



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Meeting of Garda Organisation Development Committee

Date: 16 October 2019

Venue: 90 North King Street, Dublin 7.

Part A – Committee Meeting

Attendance

Authority: Bob Collins (Chair), Valerie Judge, Pat Costello, Melanie Pine (external Committee member), Josephine Feehily (items 6-12)

Secretary: Aoife Clabby

Executive: Helen Hall, Margaret Tumelty, Aileen Healy (items 1-12), Fiona Larthwell, Sharon O'Brien, Annie O'Malley, Karen Shelly (items 8-18)

Apologies: Paul Mageean

1. Closed session – Authority Members only

The standing option to conduct a closed session was not exercised.

2. Chair's Opening Remarks

- a. There were no declarations of interest in respect of any of the agenda items.
- b. A brief update on the Authority meeting, held on 27th September, was provided by the Chair.
- c. The Chairperson drew members' attention to the requirement to complete a self-assessment questionnaire, having regard to the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. It was noted that the on-line survey would be circulated to the members subsequent to the meeting and that summary outcomes would be circulated for consideration at November meeting.
- d. The Chairperson requested an item on planning for 2020, to include the focus and frequency of meetings, would be tabled for consideration and discussion at the November meeting.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of previous meeting, held on the 17th July, were approved by the Committee and signed. There were no matters arising. The Committee noted receipt of the Garda Decision Making Model and welcomed the central positioning of the Code of Ethics within the model, alongside Constitutional and Human Rights. It was agreed that this inclusion would be a further, important step in embedding the Code and that communication of the model would be key.

4. Executive updates on evidencing visits

The Executive briefed Committee members on recent meetings with the Garda Síochána on the Investigation Management System (IMS), Garda Estates and the Garda National Protective Services Bureau. In the context of the site visit information, it was noted that the change enablers remained

key factors in facilitating the achievement of the Policing Plan. It was broadly agreed that it would be useful to get insight into the extent to which they are being actively factored into the process of developing the Policing Plan 2020. The usefulness of the site visit information provided, in facilitating the Committee's work, was noted.

5. Policing Plan Performance Reports: August, September 2019

The Committee considered the Policing Plan performance reports for August and September, together with an Executive overview paper. Developments since the completion of the half-year assessment were noted. In considering the September report, the Committee identified a number of areas for specific engagement in part B of the meeting, as follows:

- The operating model and its associated roll-out plan
- The challenges to the achievement of policing plan targets by year end
- The nature of reporting against Policing Plan targets would also be addressed, in order to achieve a clearer understanding of progress made under a range of initiatives.

6. Human Resources

The Committee considered a number of documents received, together with an Executive overview paper. It was agreed that the Committee would seek clarity in relation to progress, under the Policing Plan, on PALF, the implementation of the HR Strategy and Garda redeployment.

With regard to Garda recruitment, it was agreed that further clarity in relation to engagement with the Public Appointments Service would be sought, in particular the strategic impetus and legislative underpinning for the proposed engagement.

The Authority's statutory remit regarding arrangements for Garda Síochána recruitment, training and development and the mechanisms in place for the measurement of performance and accountability of members and staff, was discussed and noted. In addition, having regard to the existence of the Promotions Advisory Council and the various roles of the Authority, the Garda Síochána and the Department in respect of recruitment, the importance of ensuring alignment between the various recruitment structures was stressed.

7. Garda Síochána Evaluation Reports: DPSU Pilot, Mobility Project, RDMS Pilot

The Committee noted three evaluation reports received in respect of the Divisional Protective Services Unit Pilot, the Mobility Project Summary Evaluation and the Roster and Duty Management System Pilot. Consideration was given to the evaluation outcomes in the context of the new Garda Síochána Operating Model and the consequential impacts on the roll-out plans for DPSUs and the RDMS pilot in particular. It was agreed that these matters would be raised with Garda representatives.

8. Code of Ethics and Culture Audit progress reports

Committee members considered data provided in relation to training and the signing of the Code of Ethics by Garda members and staff. The reliability of the data was discussed and it was agreed to seek further information regarding the validation process and Garda confidence in the revised figures.

With regard to engagement with Garda representatives on embedding the Code, the Chairperson clarified that the suggestion of a monthly meeting was not a request from the Authority, but a position agreed between the Authority and the Garda Síochána at the beginning of the year. The Committee re-iterated its concern regarding the need for more meaningful engagement on embedding the Code, particularly in the context of the Authority's statutory in respect of the Code.

In considering the Policing Plan target regarding potential criteria for a future culture audit, the importance of comparability with the original audit was strongly emphasised by the Committee.

The Committee noted the request received to update the Commissioner's foreword to the Code of Ethics, which would require consideration by the Authority.

9. Diversity & Integration Strategy

The Committee considered the Diversity and Integration Strategy, which had been launched on 9th October. The scope of the strategy and the parallel development of the internal 'Diversity and Inclusion Strategy' was discussed. It was agreed that matters of policy in respect of integration were not the sole preserve of the Garda Síochána and that further insight would be sought regarding the apparent shift in the strategy's focus from inclusion to integration.

10. Policing Plan 2020

The Executive provided a verbal update in relation to the process of developing the Policing Plan 2020. The Committee also discussed the budget allocation for 2020 for the Garda Síochána and its potential impact on the delivery of the Policing Plan, in particular those initiatives with significant capital expenditure.

Part B – Meeting with Garda Síochána Representatives

Attendance

Authority: As per Part A of meeting

Garda Síochána: Joe Nugent, CAO; Alan Mulligan, Acting Exec. Dir. (HRPD); David Gilbride Exec. Dir. (Strategy and Transformation); Assistant Commissioner Orla McPartlin (Community Relations Bureau); Assistant Commissioner David Sheahan (Governance and Accountability); Superintendent Anthony O'Donnell (Garda Ethics and Culture Bureau); Gráinne Shortall, AP (PALO); Claire Egan, AP (HRPD).

11. Closed Session

The standing option to conduct a closed session was not exercised.

12. Human Resources

a. Recruitment

The Committee sought an update from the Garda Síochána in respect of the data collected on the pool of applicants at each in the recent recruitment process. Garda representatives outlined their engagement with the Public Appointments Service on the matter and advised that an update is still awaited. A further report from the Garda Síochána Communications Director

detailing the outcomes from the recruitment public relations campaign is also awaited. It was affirmed that the age profile of applicants is starting to get younger and that the breakdown of applicants by gender is similar to previous competitions.

The challenges of gathering data through the process was discussed, in circumstances where the current process only gathers certain types of data, on an optional basis, at the initial application stage. The approach adopted in Northern Ireland, where more detailed information is collected as part of a parallel process to recruitment, was discussed.

In terms of widening the appeal of the Garda Síochána as a career choice, there was a discussion on using local engagement in addition to national campaigns, and the possibility of using the Garda Reserve recruitment process and Transition Year work placements as a means of opening up the organisation to people from backgrounds that are currently under-represented in the organisation.

b. HR Strategy Implementation Plan

The Committee discussed the nature of the response received from the Garda Síochána in respect of its HR Strategy Implementation Plan. The Committee outlined its expectations and the need to capture not only new initiatives, but also essential day-to-day work in the area of human resources. The Committee believed that this would also be helpful in showing evidence of prioritisation. The Committee also raised the manner of reporting on HR-related targets in the Policing Plan progress report and the consequent challenge in attaining a holistic view of progress being made on HR matters.

Garda representatives acknowledged the need for more a formal reporting structure in respect of HR that would encapsulate the totality of the work involved in the strategy's implementation and would also ensure alignment with Policing Plan targets and commitments under 'A Policing Service for the Future'. It was stated that a review was being conducted in this regard and that quarterly monitoring of performance against the implementation plan would be introduced. The Committee requested sight of the review and the quarterly reports, when produced.

c. Garda Reserves

Garda representatives provided updates on the development of Garda Reserve Strategy. It was noted that the Garda reserves review was completed and that the strategy awaited approval by the senior leadership team. The Committee requested a copy of the review conducted and expressed caution regarding further recruitment of Garda reserves without the strategic context being embedded.

d. PALF

There was a detailed and wide-ranging discussion in relation to progress on the roll-out of PALF. Garda representatives provided an overview of the process associated with PALF, the training given as part of its introduction, and the nature of goal setting in 2019. It was clarified that while, overall, 82% of Garda members were trained and 45% were participating in the PALF process, some regions were performing better than others. A number of challenges in respect of implementation were cited, in the areas of supervision, training and complexities in reporting

lines. It was also noted that probationer members are not on the system. The Committee requested that the Authority would be provided with a copy of PALF training material.

The role and responsibility of management at divisional and local level in relation to the implementation of PALF was questioned by the Committee. Garda representatives acknowledged that more work was being done in this regard and that the matter had been raised with the senior leadership team.

The Committee also sought to understand the rationale for the proposal of PALF as the organisation-wide, single performance system and further detail in respect of the 'disagreed' report and the associated arbitration process. It was agreed that further discussion on the matter at the subsequent Authority meeting would be beneficial.

e. Recruitment

The Committee requested information on engagement with the Public Appointments Services (PAS) for the provision of services in support of new selection methods, to enhance the promotion process. Garda representatives outlined the previous approaches to competitions and provided a status update on the Garda Síochána's engagements with PAS to date, across a number of work strands. While a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed, it was stated that there were a number of outstanding matters requiring further discussion and resolution. It was strongly agreed that a renewed approach to the appointment of sergeants and inspectors would have significant capacity to address negative perceptions among Garda members about the promotion process, as highlighted in the Cultural Audit.

The Committee sought assurance on the process of formal engagement with the Policing Authority on this policing plan target, particularly in the context of both the Authority's statutory role in respect of recruitment and its participation on the promotion advisory council. The Committee discussed the legislative basis for the proposed partnership with PAS and further questioned if any proposals had been developed by the Garda Síochána, in relation to revisions to the promotion regulations. The importance of ensuring alignment between processes operated by the Authority and the Garda Síochána in respect of recruitment was strongly emphasised.

Garda representatives advised that a letter would issue shortly to the Policing Authority regarding consultation on the selection processes for promotion to sergeant and inspector roles. In addition, an undertaking was given to provide the Authority with a copy of its proposals for change to the promotion regulations.

f. Redeployment

Garda Síochána representatives acknowledged that the redeployment target for 2019 is unlikely to be met. The Committee was briefed on a range of operational, logistical, financial and human resource issues negatively impacting on the achievement of the target. It was noted that the immediate area of focus would be on achieving a greater understanding of arrangements in respect of those members on light /restricted duties.

13. Code of Ethics and Culture Audit Progress updates

The Committee acknowledged receipt of the Garda Síochána Decision Making Model and welcomed the centrality of the Code of Ethics to the model, alongside constitutional and human rights.

The Committee welcomed the data provided in relation to those Garda members and staff who had attended training and signed the Code of Ethics. The Committee stressed the need for confidence in the figures provided, in addition to expressing some concern at the relatively low numbers of Garda staff that had attended training to date.

Garda representatives provided a detailed overview of the process of data validation and authentication underpinning the Code of Ethics figures and expressed confidence in the accuracy of the data now provided. A rationale was also provided for the percentage of Garda staff who have yet to be trained and the measures being taken to address the shortfall.

The Committee Chairperson clarified that the suggestion of monthly engagement to discuss embedding the Code was not a request from the Authority, but rather a position agreed between the Authority and the Garda Síochána earlier in the year. The Committee re-iterated its view that regular engagement on embedding the Code of Ethics was highly desirable. It was agreed that the current arrangement of monitoring progress of embedding the Code should continue. In addition, Garda representatives expressed their satisfaction to meet on a quarterly basis.

The Committee briefly discussed a proposal to revise the forewords to the Code of Ethics and it was agreed that the matter would be raised at the subsequent Authority meeting.

A range of issues were discussed in relation to organisational culture. Garda representatives confirmed that the staff engagement charter addresses both listening and speaking up. It was noted that the charter was scheduled to be signed off by the last week in October and that a copy would be provided to the Policing Authority thereafter.

There was a discussion on plans for the next culture audit and Garda representatives advised that they were currently in dialogue with Durham University. The Committee stressed the importance of obtaining comparable figures to the last culture audit so that trends could be seen. In this regard, the Committee was advised that a copy of the audit had been provided to the university and was a key factor in deliberations.

14. Policing Plan Progress report

There was a broad-ranging discussion in relation to progress on a number of Policing Plan initiatives. The position in relation to Garda estate management, the relationship with the OPW and the requirement for an audit of contemporary and future accommodation needs need was considered. It was agreed that this area might merit further consideration in the New Year, in the context of the Policing Plan 2020. The Committee noted the positive developments in relation to the mobility project. The significance of the launch of the new operating model was also highlighted and a high-level overview of the next phase in the roll-out of the structure was

outlined. It was noted that the response to the operating model has been generally positive and that the briefing meetings held have been a very valuable communications tool.

It was noted that a number of targets of particular interest to the Organisation Development Committee were currently off-track. While acknowledging that some of these targets may come back on track before year-end, a number of others such as RDMS, IMS and Schengen would be challenging in terms of drawing on the same resources across ICT and training for their successful implementation.

15. Policing Plan 2020

Garda representatives briefed the Committee on the development of the Policing Plan 2020, including the requirement for a critical analysis of the various resources needed to deliver the range of initiatives being contemplated. The importance of agreeing shared, realistic targets and delivering initiatives that will tangibly benefit serving members was also stressed. The government's budget allocation for the Garda Síochána for 2020 was discussed and the Committee was advised that the budget increase was being assessed in terms of its likely impact on the plan.

16. Evaluations Reports

The Committee welcomed receipt of the evaluation reports on the DSPU, RDMS and Mobility pilot projects. With regard to the DPSU and RDMS findings, there was some discussion in relation to the resources required for DPSUs, and the capacity of both initiatives to adapt to the new operating model. It was also the Committee's view that it would have been useful for the DPSU review to have included an external component to the review, notwithstanding the positive anecdotal evidence from some victims' groups.

17. Diversity and Integration

The Committee commended the recent launch of the external-facing strategy, but queried whether the scope of the strategy was sufficiently broad. Garda representatives outlined that while ethnic diversity was a significant component of the strategy, the focus was significantly broader encompassing diversity in a number of other areas.

An overview of the development of the internal Diversity and Inclusion Strategy was provided and the Committee was advised that a draft would be with the Garda Síochána senior leadership team for consideration in the approximately four weeks.