



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Meeting of the Policing Authority

Date: 13 May 2021

Venue: By Video Conference

Part A – Authority Meeting

Attendance

Authority: Bob Collins (Chairperson), Donal de Buitléir, Deborah Donnelly, Valerie Judge, Paul Mageean, Stephen Martin, Moling Ryan, Shalom Binchy, Elaine Byrne..

Secretary: Aoife Clabby.

Staff of the Authority: Helen Hall (Chief Executive), Cormac Keating, Margaret Tumelty, David Pasley (Item 2), Cian Finn (Item 2), Sharon O’Brien (Item 3).

1. Chairperson’s Opening Remarks

The Chairperson highlighted the principal purpose of the meeting in providing a preliminary opportunity for Members to outline their initial perceptions of the General Scheme for the Policing, Security and Community Safety Bill (the Scheme) and to determine what actions were required of the Executive to facilitate the Authority’s further consideration of same. The Chairperson further advised that once more information was available in respect of the parliamentary timescale, the approach to communicating the Authority’s views would require further consideration and decision.

2. General Scheme Policing, Security and Community Safety Bill

Members gave detailed consideration to a number of documents in support of the agenda item and discussed a range of matters in respect of the Scheme including:

- A consideration of the changes to the Scheme, having regard to the previous draft Heads of Bill and the submission made by the Authority on 7 October 2020.
- The oversight architecture, as described in the Scheme, in particular the various accountabilities to the Garda Board, the new Policing and Community Safety Authority and the Department of Justice. The likely impact of the revised oversight regime, together with revised corporate governance arrangements was also considered. The Authority requested that the Executive would provide a diagrammatic depiction of accountability, in the context of a number of key areas of oversight.
- The proposed functions of the Policing and Community Safety Authority, in the context of the existing functions of the Policing Authority and the Garda Inspectorate.
- The proposed changes in respect of appointments to the Garda Síochána.
- An overarching consideration of the extent to which the oversight architecture and the powers, as set out in the Scheme, maximise the principle of public accountability, having regard to the Authority’s areas of oversight activity to date. The Authority requested that a comparative exercise would be undertaken by the Executive in respect of the proposed powers and having regard to previous and existing areas of proactive oversight by the Authority.

- The process of pre-legislative scrutiny to be conducted by the Oireachtas Committee on Justice. The Authority requested that a short briefing note, detailing the process would be prepared for Members' information.
- Commentary in the media in respect of the Scheme. In this regard, the Authority requested that any relevant material would be uploaded to the documents portal.

| No. | Action point | By Date | By Whom |
|-----------------|--|----------------|-----------------|
| A_091_01 | Provide a diagrammatic depiction of accountability, in the context of a number of key areas of oversight. | 27 May meeting | Chief Executive |
| A_091_02 | Undertake a comparative exercise in relation to proposed powers, having regard to previous and current areas of proactive oversight by the Authority | ASAP | Chief Executive |
| A_091_03 | Provide a short briefing papers on the pre-legislative scrutiny process | 27 May meeting | Chief Executive |
| A_091_04 | Upload any relevant commentary on or analysis of the General Scheme to the documents portal | ASAP | Chief Executive |

3. Garda Síochána Appointments

The Secretary briefed Members on the outcome of the clearance process in respect of the appointment of a candidate to the rank of Chief Superintendent. The Authority was satisfied to appoint the candidate to the rank of Chief Superintendent in the Garda Síochána, with effect from the date on which the candidate takes up the position assigned by the Garda Commissioner.

| No. | Action point | By Date | By Whom |
|-----------------|---|----------------|-----------------|
| A_091_06 | Notify successful candidate of their appointment by the Authority | Immediate | Chief Executive |
| A_091_06 | Notify successful candidate of their appointment by the Authority | Immediate | Chief Executive |

4. Other Business

Members noted that the Commissioner had appeared before the Oireachtas Irish Language Committee, arising from a report of the Comisinéir Teanga addressing the availability of Irish-speaking Garda personnel in stations in Gaeltacht areas.

The Chief Executive advised that the Garda Inspectorate had offered to brief Members on the findings of its report 'Countering the Threat of Anti-Corruption and that a proposed date and time for the meeting would be circulated by the Secretary.