



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Meeting of the Policing Authority

Date: 26 August 2024

Venue: Virtual Meeting

Attendance

Authority: Elaine Byrne (Chairperson), Anthony Harbinson, Paul Mageean, Donal de Buitleir, Jane Mulcahy, Deborah Donnelly.

Secretary: Aoife Clabby.

Executive: Helen Hall (Chief Executive), Margaret Tumelty, John Gallagher,

1. Meeting of Members in Private

The Authority did not exercise its option to have a meeting in private.

2. Chairperson's Opening Remarks

The meeting agenda was approved, as drafted.

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Members in relation to any of the items for consideration.

3. Appointments

Members considered and approved a request received from the Garda Síochána for the approval of a supernumerary position at the rank of Superintendent for a two-month period to 18 October 2024. Members noted that the Department of Justice (DOJ) had indicated its support for the supernumerary post and that it also would require the support of the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform (DPENDR).

Members were presented with the outcomes of the clearance process in respect of the appointment of a candidate to the rank of Superintendent in the Garda Síochána. The Authority was satisfied to appoint the candidate to the rank of Superintendent, with effect from the date on which the supernumerary post is approved by the DOJ and DPENDR and candidate takes up the position to which they are assigned by the Garda Commissioner.

Members considered a request received from the Garda Síochána, seeking approval for the appointment of a candidate to the position of Principal Officer (Head of ICT Operations) in the Garda Síochána, in accordance with sanctions in place. Members were satisfied to appoint the successful candidate to the position.

Members considered and approved a request received from the Garda Síochána seeking approval for the renewal of the temporary appointment of the Acting Executive Director, Human Resources and People Development. Noting that the extension requested by the Garda Síochána was for a six-month period to 30 April 2025, the Authority directed that the consent of the Ministers for Justice and for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform to the renewal would be sought for a period of twelve months to 31 October 2025. The Authority agreed that this extended timeframe would allow for the changes that would be brought about by the PSCS Act and to enable the Commissioner to determine if the matter required engagement with the Garda Board.

Members considered the recommendation received from publicjobs to appoint a candidate to the position of Executive Director, Finance and Services in the Garda Síochána, at Assistant Secretary level, in accordance with the sanctions in place. Members were satisfied to approve the appointment of the person proposed to the position.

Members considered correspondence received from the Department of Justice, consulting with the Authority on the draft mandatory retirement age regulations pertaining to members of the Garda Síochána. Members noted the Department's proposal to increase the mandatory retirement age for members of the Garda Síochána from 60 to 62. Members considered the draft regulations and supported the proposed change to the mandatory retirement age. It was agreed that a response to the consultation would issue in this regard.

Members considered correspondence received by the Chairperson from a number of the Assistant Commissioners in relation to the Deputy Commissioner competition and the implications of the Standard Fund Threshold and a request for the competition to be deferred. The Chief Executive updated the Authority in relation to her communications with the Department of Justice and publicjobs on the matter. The Authority noted that a decision had been taken by publicjobs to extend the closing date for the competition by one week.

Action Number	Action point	By Date	By Whom
A_141_01	Notify the Commissioner of the appointment of a candidate to the rank of Superintendent and notify the candidate of their appointment, on receipt of approval for the supernumerary position from DOJ and DPENDR.	ASAP	Chief Executive
A_141_02	Notify the A/ED HR&PD of the appointment of a candidate to the position of Principal Officer (Head of ICT Operations) and notify the candidate of their appointment.	ASAP	Chief Executive
A_141_03	Seek the consent of the Minister for Justice, and the Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform for the temporary appointment of the Acting ED, HR&PD to 31 October 2025.	ASAP	Chief Executive
A_141_04	Notify the Garda Síochána and publicjobs of the Authority's approval of the proposed candidate to the position of Executive Director, Finance and Services in the Garda Síochána and notify the candidate of their appointment.	ASAP	Chief Executive

4. Policing Priorities

Members considered a response received from the Commissioner in relation to the Authority's proposed changes to Policing Priority measures for 2025, following a decision taken at the June meeting to extend the existing Policing Priorities for a period of one year to the end of 2025.

Members noted that the Commissioner was in agreement with the Authority's proposals for amendment to the proposed measures for success, in the main. Members were then provided with an overview of the Commissioner's proposals for further amendment to a small number of the proposed measures, together with the accompanying rationale. Members also noted a proposal for the inclusion of an additional measure relating to local communities.

Following consideration of the proposals made, the Authority finalised the Policing Priorities 2025, subject to a number of wording amendments. It was agreed that the priorities would be submitted to the Minister for Justice for her approval, in accordance with the statutory provisions.

Number	Action point	By Date	By Whom
A_141_05	Finalise revisions to the Policing Priorities 2025 and submit to the Minister for Justice for her approval.	ASAP	Chief Executive

5. Garda Síochána resources

5.1 Finance

Members considered a financial update to end June, provided by the Garda Síochána, including projected spend to year end. Members welcomed the quality of the information provided in the update and noted that such financial updates would now be provided to the Authority on a monthly basis.

5.2 Human Resources

Members received a report prepared by the Garda Síochána for the Joint Resources Working Group providing data in relation to recruitment and retention in the Garda Síochána and a comprehensive overview of total organisational strength. Members expressed concern at recruitment level forecasts for the organisation, in particular in the context of projected retirements of Garda members. Members also considered the low number of Garda staff at senior management level, as a proportion of the organisation as a whole.

Members noted correspondence provided to the Chief Executive by the Commissioner's office, in relation to a working group established by the Department of Justice to address the strategic challenges and opportunities for Garda member recruitment and retention. Members noted that the Garda Síochána had presented the Department with a multi-year headcount plan and a significant number of proposed recruitment and retention proposals. These proposals had previously been shared with the Authority.

Members also noted the Terms of Reference for the newly established working group, entitled the 'Recruitment Training Capacity Group', involving membership at a senior level from the Garda Síochána, the Department of Justice and the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform and with the aim of providing initial recommendations to the Minister for Justice by the end of September. In this regard, Members also noted the Commissioner's observation that the range of initiatives previously submitted to the Department would not all be in scope.

6. Other Business

Members discussed preparations for future scheduled meetings of the Authority.