

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION AND OUTCOMES OVERVIEW

The Northern Ireland Policing Board (the Board) is an independent public body made up of 10 Political and 9 Independent Members established to ensure for all the people of Northern Ireland an effective, efficient, impartial, representative and accountable police service which will secure the confidence of the whole community, by reducing crime and the fear of crime.

The Board is responsible for overseeing all aspects of policing. In addition to monthly meetings, the Policing Board has five Committees to take forward detailed scrutiny of the work of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and fulfil its range of legislative duties. These are:

- [Audit and Risk Assurance](#)
- **Discipline**
- [Partnership](#)
- [Performance](#)
- [Resources](#)

This Report provides an overview of the work during the last year against the agreed Terms of Reference for the Standing Committees of the Policing Board. [These can be found here.](#)

In addition to this published report, details of discussions and decisions taken by the Board's Committees are routinely published on [the Board's website](#) along with other information explaining the Board's role and work.

A copy of some of the key outcomes for the past year are set out in the next page, along with the findings from a published survey on our work and that of the PSNI.

OUTCOMES OVERVIEW: 2023 - 2024



KEY DOCUMENTS PUBLISHED



ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2023-2025

The Northern Ireland Policing Boards Engagement Strategy aims to deliver strategic and purposeful engagement with key stakeholders and the wider community to make a significant contribution to the delivery of the outcomes and objectives of the Board's Corporate Plan 2023-2025.



HUMAN RIGHTS REVIEW OF PRIVACY AND POLICING

The Human Rights Advisor and officials undertook extensive research and consulted widely, engaging with different branches in the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other public bodies. Topics covered in this report include access to databases; biometric collection, searching, and retention; artificial intelligence; surveillance; digital forensics; and data protection at PSNI.



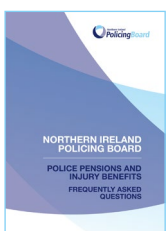
HUMAN RIGHTS REVIEW OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE: STRIP SEARCHING IN POLICE CUSTODY

The issue of strip searches of children and young people has been the subject of considerable concern over the last two years across the UK. The Human Rights Advisor makes a series of recommendations for PSNI to consider, including updating guidance and re-evaluating governance frameworks. Additionally, the Human Rights Advisor makes two recommendations regarding the amendment of PACE legislation.



POLICING PLAN SURVEY 2023 STATISTICAL REPORT

The report covers responses from a survey of 2,502 people in Northern Ireland and includes comparison with results from the 2022 survey. It also shows results from previous omnibus surveys which took place in 2014 to 2017. The purpose of the survey is to monitor outcomes of the Policing Plan and to explore public perceptions of the Police Service of Northern Ireland in policing and engagement with the community.



POLICE PENSIONS AND INJURY BENEFITS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This Frequently Asked Question document has been prepared to assist understanding of some key questions on the process for application for an Injury on Duty Award. Also included is a process maps which sets out all of the key stages involved.



17 Board Meetings



8 Board Public Accountability Sessions



35 Committee Meetings



7 Committee Reports



95 Oral Questions



66 Written Questions



146 Publications

POLICING BOARD RESOURCES

19 Board Members

50 Board Staff

£6.4m Board Funding

£1.5m Board PCSP Funding

23 Custody Visitors

8 Community Observers

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING PLAN SURVEY

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**NINE
IN TEN**

**FELT SAFE
IN THE LOCAL
COMMUNITY**

**SEVEN
IN TEN**

**WERE SATISFIED
WITH THE JOB
THE PSNI DO IN NI**

**TWO
THIRDS**

**WERE CONFIDENT
IN PSNI'S ABILITY
TO PROTECT
AND SERVE**

HALF

**OF PEOPLE WHO
REPORTED A CRIME
WERE SATISFIED
WITH PSNI'S
RESPONSE**

**THREE
QUARTERS**

**OF PEOPLE FELT
THE PSNI WAS
REPRESENTATIVE OF
THEIR COMMUNITY**

**TWO
THIRDS**

**OF PEOPLE THOUGHT
THE PSNI WERE
ENGAGED WITH THEIR
LOCAL COMMUNITY**

**THREE
QUARTERS**

**THOUGHT THE PSNI
WERE SUPPORTIVE
OF THEIR
COMMUNITY**

**ONE
THIRD**

**HAD HEARD
OF PCSPS**

**THREE
IN FIVE**

**THOUGHT THE
POLICING BOARD
WAS INDEPENDENT
OF PSNI**

2. AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

Role of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

The Northern Ireland Policing Board (the Board) has established an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (the Committee) to support it in its responsibilities for issues of risk, control, governance and assurance by reviewing the comprehensiveness of the Board and PSNI's governance framework in meeting the Board's and the Accounting Officer's assurance needs and reviewing the reliability and integrity of these assurances.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Meetings and Membership

The Committee's Terms of Reference states that it is required to meet at least four times a year. During 2023-24, the Committee met five times with meetings held on:

- 23 May 2023
- 22 June 2023
- 28 September 2023
- 19 December 2023
- 28 March 2024

During 2023-24, the following were Members of the Committee:

- Gerry Kelly MLA
- Nuala McAllister MLA
- Frank McManus
- Brendan Mullan (Chair from 6 April 2023)
- Peter Osborne (Vice Chair from 6 April 2023)
- Maurice Bradley MLA (until 12 February 2024)
- Keith Buchanan MLA (from 20 February 2024)

Internal Audit

The Northern Ireland Civil Service's (NICS) Group Internal Audit Team, from the Department for Communities (DfC) were appointed NIPB's Internal Auditors from 1 July 2019. The Department of Justice (DoJ) Internal Audit Team audit the PSNI and therefore to avoid any perceived conflict of interest, it was agreed in 2019 that the Board's Audit Team would be from DfC. In December 2023 Members noted the updated Memorandum of Understanding and Data Sharing Agreements between NIPB and Internal Audit for the period 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2026. Ms. Lacey Walker is the current Head of Internal Audit.

At the meeting on 28 March 2024 the Head of Internal Audit presented the Internal Audit Charter for 2024-2025 to the Committee. Under the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) the purpose, authority and responsibility of Internal Audit should be formally defined in an Internal Audit Charter. In line with PSIAS there is a requirement to present the Internal Charter to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) on an annual basis. The final approval of the Internal Audit Charter rests with the Board. The Committee was asked at the 28 March 2024 meeting to recommend that the Board approve the Charter. The Committee recommended its approval to the Board who subsequently approved it at the Board meeting on 11 April 2024.

At the meeting on 22 June 2023 the Head of Internal Audit presented Internal Audit's Annual Opinion for 2022-23. The Head of Internal Audit advised that Internal Audit's Opinion on NIPB's internal governance, risk management and internal control system was 'satisfactory' and was based on both internal audit activity during this financial year and also cumulative assurances derived from internal audit activity during previous years.

At the March 2023 meeting the Committee considered and agreed the Internal Audit Plan for 2023-24 and noted that this was based on the results of Internal Audit work completed to date in the previous 4 financial years, any new or emerging risks, areas where previous audit coverage highlighted issues; the audit resources available and any key risk areas identified by management on the corporate and directorate level risk registers.

The Internal Audits carried out during the 2023-24 year were:

- NIPB Procurement & Contract Management - final report presented to ARAC March 2024.
- NIPB Assurance Framework and assurance mapping - ARAC advised at March 2024 meeting that final report should be ready in April 2024.
- Advisory Audit on Raising Concerns & Complaints Handling - final report presented to the Committee in December 23 and recommendations implemented and revised policies agreed at March 2024 meeting.
- Causeway Coast & Glens - Compliance with Procurement Policies and Procedures - 2023/24 PCSP funding - ARAC advised at March 2024 meeting that final report should be ready in April 2024.

An overview of this work is included in the table below.

As at June 2023 the Committee noted that there were 4 remaining open recommendations from a 2022 audit of Mid and East Antrim Council (MEA) PCSP Funding which had been due for implementation by 31 March 2023. Members were advised that these recommendations would remain open to allow for continued monitoring of MEA's expenditure and it was hoped that they would close after year end subject to assurance provided as part of the year-end submission. At the September 2023 meeting Members were advised that these 4 recommendations had been closed as sufficient assurance had been provided as part of the year-end 2022/-2023 submissions.

In June 2023 Members also noted that the implementation of 2 outstanding recommendations relating to the Board Business Continuity Plan (BCP) would be paused due to resourcing issues and the office relocation to James House – operationally it was more appropriate for the Business Continuity Plan to relate to the new premises. In December 2023 the ARAC was presented with the updated BCP which contained amendments addressing two outstanding recommendations from the May 2021 Internal Audit Report (Business Continuity Planning and Management including Business Recovery). Following agreement, the updated BCP has now been issued to key NIPB personnel and is stored in a secure location off-site.

In December 2023 the Head of Internal Audit presented a report which noted that the advisory audit of the Raising Concerns/Complaints Handling process was complete and the final report was issued on 5 December 2023 with a “Satisfactory” Audit opinion. The report noted one Priority 2 and eight Priority 3 recommendations. Members were advised that these recommendations were minor points all of which had been accepted by NIPB management. At the March 2024 ARAC meeting and further to the recommendations in the IA report, Members were presented with the updated Raising Concerns and Complaints Handling policy documents for consideration and approval. These policy documents were approved and will be made available on the Board’s website.

During Q3 engagement took place between the Head of Internal Audit, Board officials and the Chair of ARAC regarding proposed amends to the remainder of the 2023-24 workplan. In relation to the planned assurance audit of the Police Property Fund: Call 2, the scope of which related to Compliance with Policy and Procedures, due to a number of factors it was agreed that this audit should be deferred and instead be included in the 2024-25 Internal Audit Plan. IA advised the ARAC Chair that they were content with the review’s deferral given previous work completed by Internal Audit. This included the consultancy review in October 2020 to review the Internal Procedures Manual relating to the Police Property Fund prior to its launch, and the 2021-2022 assurance review of Police Property Fund Call 1 which received a ‘Satisfactory’ Internal Audit Opinion.

In relation to the proposed Corporate Governance audit relating to the PSNI Assurance Process, given the ongoing work regarding the fact finding review of NIPB’s Assurance Framework and assurance mapping, it was agreed that should both audits be completed it would likely result in a significant amount of duplication and therefore it was agreed that the originally planned Corporate Governance assignment would be removed from the current Internal Audit plan, provided IA’s assurance mapping work covered assurances from PSNI.

The Committee was updated by Internal Audit on these revised arrangements at the March 2024 meeting and Members noted they were content with the rationale provided in relation to both deferrals.

At the meeting on 28 March 2024, the Committee also considered and approved the proposed 2024-25 Internal Audit Annual Work Plan. This was compiled in consultation with the Chief Executive and ARAC Chair and incorporates the results of Internal Audit work completed to date in the previous 3 financial years, any new or emerging risk areas where previous audit coverage highlighted issues, the audit resources available and any key risk areas identified by management on the corporate and directorate level risk registers. Members noted that the Internal Audit Plan for 2024-2025 would cover the areas of:

- I. PCSPs
- II. Injury on duty/III Health Retirements
- III. Senior Officer Discipline, and
- IV. Information Management and Security

Summary of 2023-24 Internal Audits

Audit	Assurance Rating	Number of Recommendations by Risk Priority Rating		
		Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
Review of Raising Concerns/ Complaints Handling	Satisfactory	0	1	8
Review of NIPB's Procurement & Contract Management	Satisfactory	0	0	3
Fact Finding Review of NIPB's Assurance Framework	Not complete as at year end. Report expected April 2024.			
Verification Review of Causeway Coast & Glens Council's Compliance with Procurement Policies & Procedures	Not complete as at year end. Report expected April 2024			

Open Internal Audit Recommendations

During the year, Members received quarterly updates from Board Officials on the implementation of open audit recommendations. As at 1 April 2023, there were eight open audit recommendations being progressed towards implementation. Several recommendations have been discharged throughout the reporting period, and (along with the addition of other recommendations throughout the year), at 31 March 2024 there are 5 open internal audit recommendations as detailed below:

- 1 recommendation from the audit on Information Management and Security in March 2022.
- 1 remaining recommendation arising from the Business Continuity Planning Review in May 2021, and
- 3 recommendations from the Review of NIPB's Procurement & Contract Management.

External Audit and NIPB Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

At the Committee meetings on 23 May 2023 and 22 June 2023, the Committee considered the draft Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

At the meeting on 22 June 2023, the External Auditors updated the Committee on the progress of the External Audit and presented the draft Report to Those Charged with Governance from the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG). This Report included the C&AG's unqualified opinion on the Annual Report and Financial Statements to 31 March 2023. At this meeting the External Auditors also reported that one Priority 2 recommendation had been identified during the audit in respect of one uncorrected misstatement. This related to an amount of £89k which was reported as an accrual for legal and holiday pay costs; and external audit advised it should be reclassified as a provision. With regard to this uncorrected misstatement, after discussion it was agreed by the Committee that it should remain uncorrected as it is under the materiality threshold of £126k.

External Auditors also identified one Priority 3 recommendation in relation to Remuneration Report disclosure requirements from Department of Finance (DoF) and Board officials undertook to clarify with the DoF in relation to the relevant disclosures on the Remuneration Report to ensure compliance with those requirements.

Board officials subsequently discussed the outworkings of the recommendation with NICS Pensions Branch and NIAO on a way forward.

The final Report to Those Charged with Governance was presented to the Committee at its meeting on 28 September 2023

At the meeting on 28 March 2024, the External Auditors provided an overview of their planned 2024-25 External Audit Strategy. Members were briefed on the NIAO Audit Strategy for the certification of the Board's Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024. The audit strategy detailed the NIAO approach to the audit, the roles and responsibilities of Board and Audit staff, the cost of the audit, associated risks, and also a detailed audit project plan which included a proposed commencement date of 13 May 2024 for the audit fieldwork. Members approved the proposed audit plan as presented. Members were advised that it is envisaged that the Annual Report and Financial Statements will be certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General and laid with the NI Assembly by 05 July 2024.

NIPB Governance Statement 2022-23

The Accounting Officer (Chief Executive) is required to prepare an Annual Governance Statement for inclusion in the Annual Report and Financial Statements. The Governance Statement is designed to bring together all disclosures relating to governance, risk and control and ensure transparent reporting. The Committee reviewed the 2022-23 Governance Statement at its meeting on 22 June 2023, and agreed to recommend that the Governance Statement be signed by the Accounting Officer. [This can be viewed from Page 93 of our Annual Report and Accounts 2022-2023 on our website.](#)

Risk Management

The Board owns the organisational risks and throughout 2023-24, the Committee, on behalf of the Board, spent significant time considering the approach to risk management including attending a facilitated workshop in September 2023 (further details regarding this are included below).

During the reporting period the Boards' Senior Management Team (SMT) regularly reviewed the Board's Corporate Risk Register and kept the identified risks under review, escalating and de-escalating risks as appropriate. At each ARAC Committee meeting in 2023-24 Members reviewed the Corporate Risk Register and received an update from Board Officials about the material changes to the register since the last review.

Following on from an earlier Internal Audit recommendation in relation to the Board's Risk Management Framework, in September 2023 Board Members and Board senior staff participated in a Risk Management Workshop which resulted in a decision to prioritise the below next steps in terms of the Board's approach to risk management.

- To review and update the risk management policy/framework
- To review the Corporate Risk Register to ensure it reflects key strategic and significant directorate risks
- To update the Directorate Risk Registers

In December 2023 a revised format of the Board's Corporate Risk Register and an updated Risk Management Framework (**RMF**) was brought to ARAC for consideration and agreement. Key elements of the RMF include:

- How the framework supports the consistent and robust identification and management of opportunities and risks within desired levels across the NIPB,
- The principles which will be applied to ensure the framework is effective,
- How risk management processes will be structured within NIPB to include risk identification and assessment, risk treatment, risk monitoring and risk reporting, and,

- The risk management procedures which will be the minimum standard applied across the organisation.

Following the December meeting the draft RMF was circulated for consideration and agreement by way of written procedure and is now published on the Board's website at [Risk Management Framework | Northern Ireland Policing Board \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](https://nipolicingboard.org.uk)

In respect of the revised Corporate Risk Register (**CRR**), Members considered the updated format and noted that where appropriate 5 corporate risks had been updated to reflect current circumstances and updated information was included in the "*Key Controls in Place*" and "*Action Planned with Target Dates*" sections of the CRR.

At the December 2023 meeting Members also considered the Performance Directorate Risk Register and it was agreed that going forward each Directorate Risk Register would be considered annually with one Directorate Register coming to each of the quarterly ARAC meetings.

As at the end of the reporting period there remained five risks on the Board's CRR. At the ARAC meeting on 28 March 2024 in respect of Risk 3 relating to NIPB Capacity and Capability (Staffing), the Committee discussed the residual risk score and whether this should be elevated from a 4 given ongoing challenges and budgetary uncertainty. The Committee noted that an action plan on staffing is scheduled to come to a future Resources Committee however it was agreed that the residual score on Risk 3 would be elevated from a yellow (Possible) into an amber (Likely).

Briefing and Presentations from the Independent Pensions Advisor and Police Pension Board Representative

At the Committee meeting on 19 December 2023, The Committee received a briefing and presentation from the Board's Independent Pensions Advisor. The purpose of the briefing was to provide a refresher session for Members in relation to the Governance arrangements for the Police Pension Scheme, a summary of the roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders, which included the various statutory

responsibilities and obligations of the Board as the Police Pension Scheme Manager, as well as to provide an overview of the current work of the Police Pension Board. In addition, Members were provided with an update and engaged in a question and answer session in relation to the current position of the McCloud Remedy Project.

The Police Pension Board Chair attended ARAC on 28 March 2024 at which time Members also considered the Police Pension Board Risk Register and were provided with an update in relation to the progress of the McCloud Remedy Project to include an overview of the work undertaken by the Scheme Manager and Scheme Administrator regarding the reassessment project.

Stewardship Statement to the Department of Justice

In accordance with the Board's Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM), the Chief Executive as the organisation's Accounting Officer provides a bi-annual Stewardship Statement to the DoJ Accounting Officer which enables the DoJ Accounting Officer to satisfy themselves that all relevant risk management practices are being adhered to. A mid-year Stewardship Statement was provided to the Committee at their meeting in September 2023. The end of year Stewardship statement for the 2023\24 year was issued to the DoJ on 5 April 2024 and tabled at the May 2024 ARAC meeting.

Committee Effectiveness

In line with best practice, the ARAC Chair developed a Self-Assessment Effectiveness questionnaire which ARAC Members were asked to complete and return in order to take the views of the Committee and assess the Committee's performance throughout the 2023\24 year. The initial results of this questionnaire were considered at the March 2024 meeting. Overall the results were positive with regard the Committee meeting its responsibilities. It was agreed to set aside additional time at a future meeting to consider some minor points arising and the next steps in respect of these, which would further enhance the Committee's performance.

Governance

Throughout the year, the Committee received and considered regular updates on a number of Governance matters including:

- NIPB Direct Award Contracts (DACs) [half-yearly].
- NIPB Complaints Update [quarterly]
- Dear Accounting Officer correspondence from the DoF [as required]
- NIPB Raising a Concern update [half-yearly]
- Gifts & Hospitality [quarterly]
- Register of Interests [half-yearly]
- Fraud [half-yearly]

Direct Award Contracts

Six-monthly updates were provided to the Committee and Members noted these in June and December 2023. In December 2023 one DAC was reported to the Committee. Following market failure to engage a contractor to review the current medical guidance document and engage with key stakeholders to produce a revised joint guidance document, which was intended to be placed on a statutory footing by the Department of Justice. The NIPB engaged with Capita with a view to contracting them on a Direct Award basis to scope out the work required to review the current medical guidance document. The purpose of the engagement was to determine if the NIPB's requirements in their current form are feasible and achievable, or if the specification and budget need to be revised.

In March 2024 an update was provided to the Committee on an additional DAC which had been put in place in respect of a Security Technical Advisor. The advisor will assist management with the maintenance and repair of specialist security systems within the NIPB James House building on an ad hoc basis over the next three years.

NIPB Complaints Update

The Committee routinely receives quarterly updates on the complaints received by the Board under the NIPB Complaints Policy and where applicable, the outcome of each complaint.

During the 2023-2024 year no complaints were progressed under the Board's Complaints Policy. As noted above an Internal Audit Advisory Review on Raising Concerns/Complaints Handling was completed and presented to the ARAC December 2023. The policy was subsequently updated and agreed by ARAC in March 2024. The updated Complaints Policy is now available on the Board's website via the following link [Complaints Policy | Northern Ireland Policing Board \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](https://nipolicingboard.org.uk/Complaints-Policy)

NIPB Whistleblowing Policy/Raising a Concern Update

The Committee received half yearly updates throughout the reporting period and were advised that no concerns had been raised under the Board's Raising Concerns Policy. As noted earlier, the Internal Audit review of this policy identified one Priority 2 and seven Priority 3 recommendations all of which were accepted by management. The updated policy document was agreed by ARAC in March 2024.

Fraud

Six-monthly updates were provided to the Committee in June and December 2023. Members noted there were no suspected or actual fraud incidents to report.

Gifts and Hospitality

The Committee monitors the Board's Gifts & Hospitality Register on a quarterly basis and all hospitality accepted/declined or returned for the reporting period is included in the register which has now been published and is available on our website via the following link [Gifts and Hospitality Register 2023 - 2024 | Northern Ireland Policing Board \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](https://nipolicingboard.org.uk/Gifts-and-Hospitality-Register-2023-2024)

PSNI ARAC

The PSNI's ARAC have five scheduled meetings per year and each meeting is attended by the Chief Executive, following which an update on the material items considered is provided to the Board's ARAC at their next meeting. These updates may include but are not limited to PSNI Corporate Risks, PSNI Internal Audit Reports, and PSNI DACs. The Board's ARAC Members also receive a copy of the PSNI's ARAC meeting papers for information.

At the ARAC meeting on 28 September 2023, Members received a comprehensive

briefing from the PSNI ARAC Chair, which provided an overview of the roles and responsibilities of both the Committee and the Chair of the committee, noting the common interests and interface between the PSNI ARAC and the NIPB ARAC Committee, as well as an understanding of the differences. The PSNI ARAC Chair advised Members of the governance structures in place to provide oversight and assurance of the PSNI's financial, audit and corporate governance arrangements as well as addressing issues of risk and control. The PSNI ARAC Chair provided a summary of the work activities of the Committee and noted the positive relationships with the PSNI Service Executive Team (SET) and Internal and External Audit representatives.

Recommendation to the Accounting Officer

That in relation to Corporate Risk 3 – Capacity and Capability (Staffing) – the Accounting Officer monitors closely the implementation of the proposed staffing action plan to reduce the use of agency staff and thereby reduce the level of staff turnover which is impacting negatively on capacity and capability.

Conclusion

From its work over the course of the year and informed by the reports of the Internal and External Auditors, the Committee is of the view that risk control and governance is at a satisfactory level within the NIPB.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee would wish to thank management and staff, and the Internal and External Auditors for their openness and engagement with the Committee, thereby allowing it to meet its responsibilities.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Minutes

Committee Minutes can be found on the Board's website or by clicking this link:

[Board Committee Minutes | Northern Ireland Policing Board \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](https://nipolicingboard.org.uk/Board-Committee-Minutes)

3. PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Role of the Partnership Committee

The Northern Ireland Policing Board has established a Partnership Committee to support it in its statutory responsibilities for partnership working, including Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs), communications and strategic engagement and community consultation.

The Terms of Reference for the committee outlines the requirement to provide the Board with an Annual Report summarising the work it has carried out during the year.

Partnership Committee Meetings and Membership

During 2023-2024 the Committee met on nine occasions and the following were Members of the Committee:

- John Blair MLA (Chair until January 2024)
- Eoin Tennyson (Chair from February 2024)
- Mukesh Sharma (Vice Chair)
- Les Allamby
- Cathal Boylan MLA (from February 2024)
- Maurice Bradley MLA (until January 2024)
- Cheryl Brownlee MLA (from February 2024)
- Keith Buchanan MLA (from February 2024)
- Joanne Bunting MLA (until January 2024)
- Linda Dillon MLA
- Mark Durkan MLA
- Janet Gray
- Gerry Kelly MLA (until January 2024)
- Kate Laverty
- Peter Osborne

Details of Member attendance at Committee can be found below:

- John Blair MLA (Chair until January 2024) – 6 of 7 Committees
- Eoin Tennyson (Chair from February 2024) – 1 of 1 Committee
- Mukesh Sharma (Vice Chair) – 8 of 9 Committees
- Les Allamby – 9 of 9 Committees
- Cathal Boylan MLA (from February 2024) – 1 of 1 Committee
- Maurice Bradley MLA (until January 2024) – 5 of 7 Committees
- Cheryl Brownlee MLA (from February 2024) – 1 of 1 Committee
- Keith Buchanan MLA (from February 2024) – 1 of 1 Committee
- Joanne Bunting MLA (until January 2024) – 5 of 7 Committees
- Linda Dillon MLA – 7 of 9 Committees
- Mark Durkan MLA – 6 of 9 Committees
- Janet Gray – 6 of 9 Committees
- Gerry Kelly MLA (until January 2024) – 6 of 7 Committees
- Kate Laverty – 6 of 9 Committees
- Peter Osborne – 8 of 9 Committees

Committee Terms of Reference

The Committee's role and remit is set out in its Terms of reference which were considered and agreed at the June 2023 meeting of the Committee. The agreed Committee responsibilities are identified as follows:

PSNI Governance and General Matters

- Monitor police performance against the measures/indicators specific to the committee in the Annual Policing / Performance plan(s) and support the Board in holding the Chief Constable to account for delivery of the Plan
- Review policies and procedures pertinent to the Committee's Terms of Reference and make recommendations to the Board in respect thereof
- Monitor progress in embedding a Policing with the Community culture within PSNI including through the relevant Policing Plan Measure(s)

- Monitor the development and administration of the Police Property Fund
- Monitor the implementation of the Cross Border Policing strategy activities

Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs)

- Annually monitor, support and evaluate the effectiveness of PCSPs and report to the Board
- Attend PCSP and Policing Committee meetings to provide support and enable greater insight into delivery of Action Plans
- Monitor the Reconstitution of PCSPs (usually every four years) and make recommendations to the Board concerning the appointment/removal of Independent PCSP Members, as necessary.
- Nominate Members to become Joint Committee Members to manage in partnership with the Department of Justice, the Policing and Community Safety Partnership programme
- Delegate authority to the Joint Committee Members in a dynamic fashion in advance of Joint Committee meetings, depending on the issue
- Monitor the work of the Policing Committees of the PCSPs and the delivery of Strategic Priority 3 of the PCSP Action Plans
- Contribute to the Strategic direction of PCSPs utilising the Committee's nominated Joint Committee Members and through Committee consideration of relevant items for discussion

Communications

- Monitor the Board's communications activity
- Monitor PSNI communication plans and activity

Engagement

- Monitor the delivery of an Annual Programme of Work to support the Board's Engagement Strategy that supports confidence and co-operation of the public with the police, including community consultation activities, and through participation, contribute to the

delivery of the Annual Programme of Work to support the Board's Engagement Strategy.

- Develop, implement and monitor activities which secure community involvement in policing, including community consultation activities.
- Manage and promote the Independent Custody Visitors Scheme (ICV) and the Independent Community Observer Scheme (ICO).
- **Partnership Committee areas of focus**
- Set out below are the key areas of business conducted during the reporting period April 2023 to March 2024.

PSNI Governance and General Matters

Policing Plan Measures

The 2020-2025 Policing Plan was published on 1 April 2020 and has been underpinned each year with an Annual Performance Plan containing a number of measures. In the 2023-2024 year eight of these measures were reported on by PSNI through Partnership Committee at the committee meetings outlined below:

1.3.1: Number of people in Northern Ireland who feel safe in their local area, in their local high street, town centre and in their own home at night, including the online space. (November 2023)

1.3.2: Rate of places repeatedly victimised. (November 2023)

2.1.1: The number of people in Northern Ireland who are confident that PSNI is accessible, visible, responsive and victim focused. (October 2023)

2.1.3: Report on the levels of 999 (emergency) and 101 (priority) call response. (October 2023 and March 2024)

2.2.1: Number of victims and service users who are satisfied with the service they have received. (May 2023 and January 2024)

3.1.1: Demonstrate progress against the 'Here for You' Public Engagement Strategy and the associated Hallmarks of Neighbourhood Policing. (September 2023 and February 2024)

3.1.2: Identify and report on Neighbourhood Team initiatives to address local problems and tackle local issues through co-designed solutions, in line with Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines. (September 2023 and February 2024)

3.1.3: Assess and evaluate the impact of partnership working with local communities, including but not exclusively, in areas of high deprivation and areas that have been repeatedly victimised. (September 2023 and February 2024)

The Committee considered a Board briefing paper and an outcomes-based accountability (OBA) report card from PSNI prior to each meeting and senior officers, including the Assistant Chief Constable responsible for Local Policing attended each of the Committee meetings to discuss the relevant issues and to listen and respond to the views and concerns of Members. The June 2023 meeting of the Committee took place at the PSNI Call Management Centre in Castlereagh where Members were provided with a tour of the Centre and a detailed briefing on the processes involved in answering 999 and 101 calls which provided an insight into the challenges facing the Service. The February 2024 meeting of the Committee visited the Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF) where Members received a briefing on the partnership working between PSNI, the National Crime Agency and HMRC. The team outlined the work of the PCTF which included the actions taken to tackle the serious drugs issue affecting communities in Northern Ireland.

Policing with the Community Culture

PSNI Children & Young People's Strategy

PSNI launched their Children and Young People Strategy on 13 June 2023 and formally presented it to the Committee at the May 2023 meeting. The Strategy is underpinned by five key themes of: Engagement, Safety & Protection, Suspected Offending, victims & Witnesses and Stop & Search. Members discussed how the strategy would be rolled out and PSNI provided information on the steps in place to ensure it reaches all sections of the community. An update on progress was provided at the January 2024 meeting of the Committee where Members were advised of the proposal to develop an App, the role of the Youth Volunteer Academy and the need to continually monitor the inclusion of the hard-to-reach groups.

South Armagh Review

A review of policing in South Armagh was carried out by PSNI in 2020 and the Board received the report in September 2021. It contained 50 recommendations for improvement to policing in the area. 25 of the recommendations were deemed operational for PSNI and the other 25 were monitored through the three main Committees of the Board. At the Committee meeting in June 2023, PSNI provided an update on progress against the four remaining recommendations that fall to Partnership Committee. Member discussed the Independent Advisor Group (IAG) and were advised that a new approach was being taken in respect of seeking the views of the community on issues that affect them. A separate briefing was provided to Members at the Committee meeting in October 2024 where the ACC outlined that the PSNI have commenced 'Listening' events with community sectors and intend to continue with this approach going forward. At the January 2024 Committee meeting Members received an update on the one outstanding recommendation assigned to Partnership Committee in relation to 'Vulnerability Focus' and noted that community confidence had improved in this area. Cross border co-operation has played a significant role and ensures the effective working of the wider Cross Border Strategy.

Multi Agency Triage Teams (MATT)

At the November meeting of the Committee Members received a briefing on MATT which is a body of health service professionals who work alongside dedicated police officers and mental health professionals with the purpose of providing care to individuals when concerns about that person's mental health is reported to PSNI. Members noted the challenges with the service not least of all the withdrawal of the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS), a key partner, in 2020. It was noted that in the past year of the 22,000 incidents relating to mental health on 11% had a confirmed crime. The Public Health Agency, which provided funding along with PSNI, have committed funding for the 2024-2025 financial year.

Local Policing Review

As a result of significant public consultation in 2018 by the Board and PSNI in relation to Local Policing a consultation report was published containing 45 delivery actions which were led by either PSNI, the Board or a collaboration of both organisations. The Committee has monitored progress against these actions since

2019 and it was agreed in February 2023 that all but three longer term actions were deemed to be either closed or now considered business as usual. At the Committee in May 2024 an infographic outlining progress made on the actions was considered and was approved for publication by the Board in June 2024. The Committee received an update on the remaining three recommendations at the meeting in February 2024. Two of the actions relate to vulnerability and mental health and Members heard about the challenges in sustaining partnership working with other departments and agencies, mainly due to financial pressures. Members agreed to receive an update on the Right Care Right Person project currently underway in PSNI. The remaining recommendation on the development of a social media reporting process is progressing and a further update will be provided to the Committee later in the year.

Problem Solving Awards

The PSNI Problem Solving Awards were established in October 2022 and at the June 2023 meeting of the Committee Members were advised of the timeline for the 2023-2024 awards. The Board has agreed to partner with PSNI in the awards this year and a sixth category has been added to recognise the work of PCSPs providing an opportunity to highlight the innovative projects being co-delivered by local Neighbourhood Policing Teams and PCSPs. At the November 2023 Committee meeting Members were advised that 37 applications had been received overall and 11 of those were from PCSPs. At the March 2024 meeting Members were provided with details of the category winners noting that the PCSP winner was Causeway Coast and Glens for their project which was to help support people with disabilities and their carers to ensure they feel safe and know how to access support in their local council area.

Road Safety

At the March 2024 meeting the Committee Members received a presentation on PSNI Road Safety. Members heard that Road Safety was now an organisational priority and a detailed control strategy had been developed including a proactive media campaign to highlight the dangers on the roads and how to keep safe, and the

further development of partnership working with other government agencies and An Garda Síochána to ensure an all-island approach to the issue of roads safety.

Police Property Fund

The Police Property Fund is made up of the sale of assets recovered by the PSNI as a result of criminal investigations. The Board can make payments to organisations for charitable purposes from the fund and the Board agreed in March 2020 to proceed with running a number of small and large grant schemes. At the June 2023 meeting of the Committee Members agree to open a third call small grant scheme noting that calls one and two resulted in 46 projects being provided with a total funding allocation of £320k. Members received an update on progress at the September and October Committee meetings in terms of outreach, publicity and the final documentation for the launch. The application process closed on 24 January 2024 and Members were provided with an update on the submissions received at the January Committee meeting. An assessment panel of Partnership Committee members met to assess the applications on 15 March 2024 and at the March Committee meeting Members were advised that 21 applications had been recommended for approval at a combined value of £161k. The Board approved the recommendation at the April Board meeting.

Policing and Community Safety Partnerships

One of the Board's responsibilities in respect of PCSPs is to make arrangements for the appointment of Independent Members following a local general election. This is an extensive and resource intensive process which takes place every four years. The costs associated with the recruitment are not provided for in the Board's budget and therefore a pressure was declared to the DoJ who part fund PCSPs along with the Board. Following discussion at the May 2023 meeting of the Committee a funding position was agreed. The DoJ are responsible for providing a Code of Practice for the appointment of Independent PCSP members and an updated code was discussed and debated at an extraordinary meeting of the Committee in July 2024. Members reluctantly agreed with the changes however they did highlight the risk of future PCSPs not being representative of the community. A letter to the DoJ

was agreed at the meeting in September 2024 which highlighted these areas of concern.

Committee Members received an update on the Independent Member reconstitution process at the November 2023 meeting where approval was provided to re-open the process in six council areas due to the low number of applications received. A further update to this was provided at the January 2024 meeting when nominations for the Board Appointment panel were sought. At that Committee meeting the final Policy on the Appointment of Independent PCSP Members, encompassing the changes to the Code of Practice, was agreed.

At the June 2023 meeting of the Committee Members considered the Annual Effectiveness Report for PCSPs and noted the breadth of projects and initiatives delivered by PCSPs. The Board subsequently approved the publication of the report on the Board's and DoJ's website.

At the September 2024 meeting of the Committee Members noted the current PCSP community safety priorities.

Communications

Board Communication

Throughout the reporting period, verbal updates were provided to Committee on activity in support of particular areas of Board Business and the delivery of the Board's legislative duties. The Communications team offered advice and guidance in relation to a dedicated public Board meeting in July 2023 to highlight issues in respect of resourcing and pressures faced as a result of the PSNI budgetary situation and also provided to support around the appointment of PCSP Independent Members and preparation of material for the publication of the ICV Official Statistics Report. Significant media interest was generated following the PSNI Data Breach and subsequent events including the Scofield Judgement on the Ormeau Rd incident and the resignation of the Chief Constable. Specially convened Board meetings were held regularly at this time and communications/media support was a key element of these meetings. The Communications Team provided a range of briefing material to support the Chair and Vice Chair in media interviews and in

preparation for their appearance at the NI Affairs Select Committee. A report on the Communications Action Plan for 2022-2023 was provided to the June 2023 meeting of the Committee.

PSNI Communications

At the June 2023 meeting of the Committee Members received a presentation from PSNI Strategic communications and Engagement Department noting the important and stressful nature of the topics that they deal with on a daily basis and the reactive nature of their work. The challenges arising from striving to maintain consistency across all the areas of business and at District level in terms of messaging and the volume of press queries was also highlighted. The team have also been impacted by the financial situation within the Service and the challenges of conducting their business was also discussed with Members.

Engagement

Engagement Strategy

In April 2023, all Board Members attended an Engagement Workshop in order to develop an Engagement Strategy for 2023– 2025. A draft Engagement Strategy was approved for public consultation at the May 2023 meeting of the Committee following which a draft strategy was considered further by the Committee in October 2023. The Engagement Strategy, which links and aligns with the Boards Corporate Plan, is set out in three stands, Engagement with the Community: Engagement with stakeholders and Consultation. The Strategy was subsequently approved at the November 2023 Board meeting for publication on the Board's website.

In June 2023 Members considered a Programme of Engagement for the Board outlining specific engagement events and activities under each of the three stands in the Engagement Strategy. This which was subsequently noted by the Board at the July 2023 meeting.

Committee Members were advised of, and invited to participate in, various engagement events throughout the year including the joint Board/PSNI Problem Solving conference and awards ceremony, PCSP meetings in Antrim & Newtownabbey and Lisburn & Castlereagh and events in Armagh, Banbridge and

Craigavon. Members also spoke at PCSP Information events which were arranged to promote the PCSP Recruitment campaign and to provide the public with information on the work and role of the PCSPs. These included a bespoke session jointly arranged with Disability Action.

Members also addressed students at the Ulster University campus at Magee Derry/Londonderry. Members attended a number of PSNI Reference, Engagement and Listening (REaL) events throughout the year. These included with the Catholic Nationalist Republican (CNR) Community in August 2023, with the Ethnic Minority Community in September 2023, with youth representatives in October 2023 and with Faith Based groups and the LGBTQIA+ Community (both in November 2023) Engagement with the Protestant Unionist Loyalist (PUL) Community and the Ethnic Minority Community both took place in early 2024. Members received a summary of the issues raised at the REaL events at the meeting in March 2024.

In February 2024 Board Members met with representatives from the PSNI “Your Voice Forum” in February 2024 which provided an opportunity to engage with the forum Members and seek their views on the findings and recommendations from the Independent Data Breach report. At the October 2023 meeting of the Committee Members were advised of plan to establish a Youth Forum alongside PSNI and the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland.

Volunteer Schemes

The Board is responsible for the appointment and management of the Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) scheme. ICV’s are impartial volunteers from across the community who fulfil a key function (and legislative requirement¹) in ensuring the protection of human rights of detained individuals in custody.

The Board operates a rolling recruitment process for Volunteers and during the 2023-2024 year a number of Volunteers were appointed from various backgrounds.

In September 2023 Members were advised of the plans for a Volunteer Conference which subsequently took place on 3 November 2023. The event provided an

¹ Para 73 of the Police (NI) Act 2000

opportunity for all of the Board's volunteers to share learning and good practice and a number of Board Members attended the conference.

At the October meeting of the Committee Members considered the annual report on the work of the ICVs for the 2022-2023 year and the Board subsequently agreed to approve the report for publication on the Board's website.

The Partnership Committee meeting took place in the new Waterside Custody Suite where Members were provided with a tour of the facilities after the meeting.

At the February 2024 meeting of the Committee Members were provided with details of a Custody Scrutiny Panel that had been constituted to scrutinise instances of strip searching of juveniles in Custody which was set up as a result of a recommendation by the Board's Human Rights Advisor.

Reports Published by Partnership Committee

The following reports have been brought to Partnership Committee and subsequently published on the Board's website in the last 12 months:

- Custody Visitors Annual Report April 2022-March 2023
<https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/publication/independent-custody-visitors-annual-report-2022-2023>
- Engagement Strategy 2023-2025
<https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/publication/engagement-strategy-2023-2025>
- PCSP Annual Effectiveness Report
<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/justice/pcsps%20effectiveness%20report%202022-2023.pdf>

Partnership Committee Minutes

Committee minutes can be found on the Board's website or [by clicking here](#).

4. PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Role of the Performance Committee

The role of the Performance Committee is to support the Board in its responsibilities for issues related to PSNI operational performance, to include performance against the Policing Plan measures specific to the Committee, Human Rights compliance and the Professional Standards of Police Officers. The Committee also oversees the exercise of the functions of the National Crime Agency (NCA) and keeps itself informed of the work of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in Northern Ireland.

Performance Committee Meetings and Membership

There were eight Performance Committee meetings held from April 2023 to March 2024. The Committee membership during this period was:

- Brendan Mullan
- Frank McManus
- Gerry Kelly MLA (Chair)
- Janet Gray (Vice Chair)
- Joanne Bunting MLA
- Les Allamby
- Liz Kimmins MLA (maternity leave covered by Linda Dillon MLA)
- Mark Durkan MLA
- Mike Nesbitt MLA
- Nuala McAllister MLA
- Peter Osborne
- Trevor Clarke MLA

Key issues considered by Committee against Terms of Reference

The Committee's role and remit is set out in its Terms of Reference where the Committee's responsibilities are identified as follows:

Governance and General Matters

- Review policies and procedures pertinent to the Committee's Terms of Reference and make recommendations to the Board in respect thereof
- Monitor police performance against the Measures/Indicators specific to the Committee in the Policing / Annual Performance plan and support the Board in holding the Chief Constable to account for delivery of the Plan.

Other Police Performance

- Keep under review the outcome of external inspections/research or reviews of PSNI performance in the core policing functions of preventing and detecting crime
- Monitor the implementation of recommendations from PSNI oversight bodies in respect of police performance, practice and policy
- Consider reports from Independent Reviewers in respect of PSNI use of powers in the Terrorist Act 2000 (TACT) and the Justice & Security (NI) Act 2007(JSA)
- Monitor the work of PSNI Legacy Investigation Branch.

Human Rights

- Monitor PSNI compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998;
- Produce an annual report on PSNI compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998 and consider and make recommendations to the Board in respect thereof
- Consider the Board's Human Rights Reports and make recommendations to the Board in respect thereof
- Monitor the implementation of recommendations from the Board's Human Rights Reports.

Police Professional Standards

- Revise the Code of Ethics for Police Officers and make recommendations to the Board in respect of the publication thereof;
- Assess the effectiveness of the Code of Ethics
- Monitor trends and patterns in complaints against PSNI
- Keep under review the outcome of disciplinary procedures
- Consider investigation reports of the Police Ombudsman and liaise with the Police Ombudsman in relation to policy and practice
- Keep under review the outcome of Police Appeal Tribunals
- Consider appeals on PSNI Officer Business Interests.

National Crime Agency

- Lead on the Board's oversight responsibilities with regard to the operation of the National Crime Agency (NCA) in Northern Ireland
- Consider any changes to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Board and the NCA and make recommendations to the Board in respect thereof.

During 2023-24 the Performance Committee made the following progress against these areas:

Governance and General Matters

During 2023-2024 the Performance Committee's focus in this area was on monitoring police performance against the Policing Plan 2020-2025 and Performance Plan 2023-2024.

The Performance Committee started its analysis of the Measures in May 2023. Members noted that reporting during this period built upon 2022-2023 performance monitoring through the provision of the PSNI OBA report card, in line with the methodology adopted for the Performance Plan 2023-2024. Board Officials provided

Members with an analysis paper for each Measure which identified key issues and opportunities in order to assist Members with effective oversight and informed scrutiny of PSNI performance, with senior PSNI officers when they attended Committee.

During the period from May 2023 to March 2024 the Committee scrutinised the following Performance Plan 2023-2024 Measures:

- **May 2023:** Organised Crime Gangs (OCGs) (Measure 1.2.2)
- **June 2023:** Repeat Victims (Measure 1.1.1)
- **September 2023:** Crime Rates and Trends & Crime Outcomes (Measures 1.4.1 & 2.4.1) & Police Conduct (Measure 2.1.2)
- **October 2023:** Violence against women and girls (Measure 1.4.2)
- **November 2023:** Organised Crime Gangs (OCGs) (Measure 1.2.2)
- **December 2023:** Repeat Offenders (Measure 1.2.1)
- **February 2024:** Violence against women and girls (Measure 1.4.2)

Members held senior PSNI officers to account for police performance in each of these areas by identifying the key issues and discussing the key questions in relation to:

- How much did the PSNI do? (Quantity)
- How well did they do it? (Quality)
- Is anyone better off? (Impact)

The main feedback from Members found that PSNI were performing well in terms of quantity and quality of work in these areas. The Committee was able to undertake better analysis of the draft impacts throughout the year, including comparison of updated data provided by the PSNI with baseline data. This is also reflected in the Annual Assessment for the 2023-2024 year.

Other Police Performance

Over the course of the year the Performance Committee considers and scrutinises the performance of the PSNI by keeping itself informed of the work of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and the Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the reports of the Criminal Justice Inspectorate Northern Ireland (CJINI) and the Independent Reviewers of Terrorism Legislation, Justice and Security Act and National Security.

HMICFRS

At the Board meeting of 2nd November 2023 Members received a Board paper providing a summary and analysis of the published HMICFRS Inspection Report 2022-2023². Members agreed to refer the report to the Performance Committee on 14th December 2023. At the Performance Committee on 14th December 2023, Members discussed the inspection report and made the following points:

- The inspection was carried out in a context of mounting pressures facing PSNI, including a difficult budgetary situation
- Vetting decisions may require further analysis
- A need to find innovative ways to make policing easier
- Misconduct cases – more work needs to be done on the role of senior officer and legally qualified chairs. Members requested further analysis on the issues raised within the inspection.

Overall, Members welcomed the Inspection Report and concluded that this was a good report for the PSNI. The HMICFRS report also suggests a number of areas for improvement for the PSNI, in particular the need to improve its understanding of and

² HMICFRS Inspection Report 2022/23, Available online at: [The Police Service of Northern Ireland: An inspection of police effectiveness, efficiency, vetting and standards - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/reports/2022-23/)

response to child criminal exploitation. It also suggested improving its vetting arrangements, how it detects and deals with misogynistic, prejudicial and improper behaviour and predatory behaviour and to improve its workforce planning performance management framework. The Chief Constable has also welcomed the report and considered it to be positive, stating that;

“In particular, our performance in keeping people safe and reducing crime, and the ‘Good’ ratings that we have received for Investigating Crime and our determination to detect and deal with misogynistic and predatory behaviour. This is despite the unprecedented financial circumstances that we operating in.”

At the Board meeting of 1st February 2024, Members welcomed the overall findings of the HMICFRS report and the rating of the PSNI as “Good” at Investigating Crime and Detecting and Dealing with Misogynistic and Predatory Behaviour. It also agreed to continue to monitor the implementation of the recommendations through the work of the Committees.

Independent Reviewers

In July 2023 the fourth annual report from the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism, Jonathan Hall KC was presented to the Committee. Areas highlighted in the report and discussed, were the Northern Ireland security situation, new legislation, special civil powers, stop search and question and community background monitoring, arrests and detentions and terrorist trials, sentencing and criminal Justice.

In October 2023 the Independent Reviewer of the Justice and Security Act (JSA), Professor Marie Breen Smyth attended the Performance Committee meeting to provide Members with an overview of her most recent Annual Report. Professor Breen Smyth highlighted the PSNI’s use of stop and search as a tactic and its impact particularly on young people and the travelling community as well as highlighting examples of its misuse and misapplication and the ongoing issues with the monitoring of community background for stop and search. Professor Breen Smyth also raised concerns in relation to the seizure and retention of electronic devices

particularly mobile phones. Members discussed the enhancement of PCSPs and use of community impact assessments in this area.

Produce an Annual Report on PSNI compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998 and consider and make recommendations to the Board

The Board is required to monitor the performance of the PSNI in complying with the Human Rights Act 1998 and produce an assessment of the performance. In practice, the Board has produced a separate Annual Report each year drafted by the Human Rights Advisor and Board Officials.

In July 2023 the Human Rights Advisor proposed to members a change to his next annual report. He stated that in the last five years a series of annual and thematic reports have been produced. The Human Rights Advisor outlined that he would like to incorporate details of the 2022-2023 annual report and key issues over a wider timeframe from April 2019 to March 2024 to assess the compliance of PSNI with human rights. This would be achieved through considering the key issues from all the reports during this period, their recommendations, the PSNI's formal responses and issues. The Members agreed this proposal.

A first draft of the 5-year review was brought before the committee in December 2023 for their consideration. The ten key areas covered in the report are:

- Victims
- Stop and Search
- Community Background
- Arrest & Custody
- Public Order
- Use of Force
- Legacy
- National Security
- Privacy
- Levers of Change.

Members were asked to consider the length of the report, if all detail was required and presenting the report in a more user-friendly manner. Members agreed that an Executive Summary would be beneficial as well as a full update from PSNI on the outstanding recommendations from previous annual and thematic reports.

The Human Rights Advisor made 18 new recommendations where it has been identified that PSNI should take action. Members provided the Human Rights Advisor and officials with feedback which has been incorporated into the draft report. A final version of the report was brought back to the Committee in March 2024 with the aim to seek Board approval for publication thereafter.

Human Rights: Monitor PSNI compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998

The Board is required by section 3(3)(b)(ii) of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 to monitor the performance of the Police Service Northern Ireland in complying with the Human Rights Act 1998. During the course of the year, the Committee considered and monitored PSNI's compliance with the Human Rights Act across a number of areas and below is a summary of the main issues considered and reports published.

Human Rights Review of Policing Children and Young People

In September 2023 Performance Committee, Members agreed the Terms of Reference for the Human Rights Review of Policing Children and Young People. The Human Rights Advisor and Board Officials have met with PSNI, academics and NGOS including Children and Young People to gain insight and research material for the report. It is envisaged that a draft Report will be available from June 2024.

Use of Force

The Human Rights Advisor, Board Members and Officials attend PSNI headquarters in January 2024 to view a demonstration of the Taser10. PSNI are considering this as a replacement for the existing taser. Members and the Human Rights Advisors discussed with the PSNI and the manufacturers of the taser the positive and negative aspects and a demonstration of their use was given.

Spit and Bite Guards

Following publication of the Human Rights Advisor's Report on PSNI's Use of Spit and Bite Guards³ in February 2022, PSNI provided a briefing at the meeting in September 2022 and provided the Performance Committee with their first bi-Annual Report in February 2023. Members discussed the ongoing monitoring arrangements and governance framework for the use of SBGs with PSNI and continue to scrutinise the use of SBGs. Officials will continue to monitor this use of force bi-annually.

Human Rights Review of PSNI's Strip Searching of Children and Young People in Custody

Following on from the meeting of the Performance Committee in February 2023 where Members discussed the need for the Board to carry out specific research in relation to a Human Rights Review of PSNI's Strip Searching of Children and Young People in Custody the Human Rights Advisor presented a final report to the Performance Committee in May 2023 and this was published in June 2023 after approval from the Board.

Representatives from the PSNI attended the December 2023 Performance Committee for the six-monthly update report into Strip Searching of Children and Young People. The PSNI confirmed the number of searches that had taken place and the positive steps of an Appropriate Adult being present on all but one occasion. The Human Rights Advisor also attended training provided by the PSNI in January 2024 for the Independent Custody Visitors who will be reviewing the PSNI's Strip Search material and reporting back to the Performance Committee.

Human Rights Review of Privacy and Policing

The first draft of the Human Rights Review of Privacy and Policing was presented to Members at the March 2023 Performance Committee.

³ [A Review of PSNI's Use of Spit and Bite Guards by the NI Policing Board's Human Rights Advisor](#)

The seven key areas examined in the report are:

- Criminal, Intelligence, and other databases
- Biometric Collection, Searching, and Retention
- Artificial Intelligence
- General Surveillance
- Targeted Surveillance
- Data Extraction from Digital Devices
- Data Protection at PSNI

A final draft of the report was brought to the committee in June 2023. Amendments and corrections suggested by PSNI and Members requests have been incorporated into the report to ensure accuracy. Les Allamby assisted in developing the final recommendations. Six formal recommendations have been made by the Human Rights Advisor and these recommendations reflect the need for a wider public debate around privacy and policing.

The report was published in July 2023. The Human Rights Advisor, Les Allamby and Board Officials met with the PSNI in April 2024 to discuss the recommendations and their implementation.

PSNI Legacy Investigation Branch

The Performance Committee met with PSNI's Legacy Investigations Branch in March 2024 to be briefed on the Branch's current priorities and workload, an update on litigation and disclosure and emerging issues.

Monitor the implementation of recommendations from the Board's Human Rights Reports.

Throughout the 2023-2024 year the Human Rights Advisor and the Performance Committee have monitored the implementation of the recommendations made in the Annual and Thematic Reports. Members noted that there was concern around the delay in accessing substantive and up to date responses to recommendations from previous reports and this impacted the finalising of the 5-year review. In March 2024

the PSNI forwarded their updates to the outstanding recommendations which the Human Rights Advisor will consider.

Police Professional Standards

Revise the Code of Ethics for Police Officers and make recommendations to the Board in respect of the publication.

The Board has a statutory duty to assess the effectiveness of the Code of Ethics and revise it when appropriate. The original Code was published in 2003 with the last major review carried out in 2008. Since that time there have been several significant developments in the area of police professional standards and misconduct. The legislation states that the Chief Constable submits a draft for the Board to consider. The Board may adopt the draft code as submitted by the Chief Constable or with whatever amendments the Board decides on after consultation with the Chief Constable. PSNI and the Performance Committee have discussed a review of the Code to include key issues regarding misconduct not currently reflected in the Code. Work commenced on this review in late 2021 with a draft Code presented to the Board. However, Members were of the view that more work was necessary. During 2022-2023, significant focus has been brought to the area of professional standards and conduct of police officers, not just in NI, but across the UK. PSNI informed the Board that they wished to reflect on recent developments in England and Wales before submitting any further draft Code of Ethics. England and Wales have launched new guidance, which PSNI are currently reviewing.

Monitor trends and patterns in complaints against PSNI and keep under review the outcome of disciplinary procedures.

The Board has a statutory duty to keep itself informed as to the measures in place to deal with PSNI complaints and disciplinary proceedings and to monitor trends and patterns in complaints. The Performance Committee does this by reviewing the annual report of the PSNI's Professional Standards Department. Senior Officers from Professional Standards provided a briefing on their annual report 2022-2023 in September 2023. This briefing provided the Members with an overview of areas such as breaches of the Code of Ethics in relation to sexual misconduct, suspensions and repositioning of officers, misconduct, complaints and allegations against officers and police staff discipline. Members were provided with an overview

of PSNI's PSD, the challenges and trends and an update was provided in relation to the PSNI Professional Standards report, and the recommendations for improvement, which was published on 30 November 2022. The review included six recommendations for improvement, one which included the PSNI Code of Ethics. The PSNI have made the Board aware of recent trends/patterns regarding police misconduct which includes abuse of position for sexual purpose (AoPSP) and inappropriate use of Social Media Platforms. The PSNI commenced a review in 2022, Operation RORIC, to examine sexual misconduct allegations and investigations over the last ten years. This review focuses on the management of sexual misconduct committed by police officers both on and off duty.

Consider investigation reports of the Police Ombudsman and liaise with the Police Ombudsman in relation to policy and practice

In relation to the Police Ombudsman's reports, the Performance Committee considered the OPONI Annual Statistical Report for 2022-2023 in relation to monitoring trends and patterns of complaints regarding the PSNI. In November 2023, senior officials from the Police Ombudsman attended Performance Committee to provide an overview of the latest Annual Statistical Report and to highlight key concerns and challenges. Members engaged in discussion on several issues including the increase in complaints, trends or patterns emerging in respect of multiple complaints against individual officers, the difference in the statistics by geographical area and police district and the Ombudsman's Annual Statistical Report.

The Board is in current discussion with the Police Ombudsman to renew a Memorandum of Understanding.

Keep under review the outcome of Police Appeal Tribunals

From April 2023 to March 2024 four Police Appeals Tribunals were held, and four were withdrawn. Six appeals were received in 2023-2024 under the Police Appeals Tribunals Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016, one is set for Tribunal Hearing in May 2023, one remains in 'Stay' pending PPS direction and a judicial review was heard at the High Court and the decision was given on 8 April 2024, dismissing the JR on all accounts.

National Crime Agency

Lead on the Board's oversight responsibilities with regard to the operation of the National Crime Agency (NCA) in Northern Ireland.

The Board's key functions in respect of the operation of the NCA in Northern Ireland is to monitor the exercise of the functions of the NCA in Northern Ireland and make arrangements for obtaining the cooperation of the public with the NCA in the prevention of organised crime and serious crime. The Performance Committee considers a six-monthly reports from the NCA every November and May. Board Officials analyse these reports in which the NCA set out their work across the areas of vulnerability, including child sexual exploitation and abuse and human trafficking; prosperity, including money laundering, fraud and cybercrime; commodities, including drugs and firearms; specialist capabilities, including major crime investigations and missing persons; and paramilitary crime task force, which includes all crime related to paramilitary activity. Reports are considered by Performance Committee to inform Members of the key issues in relation to NCA activity. These reports provide the basis for Members to meet with and scrutinise the work of the NCA at the June and December Board meetings when the NCA Director general attends to provide members with an update on the NCA's work in Northern Ireland.

During this year Members also reviewed the current Memorandum of Understanding with the NCA and a number of changes have been made. A final and update MOU is to be signed with the Director General and the Chair of the Board in June 2024.

Committee Publications

The Committee has published the following documents in 2023-2024:

- Human Rights Review of Privacy and Policing, July 2023
<https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/publication/human-rights-review-privacy-and-policing>
- Human Rights Review of Children and Young People: Strip Searching in Police Custody, March 2023
<https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/publication/human-rights-review-children-and-young-people-strip-searching-police-custody>

- Policing Plan 2020-25 and Annual Performance Plan 2023/24
<https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/publication/policing-plan-2020-2025-and-annual-performance-plan-202324>
- Community Policing Survey 2023, December 2023
<https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/publication/community-policing-survey-2023>

Performance Committee Minutes

Committee Minutes can be found on the Board's website or by clicking this [link](#).

5. RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Committee Role and Purpose of Annual Report

The role of the Resources Committee is to support the Board in fulfilling its legislative and oversight responsibilities for all issues related to Finance, Human Resources (including Representativeness, Police Pensions and Injury on Duty Awards), Land and Property, Information Technology and Equality in the PSNI. The Committee also has responsibility for oversight and approval of the Board's financial management.

The Strategic Objective of the Committee is:

“To monitor resourcing plans for the PSNI, advocating on issues which support policing including transformational change and delivery of a representative service; and to deliver independent, fair and transparent processes in line with Police Pension, Injury Benefit and Appeals legislation. The Committee also has responsibility for oversight and approval of the Board's financial management.”

This report details the work of the Resources Committee during 2023-24.

Committee Meetings and Membership

During 2023-24, the Committee held ten meetings. These took place on 25 May 2023, 22 June 2023, 26 July 2023, 28 September 2023, 26 October 2023, 23 November 2023, 19 December 2023, 25 January 2024, 22 February 2024 and 28 March 2024. No Committee meeting was held in April 2023 due to local Elections.

The Membership of the Committee during the year included the following members:

Committee Membership

- Brendan Mullan
- Cathal Boylan MLA (from 27/2/2024)
- Dr Kate Laverty
- Eóin Tennyson MLA (from 20/2/2024)
- Frank McManus (Vice-Chair)
- Gerry Kelly, MLA

- John Blair MLA (until 8/2/2024)
- Linda Dillon, MLA
- Maurice Bradley MLA (until 12/2/2024)
- Mike Nesbitt MLA
- Mukesh Sharma
- Nuala McAllister MLA
- Trevor Clarke, MLA (Chair)

The Board's Chair Deirdre Toner attended 3 meetings ex-officio and the Board Vice-Chair Edgar Jardine attended 6 meetings ex-officio.

Committee Terms of Reference

In line with the Board's Standing Orders which state "The Terms of Reference for all committees should be approved by the Board prior to the committee being established and reviewed at the beginning of each financial year", the Committee Terms of Reference were considered at the May 2023 Resources Committee and subsequently agreed by the Board in June 2023.

The Committee's role and remit is set out in the Terms of Reference where the Committee's responsibilities are identified as follows:

The Committee will:

Governance and General Matters

- Review policies and procedures pertinent to the Committee's Terms of Reference and make recommendations to the Board in respect thereof.
- Monitor police performance against the measures/indicators specific to the committee in the Policing Plan and Annual Performance plan and support the Board in holding the Chief Constable to account for delivery of the Plans.
- Monitor and, approve as appropriate, PSNI strategies relevant to the work of the Committee.

Financial Management

- Oversee and report to the Board on the functions performed by the Chief Constable on behalf of the Board namely:
 - Keeping proper accounts and related records; and
 - Preparing and submitting an annual statement of accounts in relation to amounts put at his/her disposal.
- Make a recommendation to the Board regarding approval of the PSNI and Board's budget for the financial year.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the PSNI's strategic financial planning process including monitoring and scrutiny of management accounts, the budget and forward financial forecasts.
- Monitor the Board's financial performance, including scrutiny of management accounts, the budget and forward financial planning.
- Consider and approve expenditure above delegated limits and novel, contentious or repercussive proposals in respect of PSNI and the Board and make a recommendation to the Board accordingly.
- Consider and approve issues relating to borrowing, gifts made, write-offs, losses and other special payments in respect of PSNI and the Board and make a recommendations to the Board accordingly.
- Monitor and consider compensation claims made against the Chief Constable.
- Consider and approve expenditure above delegate limits in respect of compensation claims against the Chief Constable and make a recommendation to the Board accordingly.
- Consider and approve expenditure in respect of compensation and other legal cases against the Board and make a recommendation to the Board accordingly,
- Monitor, review and, if appropriate, approve any Finance or associated Strategies.

Estates

Oversee functions performed by the Chief Constable on behalf of the Board namely

- Providing and maintaining buildings and equipment for police purposes.
- Monitor, review and approve, the PSNI's Estate and any associated strategies.
- Consider and recommend to the Board acquisition, vesting and disposal of land and property.
- Monitor, review and, if appropriate, approve all strategies relating to police equipment.

Human Resources

Oversee the functions performed by the Chief Constable on behalf of the Board namely:

- Directing and controlling Police staff.
- Monitor trends and patterns in the recruitment of police and police support staff.
- Assess the effectiveness of measures taken to ensure that membership of the police service and the police support staff is representative of the community.
- Monitor the representativeness and composition of the PSNI Senior Officer and staff equivalent positions and assess the effectiveness of measures taken to address underrepresentation in the Senior Management Team
- Undertake the Board's responsibilities in relation to the provision of advice and assistance to international organisations etc. by PSNI officers and staff up to and including the rank of Chief Superintendent.
- Exercise strategic oversight of equality and diversity and monitor the implementation of Section 75 within PSNI and the Board.
- Consider the approval of payment for accommodation and, if necessary, storage costs for PSNI Officers and Staff under the PSNI/DoJ Assisted Removals Scheme should there be a requirement for such provision beyond the 26 week limit.

- Undertake the Board’s responsibilities in relation to police pay, allowances and conditions of service and provide a recommendation to the Board on input to the Police Remuneration and Review Body (PRRB) annual review of pay for police officers.
- Undertake the Board’s responsibilities under Police and Police Pension Regulations.
- Make recommendations to the Board in respect of pension forfeiture cases.
- Monitor, review and approve the PSNI People and associated Human Resources strategies.

Police Training

- Advise the Board as appropriate on the facilities and provision of both pre-service and in-service training and development for police officers and staff, and oversee quality standards.
- Monitor the provision of continuous professional development and the opportunities for career development of all police officers and staff.

Resources Committee Areas of Focus

Set out below are the key areas of business conducted during the 2023-2024 year.

Governance and General Matters

Monitoring PSNI Performance Against the Policing Plan

The Committee is responsible for monitoring the PSNI’s performance against Policing Plan Measure 2.3.1 Improving representativeness of the Service. Members received information from the PSNI at its meeting in June and December 2023. At the December meeting, the PSNI provided an update that progress has been limited due to the recruitment freeze in place due to budget pressures. The Head of External Recruitment provided an overview of the Report Card and an overview of the 3 sections, covering the period April 2023 to September 2023:

- **External Recruitment:** 83 student officers appointed, and 1 external police staff campaign completed, with continuing outreach events focusing on schools and further education colleges. Challenges include managing the impact of the data breach and under-represented groups withdrawing from recruitment process.
- **Internal Representation:** limited selection and promotion activities due to budget pressures, and key work streams include publication of the cultural audit and related 'Great Place to Work' action plan, launch of a new Workforce Dispute Resolution procedure, and shift pattern review. Challenges include female under representation at senior officer level and limited internal selection and movement across departments within the reporting period.
- **Retention:** high stability index (percentage of personnel who were employed over the reporting period) at over 95% for officers and 92% for police staff despite impact of the data breach and challenges include long term impact of the data breach, working hours and shift patterns.

Members raised the following points with the ACO People and OD and Head of External Recruitment:

- Positive feedback on format and content of 'Report Card'.
- Impact of individuals stating community background as 'other', as observed in recent NI census data, and PSNI to provide information on those who declare as 'other' both organisation wide and at recruitment stage.
- Improving representativeness for police staff and perceived negative impact of adopting 'internal' selection and recruitment practices.
- Decrease in both percentage females and LGBT community applicants appointed as student officers compared to percentages reported in these categories from 2020 merit pool.
- Plans to improve representativeness from the Catholic community at senior levels in PSNI.

Monitoring of PSNI Strategies

PSNI Estate Strategy/Estate Updates

At the September 2023 meeting the PSNI provided an Estate strategy update which included an overview of the development of a Police Museum as part of the “Modern” pillar of the 7 Pillars of the Estate Strategy, and the completion of an estate wide Strategic Asset Management plan to optimise estate utilisation and deliver outcomes categorised in one of four areas - divest, invest, change, and maintain. Members were due to receive another update on the Strategy in March 2024 but this was postponed to future date.

PSNI Procurement & Contract Management Strategy

Members received an update on Procurement & Contract Management during the October 2023 meeting which included the following key points:

- Contract overview – breakdown of total contracts by value and year to date spend by department, total number of contracts including major contracts, contracts expiring in next 18 months, and total number of suppliers and contract managers.
- Further details in respect of top 5 contracts by value listing supplier, description of service, start date, approved end date, and total contract value.
- Procurement activity highlights for current year and previous two years, providing figures for PME exercises, tenders published, and total number of contracts awarded, including Direct Award Contracts (DACs).
- Additional DAC breakdown including estimated value, length of contract and justification for DAC status.
- Procurement outlook including new legislation, supply chain overview, NIAO procurement review, and current challenges.

Annual Capital Strategy Update

The PSNI Director of Finance presented an overview of the Capital Strategy at the May Committee meeting including details on the value of PSNI’s asset base in 2023, capital expenditure over the last five years, also, the 10-year Capital plan and the total resource requirement for Capital spend in 2023-24.

Fleet Strategy

In May 2023 the Head of Transport outlined the vision of the strategy in respect of flexibility, performance and green credentials alongside the mission to support the delivery of a visible, accessible, responsive and community focussed policing service with a technologically advanced, highly visible, fleet mobile office environment. The case for change is driven externally and internally across three strategic areas:

1. Modernisation – delivering a policing service with a fully integrated fleet, reflecting operational requirements effectively and efficiently.
2. Technology – to become increasingly mobile with solutions delivered at point of service including the latest safety systems and driver aids.
3. Sustainability – responding to government action on climate change and continuing to develop a lower emissions fleet.

Key commitments as part of the fleet strategy include a review of the Fleet Management Information System (MIS), increased numbers of Ultra Low Emission vehicles, new telematics system, continued implementation of the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Interceptor project, refreshing the air fleet, new public order & tactical support vehicles, and an increased percentage of liveried Response vehicles.

A further update was provided in February 2024 which focused on the following strands of activity:

- Commissioning and disposal of vehicles
- Acquirement of parts and the contracting of works
- Recruitment and retention of staff

Detail was provided around the ongoing difficulties faced in each of these areas. He explained that of the 2700 vehicles in the fleet, 233 are waiting to be commissioned and 200 are pending disposal.

PSNI highlighted supply chain issues with acquiring certain vehicle parts and noted that the ongoing conflict in Russia and Ukraine was a significant factor impacting the supply chain.

Members were advised of the challenging marketplace conditions in terms of the recruitment of skilled staff which has contributed to ongoing recruitment and retention issues.

PSNI Digital Strategy

The Committee received a presentation on the PSNI Digital Strategy from the Director of Information and Communications Services, at its September 2023 meeting. The presentation highlighted the Key Challenges relate to Staff retention and recruitment and uncertainty over budgets. The NICS pay structure is no longer in line with global pay for ICT skills, and morale among staff is low due to limited pay awards, succession planning and the impact of the data leak. There are also continual budget cuts set against increasing demand for the services provided.

There was discussion on the progress against the key digital strategic themes of:

- Digital investigation and evidence – sharing digital evidence electronically
- Digital Engagement – A customer centric approach
- Digital collaboration – Easier file sharing and multi agency and team coordination
- Mobility – providing relevant information at the point of need

PSNI Transformation

The Committee received a progress update presentation on Transformation across PSNI from the Assistant Chief Officer for Strategic Planning and Transformation.

The strategic context for transformation is contained in the Horizon 2025 strategy with the ambition of a public service ethos, Digital (IT modernisation), Estate renewal and workforce modernisation. This is set against the reality of an organisational financial deficit, the security threat, reducing workforce, increasing demand and ongoing recent critical incidents impacting on the wider organisation (Sanukite -data leak).

The committee consider the progress update covering the areas of:

- Access and understanding of available data - PULSE dashboards, statistical and analyst support, data maturity assessment.
- Clear operational service insights – the progress towards a Service Management statement, and HMIC inspection outcomes.
- The availability of change management skills and capacity.

The Committee also considered the next steps which covered:

- The insights and options from the Service Management statement, Cultural Audit, HMIC and PEEL inspections, and data maturity.
- Calibration to organisational capacity – leadership, workforce and finance.
- Communication, consultation and engagement – through the transformation programme projects, continuous improvement.

South Armagh Review Recommendations

The Committee received 2 updates throughout the year (Sept 2023 & Feb 2024) on the implementation of the 9 recommendations from the South Armagh Review Report which sit with Resources Committee. There were a total of 50 recommendations made in the report and oversight of these has been taken forward by each of the Board’s respective Committees.

As at the February 2024 Resources Committee meeting, Members noted the status updates on the 9 recommendations as below:

Rec Number	Recommendation	Status (as at Feb 2024)
4.	Selection	Complete
6.	South Armagh Police Station	In progress
12.	Tactical Patrolling Training	Complete
13.	Uniform	Complete
14.	Liveried Vehicles	Complete
15	Armoured Vehicles	Complete
41.	Continuous Professional Development	In progress
42.	Training Governance	Complete
43.	Neighbourhood Policing Development Programme	Complete

Regarding the outstanding recommendations the Committee noted that in respect of Recommendation 6, while these redevelopments remain an important part of the PSNI's Estates Strategy, they will be subject to ongoing review against affordability considerations and due to the ongoing budgetary constraints, it was not possible at that time to project a timeframe for completion on this recommendation. Following the meeting Members also sought confirmation that there would be no diminution in functionality or impact on other "blue light" services as a consequence of the relocation of the communications tower on the Crossmaglen Station site.

Regarding Recommendation 4, Members noted that a bespoke CPD plan had been developed for the Slieve Gullion area and that, following completion of the Emotional Intelligence training package due to be delivered in late February 2024, PSNI would consider this recommendation implemented in full.

Regarding Recommendation 15 which relates to the use of armoured vehicles in the area, Members noted that significant inroads have been made regarding the gradual introduction on non-armoured vehicles. However, the Committee was of the view that this recommendation has not yet been fully realised and as such has requested continued updates on progress in this area.

PSNI Financial Management

Oversight of PSNI Budget

The PSNI presented their Management Accounts to Committee monthly. Following confirmation of the budget allocation for 2023-24 on 18 May 2023, there was an improved budget position which represented a 1.7% reduction rather than 4.75% as previously advised as part of the original indicative resource budget allocation. The Capital budget allocation was reported as £97m which represented a positive settlement.

The gap in resources funding was estimated as £107m for 2023-24 and through a reduction in recruitment and in other non-pay areas, the residual gap was identified as £57m. Following a request for PSNI to halt all discretionary spend, further reductions were proposed and the funding gap was reduced to £44m based on the budget allocation. The resource plan for 2023-24 was brought back to the

Committee in June to discuss further. Members discussed next steps following confirmation that PSNI is unable to balance the budget for 2023-24, and following discussion it was agreed to not recommend the draft PSNI Resource Plan 2023-24 to the Board for approval at that time. The Board corresponded with the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and Department of Justice (DOJ) highlighting the severe funding challenges facing PSNI and advocating for additional funds.

The PSNI Annual Accounts and Pension Accounts were scrutinised at the September meeting along with the PSNI budget where the deficit had increased to £52.5m.

Following the restoration of the NI Assembly in early January, the Executive agreed to make £75 million in additional funding available to DoJ. The PSNI's allocation from that £75m was £61.1m which allowed PSNI to bring the in-year budget to a break-even position.

Litigation/Above Delegated Authority Requests and Settlement of Legal Claims

In line with the Committee's responsibility to monitor and consider compensation claims made against the Chief Constable, in January 2024 the Committee received a briefing from PSNI on their overall Litigation processes which included information on:

- The compensation claims process and interrelated processes relating to the Plaintiff, PSNI Legal Services and the Courts,
- Court interactions and a breakdown of main Court Pleadings,
- A thematic breakdown of Litigation cases including personal injury claims, alleged unlawful acts of police and civilian property damage,
- Specific Litigation cases including noise induces hearing loss, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Human Tissue retention, and Stop & Search claims.

Key areas of discussion with PSNI included reasons for delays in proceedings; the decision-making processes in place regarding the settlement of lower value claims; Plaintiff's rights during the claims process; specific links to Ill Health Retirement claims and the role of PSNI appointed experts in assessing Plaintiff's medical reports.

In terms of case management processes within PSNI, Members discussed ensuring best practice in line with audit office guidelines and the tension which may sometimes exist between progressing a case based on legal advice versus the expediency of this decision from a business perspective.

The Committee was also provided with a schedule of high value cases currently being progressed by PSNI's legal department.

Throughout the year and as per the Committee's Terms of Reference a number of Above Delegated Authority requests were considered by the Committee.

- 1 related to expenditure above delegated limits and novel, contentious or repercussive proposals in respect of PSNI.
- 1 related to borrowing, gifts made, write-offs, losses and other special payments in respect of PSNI
- 9 related to expenditure above delegated limits in respect of compensation claims against the Chief Constable or legal fees relating to compensation or misconduct cases.

All of these were subsequently referred to the Board for consideration of the Committee's recommendation.

Human Resources

PSNI People Strategy Updates and Cultural Audit

People Strategy & Action Plan Updates

The Committee received updates on the implementation of the PSNI's People Strategy & Action Plan at Committee meetings held in May 2023 and November 2023; these were delivered by the COO and ACO People and Organisational Development.

The update provided at the May 2023 Committee outlined the work that was being taken forward as part of the revised People Action Plan (PAP) for 2023-24 and explanation was given on how this would support the implementation of the PSNI People Strategy 2020-25. PSNI acknowledged that many of the actions from the previous PAP remained outstanding, and barriers to success had been identified

through engagement with Delivery Group Chairs and by carrying out a targeted staff survey. From this, a plan was developed incorporating three organisational priorities and eight corporate actions. The PSNI further explained that a core set of measures has been agreed against each of the corporate actions to monitor progress via the organisational performance management framework and that this will be supported by regular updates to Committee throughout the year.

The ACO People and Organisational Development presented an update on the PSNI Annual People Action Plan 2023-24 at the November 2023 Committee meeting. In this update the ACO outlined the progress that had been made during the year on the three organisational priorities and their associated eight corporate actions.

PSNI Cultural Audit

The Committee received updates on the development and subsequent completion of the PSNI 'Cultural Audit' at Committee meetings held in June 2023 and November 2023. These were delivered by the ACO People and Organisational Development and consultants from Inspiring Change.

At the June 2023 Committee meeting the ACO gave an overview of the three-phase approach to the Cultural Audit that had been agreed with the Inspiring Change consultants. The ACO explained that the research and preparatory work as part of Phase 1 had been completed and an online staff survey, focus groups and root cause analysis workshops were in the final stages of completion as part of Phase 2. Phase 3 would consist of data analysis, with a full report expected by mid-July 2023, this would then be followed by a communication strategy to share results and develop an action plan for key priority areas.

A further update on the PSNI Cultural Audit was provided at the November 2023 Resources Committee meeting. This update provided Members with the overall results from the Cultural Audit. Consultants from Inspiring Change briefed Members on the methodology used and detailed the types of engagement which took place during the audit process such as the use of focus groups, an online survey, individual online interviews and root cause analysis workshops. Members were also advised of

the broad range of staff at all ranks, grades and Departments who took part in completing the Cultural Audit.

PSNI Police Officer Sickness Absence Review

The Committee received a six-monthly update on the PSNI Police Officer Sickness Absence Review at the June 2023 Committee Meeting. This update was delivered by the COO and ACO People and Organisational Development.

The ACO covered the key areas of Absence Overview, Attendance Administration, Attendance Management Group (AMG) and Internal Audit. The ACO noted that PSNI sickness absence remained at a high level and continued to rise, and also highlighted the main reasons for absence being respiratory conditions, mental health, and musculoskeletal injury. Further information was given on the work being taken forward by the AMG following feedback from Internal Audit on the controls and governance of attendance management in the PSNI. Members raised their concerns regarding the impact of increasing sickness absence and the subsequent reduction in Officer/ staff numbers and the knock-on impact on workload pressures and mental health.

PSNI Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Committee received a briefing from the ACO People and Organisational Development and the Director of Human Resources at the January 2024 Committee meeting on the ongoing work across the PSNI in respect of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). The ACO outlined some of the work PSNI has carried out in the previous six months, including plans for a conference for International Women's Day, continuing progress on the Race Action Plan, work around providing more firearm training for female officers and also the development of a Disability Passport for staff/officers. Committee Members were also informed of the positive feedback received from the Equality Commission around the PSNI Annual Progress Report and Disability Action Plan 2022/23.

Police Remuneration Review Body Submission

At the November 2023 Committee meeting Members were presented with the timeline for PRRB submissions for the 2024/25 report. At this meeting Members

agreed the membership of the Subgroup, consisting of three Members, to take forward the Board's submission. Following this, at the December 2023, Members agreed the content of the Board's input to the Minister's 2024-25 Remit Letter. The PRRB subgroup met in January 2024 and agreed the scope of the Board's submission following which Board officials developed a draft submission within the agreed scope. This was subsequently brought to the February 2024 meeting and agreed by the Committee.

Key elements of the submission included:

- The continued commitment to the principle of parity in regards of pay and allowances between PSNI officers and their counterparts in E&W
- The PSNI operating environment of reduced resources and continued threat level

The Board was made aware in January 2024 that the Chief Police Officers Staff Association had contacted the DoJ to request that their pay and allowances be remitted to the Senior Salaries Review Board. Consequently, at the January 2024 meeting Members were advised and agreed on the content of the Boards input to the SSRB Remit Letter.

Key elements of the submission included:

- Parity in pay and allowances between PSNI Chief Officers and their counterparts in E&W
- Recruitment and retention of senior officers: failure to achieve and maintain pay parity will have a detrimental effect on the recruitment and long-term retention of Chief Officers
- Morale. The impact that the pressures the PSNI face has on senior leaders in an increasingly stretched organisation

Senior Officer Recruitment

In December 2023 the Committee received a paper seeking Members agreement on the role of an Independent Advisor and that of the Chief Constable in the appointment of senior officers. Members were provided with guidance and advice

from HeadsTogether HR consultants on the role of the Independent Advisor and from the Crown Solicitors Office on the role of the Chief Constable.

Members discussed the advice provided and it was agreed that Board officials would bring an updated paper back to a future committee meeting outlining options for consideration and to agree the revised policy on senior officer appointments.

PSNI Recruitment Vetting – Report of Independent Assessor

In September 2023 Members were provided with an update of the Annual Report submitted to the Permanent Secretary for the Department of Justice from Sir John Gillen, the Independent Assessor of PSNI Recruitment Vetting. The report from Sir John provided an overview of his considerations during the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 and progress made on recommendations from the previous report.

Other PSNI HR issues discussed throughout the year

Meeting with NIPSA Representatives

At the October 2023 meeting two PSNI NIPSA representatives attended to discuss the impact of the PSNI data breach and the wider effects of the PSNI budget situation on police staff. Members enquired about the number of police staff raising concerns and number absent from work because of the data breach. Members also asked what practical solutions are in place to improve engagement with staff following the data breach and the extent to which staff did not raise a concern due to trust and confidence issues.

Revised REA for Police Staff

At the October 2023 meeting the ACO People and OD presented a paper asking Members to consider a revised business case in respect of the Revised Environmental Allowance (REA) payable to Police Staff. Members were provided with the rationale for an increase in REA which included primary and secondary drivers. Primary drivers included the threat assessment; devaluation of REA; threat, risk, harm of police staff roles; deteriorating Industrial relations climate; confidence in policing; and commitment to Health and Wellbeing. Secondary drivers included a

failure to adequately recognise and remunerate police staff, the cost-of-living crisis, benchmarking comparison, and the retention and recruitment of police staff.

Police Pensions and Injury Benefits

Throughout the year, at each Resources Committee meeting or by way of written procedure Members considered the outcome of the decision by Selected Medical Practitioners (SMPs) and Independent Medical Referees (IMRs) in respect of Injury on Duty (IOD) and Ill Health Retirement (IHR) cases and provided confirmation of implementation and reassessment dates in line with the relevant legislation.

Members also considered quarterly scheme manager reports on the Board's role as Pension Scheme Manager.

Resources Committee Members were also provided with a full briefing from PPIB officials on 26 July 2023 regarding the work of the branch to include staffing, roles and responsibilities, an overview of the IHR and IOD processes, number of cases, the McCloud reassessment project and budget.

Resources Committee Members also considered and approved a number of consultation responses to include: a response to the Department of Justice (DoJ) consultation on the draft Police Pensions (Remediable Service) Regulations (Northern Ireland) in May 2023; a response to the DoJ consultation on the draft Police Pension (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024 in November and December 2023; and a response to the DoJ consultation on draft amendment for injury on duty medical guidance in November and December 2023. Members also considered and provided decisions on 2 cases in relation to pension forfeiture in November 2023.

Members continued to discuss the Boards responsibilities regarding IHR and IOD and where this work potentially sits in the future. It has been discussed that if IHR and IOD processes were moved from the Board to the PSNI, this would align the scheme with comparable UK schemes, bring parity and discharge recommendations of the Scofield Review and NIAO 2020 report. ~

PSNI Training

At the January 2024 meeting the ACO People and O/D presented Members with details of ongoing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training. Members were informed that as of 1 December 2023 over 5400 police officers and staff had completed Module 1 of the EDI training and that Module 2, which would reinforce the knowledge delivered in Module 1, was scheduled for launch in January 2024.

Committee Responsibilities Regarding NIPB

In addition to the monitoring and oversight of PSNI, the Committee has throughout the reporting period and pursuant to its Terms of Reference, discharged a number of responsibilities in relation to oversight of arrangements relating to NIPB. These are discussed further below.

NIPB Equality / Section 75 Responsibilities

Following the Committee's recommendation to the Board in November 2022 to progress to a public consultation on the Board's revised Equality Scheme and related documents, in April 2023 the Board considered the consultation responses and revised documents which were updated on foot of the consultation responses received. Following discussion the Board agreed to approve the NIPB Audit of Inequalities, the NIPB Equality and Disability Action Plans 2023-2025 and the revised NIPB Equality Scheme. The revised NIPB Equality Scheme was subsequently forwarded to the Equality Commission and received approval.

NIPB Finance

Management presented the annual budget to Members at the May meeting for scrutiny and recommendation to the Board for approval, following discussions, members requested for further clarification which was brought to the June meeting. At this meeting members agreed to recommend the Resource Plan for approval to the Board and this was approved at the July Board meeting. Management presented the monthly management accounts to the Committee for scrutiny on a quarterly basis, updating members on the expenditure to date, advising them of any pressures and answering any queries.

Committee Minutes

Committee Minutes can be found on the Board's website or by clicking this link:

<https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/publications-search/type/Resources%20Committee%20minutes>

6. MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE AT COMMITTEES

The table below provides details of attendance by the Members at Board and Committee meetings from 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.

Member	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Attendance	Partnership Committee Attendance	Performance Committee Attendance	Resources Committee Attendance	Discipline Committee
Les Allamby		9/9	6/8		
John Blair MLA (1)		6/7		7/8	3/4
Cathal Boylan MLA (2)		1/1	1/1		
Maurice Bradley MLA (3)	1\4	5/7		6/8	
Cheryl Brownlee MLA (4)		1/1	1/1		
Keith Buchanan MLA (5)	1/1	1/1		0/1	
Joanne Bunting MLA (6) (7)		5/7	5/6	2 (11)	2/4

Member	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Attendance	Partnership Committee Attendance	Performance Committee Attendance	Resources Committee Attendance	Discipline Committee
Trevor Clarke MLA			6/8	9/9	
Linda Dillon MLA		7/9	7/7	8/9	
Mark H Durkan MLA		6/9	7/8		
Janet Gray (7) (10)		7/9	8/8	1 (11)	
Edgar Jardine (7) (10)		7/9 (7)	7/8 (7)	6/9 (7)	4/4
Gerry Kelly MLA	3/5	6/8	8/8	8/9	1/4
Liz Kimmins MLA (8)		0/9	0/8		
Kate Laverty		6/9		7/9	3/4
Nuala McAllister MLA	2/5		8/8	6/9	
Frank McManus	3/5		4/8	7/9	
Brendan Mullan	5/5		7/8	9/9	

Member	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Attendance	Partnership Committee Attendance	Performance Committee Attendance	Resources Committee Attendance	Discipline Committee
Mike Nesbitt MLA			7/8	8/9	
Peter Osborne (7)	5/5	8/9	7/8	2 (11)	
Mukesh Sharma		8/9		6/9	
Eóin Tennyson (9)		1/1		1/1	
Deirdre Toner (7) (10)				4/9 (7)	

- (1) Mr John Blair MLA resigned from the Policing Board on 8 February 2024
- (2) Mr Cathal Boylan MLA was appointed to the Policing Board on 27 February 2024
- (3) Mr Maurice Bradley MLA resigned from the Policing Board on 12 February 2024
- (4) Mrs Cheryl Brownlee MLA was appointed to the Policing Board on 16 February 2024
- (5) Mr Keith Buchanan MLA was appointed to the Policing Board on 20 February 2024
- (6) Ms Joanne Bunting resigned from the Policing Board on 6 February 2024
- (7) Attended these meetings in ex-officio capacity
- (8) Absences for Ms Liz Kimmins MLA were due to a period of maternity leave, prior to her resignation from the Policing Board on 14 February 2024
- (9) Mr Eóin Tennyson MLA was appointed to the Policing Board on 20 February 2024
- (10) The term of office for Ms Deirdre Toner, Mr Edgar Jardine and Dr Janet Gray ended on 31 March 2024
- (11) Attended following special invite to all Members – not a standing Member of this committee

Northern Ireland Policing Board

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**Northern Ireland Policing Board
Committee Reports
1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024**

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