



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Meeting of the Policing Authority

Date: 8 September 2023

Venue: By Zoom

Authority Meeting in Private

Attendance

Authority: Bob Collins (Chairperson), Elaine Byrne, Anthony Harbinson, Valerie Judge, Paul Mageean, Moling Ryan, Donal de Buitleir, Jane Mulcahy.

Staff of the Authority: Helen Hall (Chief Executive), also appointed to act as Secretary in the absence of the Authority Secretary

Apologies: Deborah Donnelly

1. Meeting of Members in Private

The Authority did not exercise its option to have a meeting in private.

2. Chairperson's Opening Remarks

The meeting agenda was approved as drafted. No conflicts of interest were declared by the Members in relation to any of the items for consideration.

At the outset of the meeting, the Chairperson provided Members with an update on his recent discussions with Department officials on the progress of the PCSA bill.

In particular, he drew Members' attention to the proposed categorisation by the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform of the future Policing and Community Safety Authority. This would be at a level considerably below that of the present Authority and of the new Garda Board. This derived from a policy of aligning the category of the boards of public bodies, and associated stipend, with the grading of the relevant Chief Executive.

Members discussed their concerns at the application of this principle which takes no account of the very different character and workload of future Authority membership. The PCSA, in common with the present Authority, will have responsibility not just for oversight of the agency but also for oversight of national policing. The extent and consequential character of the commitment, through regular Committee meetings with senior Garda Personnel and the monthly meetings with the Commissioner, many in public, represented a very particular level of engagement and responsibility.

Members were also greatly concerned that the proposed categorisation would inevitably be construed as a clear public statement about the relationship between the PCSA and the Garda Síochána – at variance with repeated Ministerial commitments. It was agreed that the Chairperson would write to the Secretary General and express the significant concerns of the Authority on the matter.

A_126_01	Chairperson to write to the Secretary General of the Department of Justice to express the Authority's concerns about the suggested categorisation of the future PCSA.	ASAP	Chairperson

3. Appointments

In the context of its statutory responsibilities in relation to the appointment of the next Deputy Commissioner of the Garda Síochána, the Authority considered the requirements relating to knowledge, ability and suitability for appointment to the rank of Deputy Garda Commissioner for the purposes of the forthcoming selection competition. Members noted that the Executive had worked with the Public Appointments Service in drafting these requirements and had consulted with the Garda Commissioner on the matter. The Authority approved the requirements and asked the Chief Executive to arrange for them to be submitted to the Department of Justice for approval by the Minister for Justice in accordance with the Garda Síochána Act 2005 (as amended).

The Authority considered and approved a request from the Garda Síochána for a temporary increase of two in the current ECF of 47 at the Chief Superintendent rank, due to a deficit in the numbers actually available at that rank and in the recognition of the importance of facilitating the continued rollout of the Operating Model.

The Authority noted the copy that the Commissioner provided of a letter he wrote to the Minister for Justice regarding retirement benefits. It was discussed and agreed that it would not be appropriate for the Authority to intervene on such a matter.

No.	Action point	By Date	By Whom
A_126_02	Write to the Minister for Justice to seek ministerial approval for the requirements relating to knowledge, ability and suitability for appointment to the rank of Deputy Garda Commissioner for the purposes of the forthcoming selection competition.	ASAP	Chief Executive
A_126_03	Write to the Department of Justice noting the Authority's approval for a temporary increase in the approved level of chief superintendents and seeking their consent for same and requesting that they arrange to seek the consent of the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform.	ASAP	Chief Executive