



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Meeting of the Organisation Development Committee

Date: 13th July 2020

Venue: Online Meeting

Organisation Development Committee Meeting

Part A Committee Meeting

Attendance

Authority: Paul Mageean (Chair), Moling Ryan, Valerie Judge, Pat Costello, Melanie Pine (external Committee member)

Secretary: Aoife Clabby

Executive: Helen Hall (CEO), Aileen Healy, Cormac Keating, Margaret Tumelty, Sharon O'Brien, Alexandre Eisenbarth.

1. Garda Síochána Resources

The Chairperson provided the context for the single item agenda on Garda Síochána Resources, in particular to engage with the Garda Síochána Chief Administrative Officer on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report, *'Review of the Future Needs of the Garda Finance Function'* (the Mazars Report/the Report) and to receive a presentation on the resource needs of the Garda Síochána organisation for 2021. An overview of the information available for the Committee's consideration was provided and the Chairperson advised that a summary of discussions would be provided at the next Authority meeting.

The Chief Executive provided the Committee with a summary of the executive's engagement with the process linked to the Report's development and provided further clarification in relation to the Report's findings on financial shared services and discussions with DPER representatives in this regard.

The Mazars Report was considered by the Committee and a number of observations were made as follows:

- The Committee observed that the recommendations contained in the Report were not adequately or appropriately addressed in the recommendations.
- The Committee gave detailed consideration to matters related to Garda Síochána participation in the FMS shared services project and the envisaged migration of the organisation's finance systems to the National Shared Services Office (NSSO). The importance of the Garda Síochána having a clear sense of its requirements and of the respective roles, responsibilities and deliverables of the Garda Síochána and the NSSO in any such initiative was strongly emphasised.
- The scale and nature of the specific requirements of the Garda Síochána and the challenges that this might present to the NSSO were acknowledged.

- The Committee again re-iterated the need for finance, HR and supporting ICT systems to be fully integrated in order to provide real-time information, facilitate timely, informed decisions and reduce the reliance on unconnected, inconsistent, manual processes.

The Committee then discussed the Authority's statutory role in relation to the provision of advice to the Minister on the adequacy of Garda Síochána resources. The absence of any structure within the Garda Síochána to facilitate a process of accurate, effective costing and the significant challenges that this presents to the Garda organisation and to the Authority in the discharge of its statutory function, was highlighted.

Part B Meeting with Garda Síochána Representatives

Attendance

Authority: As per Part A of meeting
Garda Síochána: Joseph Nugent (Chief Administrative Officer),

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), was invited to present to the Committee on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Mazars Report. In his presentation to the Committee, the CAO highlighted a number of matters, as follows:

- The Committee was advised that the Mazars Report was still in draft format and its finalisation and sign-off were a priority. The CAO acknowledged that the Report had provided an assessment the main challenges facing the Garda Síochána finance function across the themes of structure, leadership, competencies and technology. However, while acknowledging that the recommendations required further consideration, the view was expressed that there was sufficient within the Report to progress matters, without having recourse to its further revision.
- The CAO highlighted a number of matters in relation to the leadership, structure and functioning of finance within the Garda organisation, and the current arrangements at national and divisional level. The changes required to enable a more strategic approach at divisional level were referenced.
- The challenges of the existing paper-based systems were enumerated and the need for more real-time information was recognised. Pending the introduction of a more sophisticated financial management system, the capacity of existing systems, such as Roster and Duty Management System to provide valuable, real-time information was highlighted.
- An overview of the required personnel to address the observations and recommendations contained in the Mazars Report was provided.

The Committee sought clarification in relation to the approach to developing a specification for any new financial system; the nature of engagement to date between the Garda Síochána and the NSSO; and the manner in which the integration of various financial and resource planning systems are

being contemplated. While acknowledging the matters raised, the CAO re-iterated the importance of signing off on the draft Report in the first instance. The CAO also highlighted the absence of key personnel to progress the recommendations contained in the Report and the potential need for some additional external support in devising an implementation plan. The Committee was further advised that the new Executive Director, Finance, will have a key role to play in addressing and giving effect to the recommendations contained in the Report.

While acknowledging the priority of signing off the Mazars Report, the Committee stressed the importance of bringing forward an implementation plan at an early date that will address the Report's findings and the reservations expressed by the Authority. The CAO's role in co-ordinating the approach was highlighted.

The CAO was then invited to present on the resource needs for the Garda Síochána for 2021. In this regard, the Committee was advised that no additional detail was available at the current time, over and above the information that had already been provided in correspondence to the Authority.

The CAO outlined the separate processes in respect of estimates of spending currently underway. The challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on expenditure were outlined. The impact of any budgetary shortfall on staff numbers and further recruitment were also highlighted. Concerns were expressed by the CAO in relation to the Garda Síochána estate, where some stations are currently in bad repair. The complexity of the current arrangements with the Office of Public Works was noted and the Committee sought further clarification on the capital spending programme relating to the Garda estate.

The Committee expressed its disappointment and frustration that no further information could be provided at this time to enable the Authority to meaningfully advise the Minister on the adequacy of Garda Síochána resources, despite having signalled the requirement for an adequately costed policing plan in numerous engagements and written reports. The Committee expressed the view that the current process was neither positive nor productive.

The Committee sought further detail on the nature of the financial information made available to the Garda Síochána senior leadership team to facilitate decision making. The CAO advised that he would review the matter and revert with a response. He further advised that he would be happy to find a mechanism to facilitate the provision of further financial information outlining the additional requirements, as developed through the estimates process. It was agreed that the CAO would engage with the Executive on these matters, given their time-sensitive nature.

The Committee then addressed matters in relation to resources. The CAO agreed that he would revert to the Chief Executive prior to the advertisement of the Executive Director, Finance position. The CAO asked the Committee to give consideration to the sanction provided in respect of a number of HEO positions, the conditions attaching and a proposal to address them. The Committee noted that sanction for HEO grades was delegated to the Authority's Chief Executive and that a submission in writing had not yet been provided. The importance of the conditions attaching to the sanction, particularly in the context of the new Operating Model, were emphasised. Notwithstanding this, the Committee expressed some concern regarding the workability of the proposal made.

Part C- Committee Meeting

Confirmation of actions required and information to be requested