

Minutes of Code of Ethics Committee

Date: 7 March 2016

Venue: 90 North King Street, Dublin7

Attendance

Authority: Pat Costello (Chair), Judith Gillespie, Vicky Conway, Bob Collins

Secretary: Darragh Stapleton

Executive: Catherine Pierse, Christopher Campbell

No conflicts of interest were declared in relation to any of the matters for discussion.

The following matters were considered and discussed as set out in the agenda:

- 1.1 Minutes from last meeting
- 1.2 Publication of minutes
- 1.3 Updated indicative timeline
- 1.4 Development of consultation paper
- 1.5 Publicising the consultation
- 1.6 Background Papers
- 1.7 Further Research
- 1.8 AOB

2. Actions and matters of Note

- 2.1 The minutes from the last committee meeting were agreed and formally signed by the chair. The Committee indicated its preference to have the minutes of the committee meetings published. This will facilitate transparency in relation to the manner in which the Committee's approach develops over the course of this project.
- 2.2 There was discussion about the likely level of responses that might be expected from the preliminary consultation. It was noted that if a large response was expected, then the Committee would need to be careful to ask very precise, closed questions. However, the Committee considered that it was unlikely that the response to the invitation would be

that extensive, or that it would place an undue burden on the Authority to review the responses to an open request for “preliminary observations”. The Committee does not intend to publish substantive responses to the representations received.

- 2.3 The committee expressed the view that, at this stage, the consultation paper should take the form of an invitation for preliminary observations and should not try to prompt or guide people in a particular way. The purpose of this stage of the consultation process is to give people a real opportunity to shape the approach taken to the Code before the drafting commences. The Committee asked that it be made in the paper that an opportunity will be given at a later stage to provide comments on a draft Code.
- 2.4 It was proposed that links to relevant legislation, along with other EU Codes of Ethics, would be provided in the consultation paper.
- 2.5 The Committee requested that the Executive update the draft consultation paper so that it would avoid asking specific questions and instead ask for preliminary observations. The Executive was also asked to include further specific language requested by Committee members. The Committee requested that a fresh draft be circulated to committee members for approval as soon as practicable. The Committee further requested that, once it had been reviewed by the Committee, it be submitted to the Authority for discussion at the next Authority meeting on Monday 14th March. It was noted however that this was subject to whether there was time for this on the agenda for Monday meeting.
- 2.6 The various ways in which the consultation paper could be publicised were discussed. In addition to contacting the statutory stakeholders, as set down in section 17, the Committee intends to contact other bodies and persons that may have an interest to flag that an invitation for view has been placed on its website. The Executive was asked to request a list of the stakeholders involved in the consultation process for the previous draft of the Code from the Gardaí to assist with this.

In addition, it was decided that the following should be explored:

- the possibility of requesting the Gardaí to put a link the Authority’s invitation on the Garda Intra-net. The Authority will tweet a link to its website and also encouraging a number of other organisations (e.g. the Gardaí) to re-tweet it.
- the possibility of contacting journalists and academics who may have an interest in the issue.

- the possibility of bringing the invitation for views to the attention of the joint policing committees
- issuing a press release

2.6 The Executive was asked to arrange a briefing for the next Committee meeting from someone from the Gardaí who had an awareness of the process undertaken in relation to the draft Garda Code of Ethics that was developed in accordance with the previous version of Section 17 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005.

2.7 The dates for the next three committee meetings were agreed to i.e. 12 April at 9 a.m; 11 May at 3 p.m and 13 June at 3 p.m.