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**CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT TO NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD
4 DECEMBER 2019**

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide a broad overview of the activity undertaken by the Police Service of Northern Ireland in recent weeks.

SECURITY SITUATION UPDATE

There remains a persistent threat of attack against security force targets and we are continuing to see high levels of dissident republican (DR) activity. Police officers, military and prison officers remain the primary target for violent DRs and the threat to each of these remains SEVERE, meaning an attack is highly likely. We continue to assess that DRs remain capable of mounting reckless and dangerous attacks, many of which also pose a danger to members of the public.

Republican, loyalist and organised criminal groups continue to conduct paramilitary-style attacks (PSAs) and intimidation directed at the wider community. These brutal attacks remain a significant issue in many communities in Northern Ireland.

Paramilitary Style Assaults (to end of October 2019)

- There were 60 casualties of paramilitary style assaults during the last 12 months compared to 54 during the previous 12 months. The majority of these assaults were carried out in Antrim and Newtownabbey (19 casualties) and Belfast (18 casualties). Antrim and Newtownabbey and Derry City and Strabane have seen

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the largest increase in the number of such casualties (11 and 7, respectively) compared to the previous 12 months.

- Of the 60 casualties of paramilitary style assaults during the last 12 months, six were aged under 18 years old.

Paramilitary Style Shootings (to end of October 2019)

- There were 17 casualties from paramilitary style shootings during the last 12 months, compared to 21 during the previous 12 months. Of these 17 shootings, 10 occurred in Derry City and Strabane. After a four month period between April and July which saw no such attacks, the last three months have seen two or three such shootings each month.
- Of the 17 casualties of paramilitary style shootings during the last 12 months, all were aged 18 years and above.

OPERATIONAL UPDATE

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking continues to be a fast growing crime in Northern Ireland (NI). During the 2018/19 financial year, 59 potential victims were identified in NI, an increase compared to 36 the previous year. Already this financial year 64 potential victims have been recovered in NI - the highest figures ever recorded for NI since National records began in 2009.

Operation Vowelist: This is a proactive Human Trafficking investigation relating to sexual exploitation which commenced in February 2019. All suspects and potential victims in this case are from Northern Ireland. On Sunday 29 September 2019, a 57 year man was arrested for human trafficking for sexual exploitation, controlling prostitution, brothel keeping, paying for sexual services and Money Laundering. A 27 year old female was also arrested for controlling prostitution, brothel keeping and Money Laundering. She has been released on police bail pending further enquiries. Both properties were searched and a substantial amount of electronic devices, storage devices and cash were seized. The male was charged with 3 x human trafficking for sexual exploitation, 3 x controlling prostitution, 1 x brothel keeping, 1 x paying for sexual

services and 1 x acquiring criminal property to the value of £139,772. The male remains remanded in custody.

To date six vulnerable female victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation have been safeguarded through the National Referral Mechanism process with more vulnerable females engaging with Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit detectives.

Eight males across Northern Ireland were arrested on suspicion for paying for sexual services. A ninth was interviewed under caution. All nine will be reported to the Public Prosecution Service.

Kevin Lunney Kidnap Investigation Update

The investigation into this horrific crime continues and we are working in close collaboration with our colleagues in the An Garda Síochána (AGS). We have formalised this collaboration under a Eurojust Joint Investigation Team which has the effect of easing the transfer of relevant information between the two organisations and enables the participants to avail of specialist support from Europol if it is considered beneficial to the investigation. In terms of progress, the AGS, PSNI and Derbyshire Police carried out searches at a number of addresses in Northern Ireland, Ireland and England on 8 November 2019 and recovered significant amounts of potential evidence for examination. Sadly, an occupant of a property in England took seriously ill during the search and later died in hospital. The AGS subsequently arrested six people in connection with the abduction and assault. On 26 November 2019 four men appeared in court in County Cavan charged with offences linked to the abduction of Mr Lunney. The investigation remains a top priority for the PSNI and I met with four of the Directors of the company on 19 November 2019, including Kevin Lunney, to reassure them of this and listened to their concerns.

Attempted ATM Theft Ballynahinch

In the early hours of Monday 18 November 2019, police received a report of an attempted ATM theft/commercial burglary at Carlisle's Service station Ballynahinch. A JCB digger was taken from a Quarry business close by and used to remove the ATM from the wall causing substantial damage to the business. The suspects entered the premises and took a large quantity of national lottery scratch cards and cigarettes. They were not able to remove the ATM from the scene and made off in a silver VW Passat vehicle which was located burnt out in the Saintfield area a short time later. A number of follow up searches were conducted by Newry CID in the Saintfield area which resulted in four persons being arrested. Two males have since been charged with a number of offences relating to the incident.

Operation Turnstone – Muckamore Abbey Hospital Investigation

This is the Public Protection Branch investigation into incidents of physical abuse and inappropriate conduct by staff members towards patients in Muckamore Abbey Hospital. CCTV footage was installed in four wards, all of which must now be viewed. The timeframe is between April 2017 and November 2017, which has resulted in approximately 300,000 hours of footage. Footage from PICU Ward has been fully viewed by PSNI with the viewing of a second ward (Sixmile) having now commenced. To date 26 victims have been identified together with 126 potential suspects. Two suspects have been arrested and interviewed with a further two suspects scheduled to be interviewed before the end of 2019. The PSNI continue to have good engagement with the victims' families by way of dedicated family liaison officers and have kept the families informed whilst also responding to their concerns. Investigating Officers have liaised with the Public Prosecution Service and discussions about disclosure and submission of files has progressed. PSNI, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and The Regulatory and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) continue to address safeguarding concerns that arise from incidents identified during the investigation.

Op Lamplighter – Dunmurry Care Home

In June 2018 the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland (COPNI) published his report, 'Home Truths' in relation to care provided at Dunmurry Manor Care Home (DMCH). At the time of publication, the Commissioner Eddie Lynch wrote to PSNI to ask them to review information they had gathered during their investigation to see if there was evidence of any criminality. A Police investigation was subsequently commenced in August 2018. The investigation is focused on the period June 2014 – July 2017 during which time there were 183 residents. Of the 183, the investigation team have identified 29 residents whose care requires further enquiry. Witnesses in this case are the family members of residents in the home as well as staff at the home and agency staff who worked there. The information gathering stage has been lengthy, however, an expert advisor has been employed to review eight of the cases for which full records are now available. This work will commence in January 2020.

**Paramilitary Crime Taskforce (PCTF) Operation - Drugs Search and Arrest
Operation East Belfast UVF**

In November 2019 PCTF stopped and searched a vehicle suspected of carrying controlled drugs linked to the East Belfast UVF. This resulted in suspected Class B controlled drugs (Cannabis) with an estimated street value of £60,000 being seized. A Mobility vehicle used in the offending has been seized and returned to the Scheme. The suspect was interviewed and charged with possession of a Class B controlled drug with intent to supply. The suspect is charged and remains on bail pending a first court appearance.

Paramilitary Crime Taskforce (PCTF) Operation – West Belfast UDA

In November 2019 PCTF concluded an investigation in to the sale of counterfeit goods by persons linked to the West Belfast UDA. Among the counterfeit goods seized were Scottish and English Premier League Football jerseys eg Ranger FC and Manchester Utd and items bearing the branding of SilkSilk. These goods were destined for sale on Ebay. This resulted in two suspects being charged with a variety of money laundering offences in which the interim value of money laundered is in excess of £200,000. It is assessed this has impacted a revenue stream of West Belfast UDA. The suspects are charged and remain on bail pending first court appearance.

Drugs Arrest and Search Operation November 2019

Detectives from PSNI Organised Crime Unit have been conducting an investigation into the importation and supply of Class A controlled drugs into Northern Ireland for distribution in the Belfast area. On 8 November 2019 they seized a van containing suspected Class A controlled drugs (cocaine) with an estimated street value of £180,000. The driver and two other males suspected to be involved in the importation of the cocaine were subsequently arrested. Six searches were conducted in Crumlin, Lisburn, North and West Belfast. Two of the males were charged to court overnight and the third was bailed pending further Police enquiries. The third male is the subject of a Proceeds of Crime Application for £17,000 placed before the courts in the same week.

Drugs Arrest and Search Operation October 2019

During an ongoing investigation into a South East Asian organised crime network, a search and arrest operation took place in North Belfast and Larne. This investigation involved partnership working with Border Force. Border Force made the initial referral and rapid developmental work by PSNI led to the identification of a number of addresses.

Seven parcels were delivered to three addresses in late October originating from continental Europe. Two arrests (a male and female suspect) were made at properties in North Belfast. Detectives seized cannabis with a potential value of £460,000 and a number of other items including a vehicle.

The male was arrested for Possession of Class B, Possession of Class B with intent to supply and illegal entry to the UK. He was charged to court and subsequently remanded in custody.

The female was arrested for Possession of Class B, Possession of Class B with intent to supply, conspiracy to supply Class B and Money Laundering. She was bailed pending further investigation.

Drugs Education Scheme Pilot - Community Resolution Notices

A pilot Drugs Education Scheme has been running in B&C Districts (Lisburn & Castlereagh and Ards & North Down Boroughs) from June 2019 for an initial six month period with partners at the ASCERT charity (<https://ascert.biz/>). The scheme augments the normal for Community Resolution Notice (CRN) process with attendance on the scheme being a condition of this disposal type for appropriate first time offenders.

By the end of December up to 80 people will have completed the education sessions which include sessions on the harm caused by drugs and on drug legislation. Feedback from the attendees has stated that their knowledge in relation to drugs legislation and the harm they can do to themselves and society has increased as a result of the education session. A 25% dip sample of attendees who attended the drugs education sessions indicated that none of the attendees have had any further involvement with police in relation to drugs or any other offence. Whilst this intervention is in its infancy it would indicate there is value to this additional layer of support and education.

Street Beat Initiative

Belfast District commenced a partnership with The Linen Quarter and Cathedral Quarter in September that has resulted in two dedicated PSNI Constables patrolling the areas at agreed times.

With direct dial numbers for the team, we are encouraging the community to report crime but at the same time encouraging local business to be part of the solution. This 'civic watch', style of police/community liaison has been received very well by all stakeholders. Policing style has been delivered by a combination of vehicle and foot patrols in areas of strong pedestrian or vehicular traffic. This has prompted a positive response from partners who have witnessed a reduction in anti-social behaviour in a number of hotspots.

ORGANISATIONAL UPDATE

Op Seasons Greeting

We launched our annual Season's Greetings operation to keep people safe in the run up to Christmas. Dedicated resources from districts, operational support and crime operations will be deployed across all districts in Northern Ireland to deter and detect criminality and provide visible reassurance during some of the busiest weeks of the year. The operations will provide visible policing to local communities, businesses and those who are out and about shopping and enjoying the festive build up. There will be a particular focus on illegal drug activity, retail crime and looking after older people and the most vulnerable in our communities, including victims of domestic abuse.

We recognise that this is a difficult time for many people and in the past we have seen an increase in the number of domestic abuse victims over the Christmas period. We want all victims to know that we are here and we would encourage victims of domestic abuse to report incidents. A specific domestic abuse campaign will launch on 9 December 2019 to encourage victims to speak out and help stop the abuse.

Roads Policing

Road deaths continue to be a priority for the PSNI. In this calendar year, 46 people have been killed on our roads, compared to 51 for the previous year and 61 in the year 2017. This downwards trend has been particularly evident in the motorcyclist category but worryingly we don't see a commensurate reduction in relation to pedestrians. The theme for this year's Road Safety Week (18-24 Nov) was "Safer Rural Roads" where one third of our total collisions occur but these conversely account for two thirds of the deaths and over half of the serious injuries recorded.

Road Education Interventions

Since the return to school in September, the Education Officers have delivered over 70 presentations targeting the most vulnerable of road-users. They have been welcomed into schools in Belleek for the first time in uniform and a further planned visit to Belcoo, right on the border in a hard to reach community. Road Education Officers have participated and presented to community events and work experience programmes in

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Strabane and Newry, with participants stating that it had generated and consolidated their interest in a career in policing.

The Roadsafes Roadshow was staged in St Patrick's in Dungannon and Foyle Arena in Derry city centre.

Criminal Justice Initiatives

A/ Single Sample

This project went live on 12 August 2019. The overall aim of the Single Sample DNA Project is to align PSNI business process with national practice such that a single DNA sample is taken to evidential standards. This means that if required the sample/derived profile can be subject to additional processing, facilitating its usage as part of any subsequent forensic examinations. This also negates the need to retake DNA as a Casework Sample every time an individual is identified against the DNA database. This will bring significant efficiencies because only one sample is being taken, transported and examined.

B/ Victim Support Referrals

This project aims to return 100% victim referrals to Victim Support NI for all Public Protection matters. This went live on 4 November and is already yielding 85% referrals (previous average was 27%). This seeks to ensure that the most vulnerable victims are provided with the appropriate levels of support at what will be a critical time in their lives.

C/ Sexting Pilot

Belfast District, Newry, Mourne & Down District and Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon District are part of this pilot that commenced on 4 November. This is a pilot programme for young people aged from 10 to 17 years about sexting (where an individual has sent sexually explicit photographs or messages to another usually via mobile phone). Where young people involved in this type of behaviour come to the attention of police and criminal proceedings are not ongoing, PSNI Youth Diversion Officers will offer the young person involved and their parent or guardian a one off educational session. This is delivered by the Youth Justice

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Agency with the consent of the young person and their parent or guardian.

The benefits of this are:

- prevents the criminalizing of children
- educates the parent/guardian as well as the child
- offers opportunity for onward referral to other services if required

ENGAGEMENT

Awards

The collaborative working between the Police Service of Northern Ireland and Northern Ireland Policing Board in respect to the Local Policing Public Consultation was highly commended at the inaugural World Class Policing Awards on the 14 November 2019. The awards recognised and celebrated World Class Policing and received hundreds of nominations from Police Services from around the world. The Public Consultation team was one of six finalists highly commended by the judging panel. The panel recognised the challenges in obtaining meaningful feedback in similar consultations and commended the team on the scale and innovative nature of their work. They acknowledged the usefulness of using the user-friendly, online prioritisation simulator, allowing participants to see how moving resources impacted on policing. They also commented on the explanatory animation and that this educational approach led to more measured, realistic responses based on budget, challenges and demands.

Training

PSNI was recently represented by one of our Foundation Trainers at bespoke LGBT training events in Madrid and Rome. The training was provided by the European Council and was fully funded by them for successful applicants. This provided an opportunity to work with colleagues and stakeholders in the Criminal Justice Systems from all over Europe and to bring back learning to the PSNI which will be incorporated into training going forward.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We have also been invited by the Northern Ireland Branch of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) to sit on a judging panel in 2020 assessing a range of award categories. A similar invitation has been received to facilitate/chair a 'Diversity & Inclusion - A Practical Guide' event being organised by a leading Law firm and a leading HR Consultancy Firm. Both these invitations reflect the fact that PSNI is now establishing itself in terms of commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives. Importantly, involvement in such events serves as an important engagement opportunity.

Promotions and Recruitment

During November 2019, 93 appointments to Inspector were progressed with a start date of 2nd December 2019. Further to this work has commenced to establish the vacancies at Sergeant level to allow existing live transfers and specialist appointments to progress, which will be followed by Sergeant promotion appointments. There are 214 officers on the Sergeant's promotion list with approximately 174 vacancies currently existing. It is anticipated these promoted Sergeants will undertake their new roles during February 2020.

Over the past number of weeks promotions for police staff have included 2 promotions to Grade 7, 2 to Deputy Principal, and 2 at Staff Officer grade.

The promotion delivery schedule has recently been published to the service which will see promotion processes for Superintendent, Chief Inspector, Inspector, Sergeant, and EO2 all launch between now and March 2020.

Finally, the next Police Officer recruitment competition will commence early in the New Year.

CONCLUSION

When the year finally draws to a close it will mark six months for me as Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. I would like to thank my colleagues, the Policing Board and the wider Northern Ireland community for the welcome and support I have received. Time has flown and in that time we have collectively begun a conversation about where we want to take policing in Northern Ireland over the next ten years.

This report has outlined the breadth and depth of the service we are providing to local communities. It also evidences that we are building upon strong foundations as we develop our plans for change over the coming months. I look forward to 2020 with optimism.

Ends