



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Meeting of the Policing Authority

Date: 14 March 2016

Venue: 90 North King Street, Dublin7, D07 N7CV

PART A – AUTHORITY MEETING

Attendance

Authority: Josephine Feehily (Chairperson), Noel Brett, Bob Collins, Vicky Conway, Pat Costello, Judith Gillespie, Maureen Lynott, Moling Ryan.

Secretary: Catherine Pierse

Executive: Helen Hall (Chief Executive), Aileen Healy

Apologies: Valerie Judge

1. Chairpersons opening remarks

The agenda was approved and no conflicts of interest were declared in relation to any of the matters for discussion.

2. Minutes and matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were approved and will now be published on the Authority's website.

The Chairperson addressed a matter arising from the last minutes relating to the commencement of Section 17 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 (the "Act") and specifically the recruitment process for a new Chief Administrative Officer for the Garda Síochána which is underway. She advised the Authority that the Department of Justice and Equality had stated in recent correspondence that, subject to engagement with the Public Appointments Service (PAS), consideration is being given to putting transitional administrative arrangements in place whereby the Authority would make the appointment following the PAS selection process. The Authority has been requested to confirm that it would have no difficulty appointing the successful candidate from a process that was underway and in which the Authority had limited involvement.

The Authority noted the administrative option proposed and welcomed the fact that this would allow section 17 of the Act to be commenced more quickly. It was agreed that the Authority would be prepared to appoint the successful candidate for the post given that this is a Top Level Appointment Committee (TLAC) process undertaken by PAS. It was noted positively that PAS has invited Dr. Moling Ryan, a Member of the Authority, to sit on the selection panel for the CAO and was agreed that PAS be requested to provide a short written description of the selection process to the Authority when the appointment is being proposed.

In response to a question regarding the attendance of an observer from the Authority at the interviews for the Assistant Commissioner, the Department advised that there is no provision in the regulations for such an arrangement.

No.	Action point	By Date	By Whom
A_003_01	Respond to the Department of Justice confirming that the Authority is satisfied with its proposed administrative arrangement for appointment of the CAO	Immediate	The Executive

3. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive's report was taken as read. A verbal update was provided on subsequent meetings held between the Executive and the Deputy Garda Commissioner regarding preparations for the Authority's the appointments functions, and the process of transfer of information between the two bodies. There was also discussion about the nature of financial reporting that the Authority wished to receive in the longer term.

4. Draft Scheme of Delegations for the Policing Authority

The Chairperson explained that the purpose of the proposed scheme of delegations was to clarify the respective roles of the Authority and the Chief Executive in relation to the performance of a number of statutory functions in the Act and the Authority's own delegation of authority for approval of expenditure.

A comprehensive corporate governance framework will be presented to the Authority at its April meeting which will describe the Authority's governance framework and its relationship with the Department of Justice. Authority members discussed the draft and provided some comments for change and subject to same, the draft scheme of delegations was approved.

No.	Action point	By Date	By Whom
A_003_02	Finalise scheme of delegations incorporating Authority comments	31 March 2016	The Executive

5. Form of the Garda Commissioner's annual report on policing matters to the Authority

It was noted that in accordance with Section 46 of the Act, the Garda Commissioner is required to submit the 2015 Annual Report on policing services to the Authority by 30 April 2016. The Authority agreed that, because the 2015 Annual report relates to a period before the establishment of the Policing Authority, it would not ask the Garda Commissioner to produce the 2015 Annual Report in a particular form (as provided for in section 46). The form of the 2016 Annual Report will be considered in the context of the approval of 2016-18 Strategy Statement and 2017 Policing Plan.

6. Chair of the Audit Committee of the Garda Síochána

The Chair of the Garda Síochána Audit Committee provided an overview of the work of the Committee and explained that the term of the current Committee would expire on 31 May 2017. It was noted that it will be the responsibility of the Authority to appoint a new Audit Committee at that time in accordance with section 44 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005.

No.	Action point	By Date	By Whom
A_003_03	Executive to liaise with the Garda Síochána, the Department and the Chair of the Garda Síochána Audit Committee to facilitate early consideration by the Authority of proposals for the next Audit Committee Appointments in May 2017	Q4 2016	The Executive

7. Committee Updates

Performance and Strategy Committee

The Chair of the Performance and Strategy Committee updated Members on the Committee work which is focussed on the Garda Strategy Statement, the Performance Framework and the 2017 Policing Plan.

Ethics Committee

The draft consultation paper was discussed. The Chair of the Ethics Committee explained that the intention of the committee was to signal that a new process was underway to prepare the Code of Ethics in accordance with section 17 of the Act and to provide an opportunity for early input, both by bodies listed in the legislation and by anyone else who may have an interest. It was the intention of the Committee that at this early stage the consultation paper should be an invitation for preliminary observations rather than an opportunity to comment on any specific draft proposals. It should be made clear that an opportunity would be provided at a later date for comment on a draft text of the Code when it is developed.

No.	Action point	By Date	By Whom
A_003_04	The Executive to further develop the draft consultation paper in light of Members' comments for finalisation by the Chair of the Ethics Committee and the Chairperson, and circulated by email for formal sign-off.	As soon as possible and in any case before the next Authority meeting	The Executive and the Authority.

Appointments Committee

In the absence of the Committee Chair, the Chief Executive noted that work was ongoing on the submission regarding the Garda Síochána (Promotion) Regulations 2006 and would be finalised and submitted to the Department later this week.

8. CSO Crime statistics

Representatives from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) provided a presentation to the Authority in relation to how crime statistics are compiled, trends in crime from 2007 – 2015 and the 2015 review

of the quality of crime statistics, which was initiated as a result of issues identified by the Garda Inspectorate in 2014. Members raised a number of questions relating to the “counting rules” and agreed that this topic would merit further discussion in the future. There was also some discussion regarding the caveat the CSO attaches to its crime statistics publication as a result of this review. In response to questions, the CSO said that it was generally satisfied with improvements which the Garda Síochána had made since the review and that the Garda Information Services Centre appeared to be working well. Nevertheless, it is envisaged that the process for production of the data will be subject to ongoing review and its publications will continue to carry a caveat until the CSO is satisfied that there is no longer an issue with the quality of the data. The Authority acknowledged the significance of accurate statistical data in the context of its oversight role and noted the work that the Garda Síochána are doing to improve the accuracy of crime recording.

No.	Action point	By Date	By Whom
A_003_05	The Executive to follow up with the CSO and ensure that <i>Analysis and quality of recorded crime statistics</i> and <i>Crime and victimisation Q3 2015 results</i> due to be published later this year are brought to the attention of the Authority.	Once relevant reports are published.	The Executive.

9. Preparation for meeting with Garda Síochána

Members discussed the agenda for meeting with the Garda Síochána and noted that in the absence of the Commissioner Nóirín O'Sullivan, that the Department had formally advised the Authority that Deputy Commissioner John Twomey had been designated under the Act to perform the functions of the Garda Commissioner. It was agreed that this was a good opportunity to receive a previously proposed briefing from Deputy Commissioner Twomey in relation to operational policing.

10. AOB

It was noted that there had been some enquiries from the media with regard to the current meeting and it was agreed that a brief press statement linked to the agenda would be made following each meeting.

Lines of communication between the Authority and government departments and/or Garda Síochána were discussed. It was agreed that such communication would, in general, be done by the Chairperson or the Executive, on behalf of the Authority or its Committees.

No.	Action point	By Date	By Whom
A_003_06	The Authority to make a brief press statement after each meeting, which would reference the agenda for the meeting and the minutes of the previous meeting	Immediate	Executive and Authority members.

PART B – AUTHORITY MEETING WITH THE GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

Attendance

<i>Authority and Executive</i>	As above
<i>Garda Síochána</i>	John Twomey (Deputy Commissioner Operations), Jack Nolan (Assistant Commissioner), John Keegan (Superintendent),

1. Introduction

The Chairperson welcomed the Deputy Commissioner and his colleagues and outlined the plan for the meeting.

2. Briefing on operational policing.

The Deputy Commissioner provided members with a comprehensive description of operational policing and it was followed by a detailed question and answer session. Community policing and the importance of building relationships with hard-to-reach communities was emphasised. There was discussion about what the Garda Síochána are doing in relation to diversity and vulnerable minority groups and whether applications and recruitment reflected the ethnic change in Ireland's population.

No.	Action point	By Date	By Whom
A_003_07	The Garda Síochána will provide the Authority with a copy of its existing diversity strategy and the new draft strategy which is currently under review.	Immediate	The Garda Síochána
A_003_08	The Garda Síochána to provide diversity statistics in relation to applications and the consequent number selected.	Immediate	The Garda Síochána

3. Progress on the preparation of the 2016 – 2018 Strategy Statement

Assistant Commissioner Nolan explained that the consultation process is in place and that certain themes consistently emerge such as policing operations, community safety, community engagement and organisational development. There was a lengthy discussion about performance indicators and Authority members emphasised their expectation that the strategy would be ambitious and would contain some clear performance indicators. Members did accept that not all objectives could be quantitatively measured, but considered that it would be difficult for it to oversee the performance of the Garda Síochána in the absence of clear measurable performance indicators.

4. Other business

The issue of the upcoming publication of crime statistics by the CSO was also discussed and the Deputy Commissioner agreed to provide the Policing Authority with a copy of any analysis they had in advance of those statistics being published. Authority members queried the delay in receiving the Garda Transformation Programme Roadmap and asked for confirmation as to when this would be ready. The Deputy Commissioner indicated that it would be with the Authority within the next two weeks.

No.	Action point	By Date	By Whom
A_003_09	Documents referred to at the meeting to be requested by the Executive and subsequently provided by the Garda Síochána	Immediate	Executive and Garda Síochána

5. Concluding remarks

The Chairperson thanked the Deputy Commissioner and his colleagues for their time and contribution to the meeting.