



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Meeting of the Policing Authority

Date: 13 February 2017

Venue: 90 North King Street

Part A – Authority Meeting

Attendance

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

Secretary: Aileen Healy

Executive: Helen Hall (Chief Executive), Catherine Pierse, Margaret Tumelty

Apologies: Maureen Lynott

1. Chairpersons opening remarks

The agenda was agreed and there were no disclosures of interest in relation to any of the items for discussion.

The Chairperson briefed Members on the state of developments in relation to matters related to certain Protected Disclosures and the conclusions and recommendations of Mr Justice O'Neill's review including to establish a Commission of Investigation. The main purpose of the meeting was to reflect on the Authority's role and remit in this regard.

2. Matters related to certain Protected Disclosures and the conclusions and recommendations of Mr Justice O'Neill's review

There was a general discussion on matters arising from certain protected disclosures and the conclusions and recommendations of Mr Justice O'Neill's review. All Members participated in a tour de table discussion in relation to the role and remit of the Authority.

It was noted that the oversight architecture for the Garda Síochána (GS), including the Government and the Minister for Justice and Equality, is complex and that, within that, there is a delineated and quite specific role and remit for the Authority. The importance of remaining within the boundaries of the Authority's remit and responsibilities was appreciated and endorsed by the Authority. In the context of this complex oversight architecture Members were keen to have a deeper understanding of elements of the Authority's remit and how they would operate in practice. It was agreed that the Executive would explore and consider this further.

It was noted that the revised Protected Disclosures Policy had been received from the GS on the previous Friday. While this had not yet been considered, it was agreed that the Executive would review this and brief the Authority at its next meeting so that it could be discussed in the context of these matters and the Code

of Ethics. The Chief Executive expects to have a meeting with the Chief Executive of TUSLA in the coming weeks to deepen the Executive's understanding of how the Garda / Tusla interactions operate in practice.

3. Proposed Commission of Investigation

It was noted that the establishment of a proposed Commission of Investigation was still under consideration by the Government and the Oireachtas. Having regard to this fact, the foregoing discussions and the opportunities offered by the upcoming Authority meeting in public with the Garda Commissioner it was decided that it was appropriate for the Authority to refrain from public comment, although, given the rapidly changing environment, that the Chairperson and Chief Executive should keep this under ongoing review. A number of possible matters for discussion with the Commissioner were proposed and it was agreed that there would be a need to allow more time than usual for the private meeting with the Commissioner.

The Authority discussed the importance for public confidence and for the morale of all those who work in the Garda organisation, of continuing to focus on day to day community policing, roads policing and in disrupting serious and organised crime. They also emphasised the critical importance of not allowing the Authority to be diverted from its ongoing oversight work and the important task of running effective selection competitions for the senior Garda ranks over the coming months.

4. Other Business

None arising.

5. Agreed Actions:

No.	Action point	By Date	By Whom
A_015_01	The Executive to ensure that it develops a fuller understanding of scenarios relevant to the Authority's remit and responsibilities that are provided for in the Garda Síochána Act 2005 (the Act).	ASAP	The Executive
A_015_02	The Executive to undertake preparatory work in relation to its report to the Minister under s. 62O(2) of the Act and to bring this work forward in its 2017 work plan.	ASAP	The Executive
A_015_03	The Executive to review the revised Protected Disclosures Policy and prepare a briefing for the Authority for its next meeting.	23 February	The Executive