



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Meeting of the Policing Authority

Date: 16 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, Maureen Lynott, Moling Ryan

Secretary and Chief Executive: Helen Hall

1. Chairperson's opening remarks

The agenda was approved, there were no apologies and no declarations of interest. The proposed terms of reference for the Tribunal of Inquiry were noted and the announcement in relation to the appointment of an international expert.

2. Preparation for meeting with the Garda Commissioner

The Chairperson informed Members that the Garda Commissioner had requested an opportunity to brief the Authority and to provide Members with an opportunity to ask questions in the context of matters which had been in the public domain over the past week.

As a follow up to the Authority's meeting of 13 February 2017, it was agreed that today also provided an early opportunity to ask the questions which Members intended to ask the Commissioner at its meeting on 23 February.

Part B – Meeting with the Garda Commissioner

Attendance

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

Secretary and Chief Executive: Helen Hall

Garda Síochána: Commissioner Nóirín O'Sullivan, Superintendent Marie Broderick

3. Discussion with the Garda Commissioner of matters in the public domain

The Commissioner noted that she had offered to come to meet the Authority to clarify and to give Members an opportunity to ask questions about matters in the public domain

It was noted that in addition to the usual constraints regarding live investigations, personal cases etc. the forthcoming Tribunal of Inquiry required particular care to be taken in any discussion.

The discussion gave Members an opportunity to deepen their understanding of relevant Garda Síochána practices and processes as a backdrop to matters in the public domain. Issues discussed included:

- Processes for evidence handling;
- Systems for assuring compliance with the “Children First Guidelines”;
- How investigation cases are allocated to teams;
- Operation of disciplinary procedures;
- The challenges that recent events present for creating an environment in the Garda Síochána of speaking up and how that would be addressed in the short term;
- Welfare issues across the organisation;
- The value of the Public Inquiry (and by extension Authority meetings in public) providing the opportunity for maximum transparency;
- The absolute importance of maintaining a focus on delivery of policing and security services and implementing the modernisation and renewal programme;
- Necessity for review of legislation as it relates to GSOC functions; and
- How to change and renew culture in the Garda Síochána and the importance of progressing the culture audit so that success in this regard could be objectively measured.

4. Agenda for the Authority meeting on 23 February

The Chairperson alerted the Commissioner that the draft agenda for next week’s Authority meeting would be amended in the context of the events of this past week.

Part C – Authority Meeting

Attendance

Authority: Josephine Feehily (Chairperson), Bob Collins, Vicky Conway, Pat Costello, Maureen Lynott,

Secretary and Chief Executive: Helen Hall

Apologies: Valerie Judge, Noel Brett, Judith Gillespie, Moling Ryan

1. Planning for meeting on 23 February to be held in public

Members agreed that many of the questions asked of the Commissioner today, would need to be asked again at next week’s meeting in public and indeed that Members would wish to go deeper on certain issues. It was agreed that immediate consideration would be given by the Chairperson to the identification of lead questioners to allow Members to do sufficient advance preparation.