Corporate Plan, as amended.

13. FINANCIAL OUTTURN – NOVEMBER REPORT (Paper 139/16)

The year to date underspend is £108k or 0.98% of the budget as of 30 November 2016.

There are one off legal costs expected and a slight overspend on staff. It was advised the Executive Team have monthly meetings to oversee the budget and assurance was given to the Board that the year-end final figure will come in around budget. It was advised that delays in a couple of projects from the October Monitoring estimates explains the variance but re-profiling in the January Outturn once the January Monitoring input is confirmed will be done.

A member asked what the tolerance was for overspend / underspend. It was advised that last year the underspend came in at £30k under budget. The Chairman noted that although the rule of thumb would be 1% or below as underspend, the spend should be as near to budget as possible without going over and also allowing for the need for accruals.

A member asked for an update on the VAT situation. An update was given with an undertaking to keep the Board informed of any updates.

14. PROGRAMME AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT UPDATE (Paper 140/16)

The (Acting) Head of Finance advised that the current Business Cases and Programme remained as last month's update. The Managed Print Service Replacement is with the DOJ and should be signed in the near future. The Board noted all other projects.

The Board noted the paper.

15. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION PAPER (Paper 141/16)

The Head of HR advised members that the sick absence figures continue to rise. The figures received a full discussion at CRC on the 25 November 2016. Comment had been given by the Chair of CRC under agenda item 9 of this meeting.

The (Acting) Deputy Director advised members that the Justice Committee will be undertaking a 'review of the need for stalking legislation in Northern Ireland with the Chief Executive being invited to submit written comment. Extern have applied for Peace IV funding for cross border employability in the North West and NIACRO have also applied for Peace IV funding for a cross border project to address Hate Crime. PBNI have supported both bids.

As previously mentioned in the meeting, members were advised that some of the staff from the Antrim Road office were being relocated to 72 North Street, the Inspire building. A rolling lease has been signed. The work has started on finding an alternative solution to the Antrim Road office.

It was advised that there were no Serious Further Offences to be reported.

The Board noted the paper.

16. PROGRAMME OF VISITS AND BUSINESS (Paper 142/16)

The Chairman advised that Mrs Erskine had attended a breakfast meeting, hosted by the NIAO, on 7 December 2016 on behalf of the Chairman. All other visits were noted.

The Board noted the paper.

17. BOARD WORK PLAN 2016 – 2017 (PAPER 143/16)

The Board Secretary advised that dates for 2017/2018 will be sent to committee chairs for their review to ensure that the dates are appropriate and fit in with the needs of the Organisation.

Action: Dates of proposed committee meetings to be sent to committee chairs, Board Secretary.

The Board noted the paper.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

18.1 The Chairman advised that the Head of Communications had been approached for Probation to take a four page article in AgendaNI. This would take the form of a roundtable discussion. Discussion ensued as to who would be good partners to participate in this. How the interview would be run was explained to the Members. There was discussion on the cost of the article and the circulation figures of the magazine. It was advised that the Head of Communications considered this to be good opportunity to promote Probation but the finer details and costs would need to be worked through. It would also provide a good platform for the launch of the Corporate Plan. The Board will be advised of any updates on this item. Members discussed the cost and suggested that the cost be negotiated and were in agreement with the proposal to participate.

18.2 The Chairman reminded members that the launch of the Corporate Plan had been scheduled for 27 March 2017 in the Long Gallery, Stormont. It was advised that the Minister was no longer available until after 3 pm on that day. Other dates being considered were the 28th or 30th of March. Members were asked to note the update.

Action: Members to note the possibility of the change in the date for the launch of the Corporate Plan 2017-2020.

19. BOARD SECRETARY’S BUSINESS

- 19.1 Members were advised that the closing dates for receiving expenses each month will be sent out.
Action: Payroll dates to be sent to members, Secretariat.
- 19.2 Return of the Register of Interests for members is requested by 31 December 2016 to allow for a paper to be prepared for the January Board
Action: Register of Interests to be returned by 31 December 2016, Board Members.
- 19.3 Return of the Self-Assessment forms by members is requested by 31 December 2016 to allow for a paper to be prepared for the January Board
Action: Self-Assessment forms to be returned by 31 December 2016, Board Members.
- 19.4 A suggested list of offices for members has been received from the Executive Team and dates will be distributed to members.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on Friday 20 January 2017, PBNI HQ, Conference Room, 9.30 am.

Vilma Patterson
Chairman

Date