



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Meeting of Garda Organisation Development Committee

Date: 16 April 2019

Venue: 90 North King Street, Dublin 7

Part A – Committee Meeting

Attendance

Authority: Bob Collins (Chair), Valerie Judge, Pat Costello, Paul Mageean, Melanie Pine

Secretary: Aoife Clabby

Executive: Helen Hall, Margaret Tumelty, Aileen Healy, David Pasley, Sharon O’Brien, Karen Shelly

1. Closed session – Authority Members only

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

2. Chair’s Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed Paul Mageean to the Committee. Minutes from the previous meetings held on 20 November 2018, 15 January 2019 and 5 February 2019 were approved by the Committee and signed.

3. Committee Work Plan for 2019

The Committee considered its revised draft Terms of Reference. The context for the proposed revisions was discussed, in particular that the Committee’s oversight would focus on those enablers for the Garda Síochána, which are fundamental to organisational change, and are reflected specifically in the relevant chapters of the 2019 Policing Plan. The Committee agreed on the inclusion of additional strands of work relating to ethics and wellbeing within the Garda Síochána.

It was agreed that the Committee’s oversight would take account of the effectiveness of the Garda Síochána measures in facilitating the realisation of the implementation plan associated with ‘A Policing Service for the Future’.

Following discussion, the draft committee terms of reference were approved and it was agreed to submit these for the next Authority meeting.

4. Briefing on Executive Engagements

The Executive provided the Committee with updates from recent engagements including a meeting with the Strategic Transformation Office, a visit to Durham Constabulary and attendance at the ICT Governance Board.

5. Code of Ethics

The Committee discussed the progress report in embedding the Code of Ethics. The figures provided for signing rates were not regarded as transparent. It was noted that the percentages presented as having signed the Code related only to those who had attended

the workshops. When looked at as a percentage of the whole organisation, the number of members who have signed was considerably less, at approximately 55%. It was agreed that the matter would be addressed at the public meeting of the Authority.

It was noted that a response was awaited in respect of the Authority's proposal for monthly engagement between the Ethics and Culture Bureau and the Executive, with one Committee member present. An action was noted to discuss this further with the Assistant Commissioner for DMR.

6. Workforce Modernisation

The Executive provided a briefing on the draft Garda Síochána People Strategy 2019-2021. The Committee welcomed the delivery of the strategy and its comprehensive nature. However, some of the key building blocks were noted as missing, including a demand analysis and skills audit. It was noted that the timings for objectives were expressed in terms of commencement dates, with no milestones listed. Concerns were also expressed about the organisation's capacity to deliver the objectives contained in the strategy.

While agreeing on the necessity of a comprehensive document for senior management, the Committee emphasised the importance of having a more user-friendly format for communication and engagement with the wider organisation.

Finally, while reference within the strategy to the organisation's strategic vision was welcomed, it was the Committee's view that further elaboration on, and the connection to, the organisation's vision would be helpful.

Part B – Meeting with Garda Síochána Representatives

Attendance

Authority: As above

Garda Síochána: Mr. David Gilbride (Executive Director Strategy and Transformation), Dr. Oghenovo Oghuvbu (Chief Medical Officer), Mr. Alan Mulligan (Acting Executive Director HRPD), Superintendent Tony O' Donnell (Ethics and Culture Bureau), Inspector Paul Franey (Strategic Transformation Office), Ms. Alison Keogh (STO), Ms. Grainne Shortall (Policing Authority Liaison Office), Ms. Eilís Gilvarry (HRPD), Ms. Claire Egan (HRPD), Ms. Mary Fitzsimons (Ethics and Culture Bureau), Ms. Monica Collins (Ethics and Culture Bureau), Ms. Niamh Duggan (Ethics and Culture Bureau).

7. Closed Session

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

8. Code of Ethics

Members of the Ethics and Culture Bureau offered apologies on behalf of the Assistant Commissioner, DMR and provided a progress report with regard to embedding the Code of Ethics. The Committee queried the signing rate of members and staff and expressed the view that the low rate of signing was a negative reflection on the organisation's culture. Garda representatives explained that signing the Code was now part of the promotion process. No definitive explanation could be provided regarding the relatively low rate of signing, nor was a breakdown available of who had signed at district, divisional or regional level.

Representatives did however, state that there had been some initial some confusion among members who incorrectly thought that the Code of Ethics was an element of the disciplinary process. The representatives also stated that data migration to the organisation's learning management system was almost complete and would enable the identification of those cohorts who had yet to sign the code.

The Committee queried why the Decision Making Model had not been launched after being agreed more than a year previous. Garda representatives explained that it had been decided that Human Rights should be incorporated in the model and that a document containing the relevant amendments has been prepared for the Commissioner. It was confirmed that Human Rights would not replace Ethics within the model. It was also stated that clarity was being sought from the Commissioner on who would have responsibility for leading further work on revisions to the Decision Making Model.

The Committee complimented the Ethics videos which had been produced by the Garda Síochána. The Committee re-iterated its proposal to pursue more regular meetings at Executive level, to maintain oversight of the embedding of the Code of Ethics, with a quarterly reporting structure to the Committee on progress being made. Garda representatives advised that there was no difficulty in principle with this approach, subject to the input of the Assistant Commissioner, DMR.

The Committee requested details of any progress on the findings from the Cultural Audit. Concern was expressed regarding a perceived lack of progress, particularly in circumstances where a high percentage of gardaí who participated in the audit believed that nothing would happen. While welcoming the Commissioner's comments in respect of culture, the Committee re-affirmed its view that an articulation of the desired organisational culture was required. The garda representatives provided an update on progress to date since the publication of the Cultural Audit and in the context of the publication of 'A Policing Service for the Future'. The representatives noted plans for future engagement on the matter.

9. Garda Wellbeing

The Chief Medical Officer provided an overview of the Garda Occupational Health Service, detailing the range of formal supports available to gardaí, including peer support network, employee assistance service, health and safety section, human resources and the chaplaincy service.

It was stated that the aim was to create a more integrated approach to the delivery of health and wellbeing, with a proposal to create an office under the Chief Medical Officer to facilitate greater control and governance of this area. A number of other initiatives were listed including, the development of a health and wellness strategy which is currently in scoping stage and scheduled for delivery by year end; better signposting for members and staff to access assistance; requests for each district to develop a health and wellbeing initiative; and, the establishment of wellbeing hubs. It was stated the first line of support for members was the unit and that units need to be empowered to offer better supports with training for supervisors. The importance of generating awareness of the available supports in order to create engagement was emphasised by the Chief Medical Officer.

The Committee discussed a range of issues under this agenda item including absenteeism rates; perceptions of wellness and well-being initiatives within the organisation; the integration of wellness into local policing plans; the requirement for consistent delivery of

supports across the organisation; and, the importance of quality interventions and supports in the case of traumatic incidents.

10. Policing Plan

With the commencement of the new Policing Plan, the Committee queried what steps have been taken to address issues which hindered progress in the previous plan. The Committee also proposed that some of the challenges which affected progress on the Modernisation and Renewal Programme may also affect progress on the implementation plan for 'A Policing Service for the Future'.

In response, garda representatives outlined the accountability measures which have been put in place by the Commissioner. The garda representatives also acknowledged and concurred with the Authority's assessment contained in the Seventh Report to the Minister on 'Changing Policing in Ireland'. In particular, the need for better planning, resource allocation, clarity in respect of priorities and understanding organisational capacity and capability were acknowledged. While noting that contestability of resources was still an issue, the representatives advised of the centrality of the Strategy Statement and Policing Plan in guiding the work of the organisation. The importance of acquiring further resources in the areas of ICT, HR and change management were also highlighted as key in giving effect to the plan

11. Redeployment and workforce planning progress report

Garda representatives provided an overview of the draft People Strategy and outlined a number of elements required to feed into the strategy, among them the diversity strategy. The Committee welcomed the draft of the People Strategy and requested details on the level of engagement within the organisation in its development. The garda representatives provided a detailed overview of the process of development of the strategy and other initiatives that had informed its development, including the cultural audit, Garda Inspectorate publications and Policing Authority publications. The Committee was advised the next stage in the process will be to align the strategy with the Policing Plan.

The Committee discussed a range of issues relating to the strategy including plans for its communication and roll-out, and enablers of and risks to its success. It was acknowledged that clear concise communication on the People Strategy would be key to its understanding and acceptance. In discussing enablers and risks to success, the Committee and garda representatives discussed the Operating Model and the critical requirement for an adequate HR system to support the strategy. It was also noted that a risk register had been created for the people strategy and that there had been engagement with ICT in respect of HR needs.

There is also work underway to establish a better understanding of what the organisation will look like, first examining services offered before conducting a needs analysis. It was stated that the divisional model pilot was providing information and there is further assessment to be done to establish if services should be offered on a national, regional or divisional level.