



Police Service
of Northern Ireland

Chief Constable's Accountability Report

to Northern Ireland
Policing Board

Report Date:

Covering Period of 30 May 2024
to 25 July 2024

Presented at Policing Board
Meeting:

1 August 2024



**we care
we listen
we act**

Contents

Foreword	3
Finance and Resource Update	7
Our Performance	8
Outcome 1: We have a Safe Community	11
Outcome 2: We have confidence in Policing	18
Outcome 3: We have Engaged and Supportive Communities	19
Our People, Your Service	20

Foreword

The Summer months are always a busy time for policing, with this year being no exception. We have witnessed successful public safety policing operations at a number of key annual events. Over the Twelfth of July period, approximately 4,000 police officers and police staff facilitated some 300 bonfires and 500 parades. Notwithstanding some disappointing 'hate displays' at a number of bonfires, this was one of the safest and most peaceful 'Twelfth of July's' in many years.

This does not happen by accident. It is testament to the extensive engagement and planning that takes place with event organisers, marshals, the Parades Commission and many other groups in the preceding weeks and months, as well as on the day itself. I have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from event organisers, partners, stakeholders and the community on how we have policed these events, with our community policing ethos, in particular, being recognised. I spoke to numerous people in the community on the day at various events and the atmosphere was one of a family day that everyone was welcome to attend and enjoy. That is where our society needs to be. I wish to place on record my appreciation and thanks to everyone involved, all police officers and police staff, event organisers, participants and the wider community for their effort in securing a safe and peaceful period.

A key success factor for the events being policed so well was the support to the policing operation by our brilliant police staff, who are too often our unsung heroes. On that note, I would like to express my gratitude to the leadership and members of NIPSA and UNITE for their decision to pause the industrial action associated with the issue of the Revised Environmental Allowance (REA) scheduled for the 11th July. More than

anyone, they know the challenges the Police Service face during July, and in taking their decision they have acted in good faith and on trust to ensure that victims and communities continue to receive the most professional of policing services. Their argument to have the REA increased is entirely just and this should have been addressed years ago. I am determined to resolve this matter for them. Without our police staff there is no police service. Everybody is equally important to this organisation and everyone is equally valued.

I want to take the opportunity here to address the recent Spotlight programme about the brutal rape and murder of Katie Simpson. This was a shocking and tragic crime which has devastated Katie's family and friends; what they have been through in the past few years is unimaginable. There were shortcomings in the initial police investigation and for that, I am deeply sorry. The Police Ombudsman will soon publish a report into these shortcomings which limits what I can say at this stage. I am due to meet with some of Katie's family members next week and I will be able to say more following publication of the Ombudsman's report. I want to make clear to the Board that where we made mistakes we have acknowledged them and learnt from them. We have already made changes, but we are not complacent about this issue. We are treating the potential damage this case could do to public confidence as a critical incident and I have asked ACC Davy Beck to lead our response. It is crucial that the public, and particularly women and girls who are disproportionately affected, know we are determined to tackle violence against women



and girls, controlling and coercive behaviour, and to pursuing those who carry it out.

The 8th August marks one year since the terrible data breach that impacted all of our officers and staff. Whilst much work has come from this and many changes for the better have now been made, the impact is still felt heavily by many of our colleagues and we must all continue to support each other. Our processes for sharing information outside of the Service have been strengthened considerably and our information management has undergone a staffing, training and systems review. Both the Information Commissioners Office and a specially convened Independent Review Team have inspected us in detail. 37 recommendations arose from the independent review and already 17 of these have been completed. Every one of us have now been afforded the opportunity to take up a universal offer of up to £500 to improve our own personal security. And every one of us have now had our service numbers replaced by Personal Identification Numbers (PINs) for use in all our external communications to devalue the breached dataset as much as possible. But we are not complacent about the risk that remains. We will continue to relentlessly pursue anyone seeking to use the breached dataset to cause harm, with eight arrests having been made, the latest of which was just last week. Having elevated the responsibility for data now to the Deputy Chief Constable, who is engaged directly in national policing data governance as well as chairing our own Service Data Board, we can be confident that our grip on this vital aspect of our daily business is stronger than ever, so that officers and staff and the communities we serve can be assured and kept safe.

I extend a warm welcome to the newly appointed Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Hilary Benn. I have met both Hilary and the Prime Minister, Keir Starmer, in

advance of, and following, the election and took the opportunity to personally spell out the funding challenges the PSNI face and the ramifications of continued under investment. I have reiterated these challenges to the Justice Minister and the First and Deputy First Ministers.

The PSNI has continued to be a net loser when funding is allocated compared with other key public services and this has to stop or there will be no meaningful policing in Northern Ireland. My message is clearly not landing, so let me again spell out the facts. The funding of the PSNI has taken a major downward turn since 2010 whilst health and education have seen huge increases. An independent review earlier this year reported that the health budget had increased from £3.5bn to £6.6bn (89%) and education from £2.7bn to £3.4bn (23%). In contrast, over the same period, the police budget has been cut by 3% and experienced a fall of 29% in real terms given inflation.

People want neighbourhood policing, but our numbers in neighbourhoods have been diminishing since 2015 and will continue to get worse. We have fewer call handlers to answer 999 calls quickly enough and significantly fewer police officers on the ground to respond to emergency calls when the public really need us. Why should the public of Northern Ireland have significantly less investment in its police compared with elsewhere in the United Kingdom?

The Patten Commission established that PSNI officer numbers should be 7,500. The PSNI now has 6,358 police officers. Since my arrival I have had some independent analysis conducted that shows that our number of officers should be at least 8,000, if we had kept pace with England and Wales. Forces in England, Wales and Scotland have seen increases in numbers in the time since the



Patten Commission, as have An Garda Síochána. We remain a world class policing organisation, but this is an organisational miracle set against the way policing has been abandoned in Northern Ireland by those who are responsible for our funding. I will not stand over this. People are coming to harm who should be protected. We cannot manage the large scale policing operations that we traditionally have been required to in Northern Ireland. People, including my officers and staff, will come to harm when they should not. Our sickness levels and ill health retirements are off the scale because the organisation is exhausted. To build in some resilience and stabilise our resourcing, I have commenced recruitment this year to stop the erosion of our workforce and support our teams.

I'm committed to working with all key stakeholders to address this, to maintain the delivery of policing services and secure the additional resources required to put the Service on a more sustainable financial footing.

Due to our deplorable funding we are having to adjust our policing model so that it is based on the reduced budget that we have to work with rather than on the need to tackle the crimes and policing issues that matter to the people of Northern Ireland. Our policing model is having to be structured on the limited resources that we now have, rather than the policing services that I want to provide for Northern Ireland residents. We have to optimise our reducing resources in ways that other police forces do not have to contemplate.

Taking account of the depleted PSNI funding, I have set our strategic direction for the coming years. We will be:

- **Workforce Focused** - stabilising the organisation by reconnecting our officers and staff with it. We will create an environment where we take care of each other, promoting a culture and readiness for

change. TEAM PSNI Events will commence in September and will provide an opportunity for everyone to tell me what's happening in the organisation. As the REA issue highlighted above demonstrates, I will listen and I will act on behalf of my officers and staff.

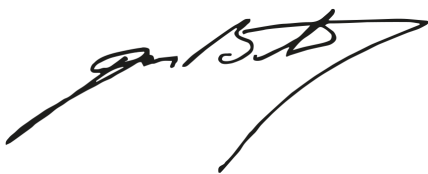
- **Victim Focused** - supporting the creation of safer communities by focusing on the most vulnerable, tackling the threat posed by terrorism and serious organised crime and playing our full part to reduce deaths on our roads. We join the police service to keep people safe and should anyone become a victim of crime it is incumbent on us to treat that person as we would expect and hope a loved one would be treated.
- **Community Focused** – As evidenced during our planning and preparation for the events associated with the Twelfth of July, we will focus on engaging, supporting, consulting and empowering local communities and maximising our relationships and partnerships. Community policing is the bedrock of the PSNI.

Every day I speak with and congratulate a member of the PSNI for various and extraordinary acts of kindness, bravery or professionalism that goes above and beyond. And every day we receive thanks from the public for the work officers and staff do in keeping people safe. Our demand has shifted to managing major elements of the demands in health, whether that is answering hundreds of ambulance calls each month or sitting with people going through complex mental health challenges. We are neither trained nor funded for these functions. It would be super to see these overwhelmingly positive encounters reported more in public. I was once told the media only want to report bad news. For the sake of fairness, it is time the true story of the PSNI was told.



We, will of course get things wrong on occasions, but we will learn from mistakes, acknowledge them and importantly, we will put things right. It is widely accepted that we are the most scrutinised police force in the United Kingdom. We welcome such scrutiny, it is something that sets us apart from wider policing and it helps us to continually improve. But it's time to acknowledge the hard work, dedication and commitment to public service of our workforce. In joining the PSNI, each officer and staff member makes a life choice that is not straightforward, because by joining the organisation they know their personal security and safety is put at risk. We are an armed police service for a reason, we are an organisation that faces a unique threat against our staff. I have over 40 years' experience in policing during which I have seen the best and the worst of policing. The policing I have seen here in Northern Ireland is by far the best I have seen anywhere.

In concluding my remarks, I want to make absolutely clear that although everyone in the PSNI will continue to deliver a world class service, fewer members of the public will experience this as we now have dangerously low numbers. Should major disorder or complex crime challenges occur we will not be able to match the response that policing can deliver in England, Wales or Scotland. That is unacceptable. It is time to support the PSNI, not allow it to continue to be eroded.



Jon Boutcher

QPM

Chief Constable

Police Service of Northern Ireland



Police Service
of Northern Ireland

Finance and Resource Update

2023/24

After an extremely challenging year, I am pleased to confirm that the final financial outturn reported a Resource underspend of £0.1m (against a budget of £829m) and Capital underspend of £0.5m (against a budget of £64m), further evidencing our careful management of the Police Budget. Both the Main Accounts and Pension Accounts have now been certified by the Comptroller & Auditor General with unqualified audit opinions and laid in the Assembly. This concludes the cycle for another year.

2024/25

However, as we move into this year, the financial outlook remains equally challenging. In addition to provision for Holiday Pay and Data Breach claims, our projected pressures were estimated at some £141m. The opening allocation provided the PSNI with additional funding of £60.6m, with the June Monitoring process providing a further, and much needed, amount of £23m. While this additional funding is welcome, it falls significantly short of the underlying requirement and presents not only operational challenges, but the likelihood of over spending this year.

I now intend to submit a draft Resource Plan for 2024/25 to the Policing Board. This Plan will include the funding allocated to date and our planned expenditure this year. I am on record that police officer numbers cannot fall any further and the Plan will reflect ongoing recruitment to prevent the erosion of our capacity to keep people safe.

Significantly, the Plan will result in an unresolved funding gap and I will be seeking support from the Board to proceed on that basis. This is not a position that I want to be in, but it is a direct consequence of the shortfall in funding from the Department. That said, I will continue to lobby for adequate resourcing to close the gap and to deliver a balanced budget by the end of the year.



Our Performance

The information in this section is extracted from our Official Statistics published reports. The full reports can all be accessed from the following link. <https://www.psnl.police.uk/about-us/our-publications-and-reports/official-statistics>. These are in-year provisional figures and may be subject to change.

Recorded Crime

In the 12 months from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024:

- There were 100,779 crimes recorded, a decrease of 10,547 (-9.5%).
- There were 53 police recorded crimes per 1,000 population¹ in the 12 months July 2023 to June 2024 compared with 58 in the previous 12 months.
- When compared with the previous year, crime levels have been lower in all of the months since July 2023 and all policing districts experienced a lower level of crime.
- While shoplifting has increased by 1,052 (13.4%), the majority of crime classifications have recorded lower levels. Stalking and harassment shows the largest fall (-3, -23.9%); there have been a number of changes² in the recording of these 'behavioural offences' since April 2017 with the latest change from May 2023 requiring fewer such offences to be recorded.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

In the 12 months from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024:

- There were 44,099 ASB incidents, a decrease of 3,940 (-8.2%) on the previous 12 months. This is the lowest 12 month figure since the data series began in 2006/07.
- All eleven policing districts experienced lower levels of anti-social behaviour.

Police Recorded Drug Seizures and Arrests

Drug Seizures

In the 12 months from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024:

- There were 8,041 drug seizure incidents, a decrease of 1,088 (-11.9%) on the previous 12 months
- There was a rise in the number of Class C seizure incidents, and a fall in the number of Class A and Class B seizure incidents.
- Cannabis (Class B) was the most commonly seized drug, followed by cocaine (Class A), pregabalin (Class C) and benzodiazepines (Class C).

¹ Crime per 1,000 population based on mid-year population estimate of 1,910,543 for 2022, the latest mid-year estimate available at time of compilation. Mid-year population estimates are available from the NISRA website (opens in a new window).

² Full details are available in points to note on page 3 of The Police Recorded Crime in Northern Ireland Update to 30th June 2024



Number of drug seizures¹ by class and drug type

Drug class	Drug type	Drug seizure incidents Jul'22-Jun'23	Drug seizure incidents Jul'23-Jun'24	change
Class A	Cocaine	1,552	1,543	-9
	Ecstasy	116	141	25
	Heroin	138	73	-65
	LSD	18	18	0
	Methadone	11	19	8
	Morphine	19	12	-7
	Other Class A	110	139	29
	All Class A	1,865	1,841	-24
Class B	<i>Herbal cannabis</i>	5,502	4,334	-1,168
	<i>Cannabis resin</i>	217	192	-25
	<i>Cannabis plants</i>	64	56	-8
	<i>Cannabis, other formats</i>	720	641	-79
	Total cannabis	6,131	4,891	-1,240
	Amphetamines	103	128	25
	Mephedrone	3	4	1
	Other Class B	260	399	139
All Class B	6,326	5,206	-1,120	
Class C	Anabolic steroids	48	35	-13
	Benzodiazepines	1,153	1,155	2
	Gabapentin	72	74	2
	Pregabalin	1,130	1,182	52
	Other Class C	263	307	44
	All Class C	2,179	2,262	83
All drugs		9,129	8,041	-1,088

¹ As each seizure incident can involve more than one class or type of drug, seizure figures for individual drugs cannot be added together to produce totals as this will sum to more than the total number of seizures.

Drug related Arrests

In the 12 months from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 there were 3,618 drug-related arrests, an increase of 274 (8.2%).

Security Situation

In 12 months from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024:

- There was one security related death, the same number as during the previous 12 months.
- There were 5 bombing incidents, compared to 7 during the previous 12 months and 20 shooting incidents, compared to 32.
- There were 26 casualties of paramilitary style assaults, compared to 29 during the previous 12 months. Of the 26 casualties, one was under 18 years old.
- There were 9 casualties of paramilitary style shootings, compared to 11 during the previous 12 months. Belfast experienced the greatest number of shootings (4),

followed by Derry City and Strabane (3). All 9 casualties were aged 18 years or older.

- There were 83 security related arrests under section 41 of the terrorism act 2000, compared to 114 during the previous 12 months.
- 17 persons were subsequently charged, compared to 20 during the previous 12 months.

(Figures include only those arrests that are linked to the security situation in Northern Ireland; persons who have been arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act for other reasons are excluded.)

Motoring Offences

In the 12 months from 1 June 2023 to 31 May 2024:

- There were 38,122 detections for motoring offences of which 97% were dealt with by means of a fixed penalty notice or referral for prosecution.

- The remaining 3% resulted in the completion of a speed awareness or safer driver course.
- Total detections decreased by 13% on the 43,890 detections recorded in the previous 12 months, with a notable reduction in speeding offences which was down by 1,597 (23%).
- All of the 19 offence groups showed decreases in detections over the year.
- The largest offence group was insurance offences with 7,043, which along with speeding (5,219) accounted for one-third of the total detections.
- The highest speed detected by PSNI officers in the latest 12 months was 149mph, on the M2 Foreshore, Belfast.

Number of motoring offences by disposal type, 1 June 2022 – 31 May 2024

	1 st June 2022 – 31 st May 2023	1 st June 2023 – 31 st May 2024	Change over last 12 months	Percentage change over last 12 months
Endorsable Fixed Penalty	9,850	8,136	-1,714	-17
Non Endorsable Fixed Penalty	4,819	4,375	-444	-9
Referred for Prosecution	28,403	24,413	-3,990	-14
Speed Awareness Course	797	770	-27	-3
Safer Driver Course	21	428	407	N/A
Total	43,890	38,122	-5,768	-13

These figures are provisional and subject to change.

1. Note that not all detections in the most recent few months will have been processed, particularly those 'referred for prosecution'.

2. Safer driver courses were introduced in Northern Ireland in May 2023 as an alternative disposal to the new fixed penalty notice for careless driving.

Outcome 1

We Have a Safe Community

Crime Department

Organised Crime Branch

C1 Overall Branch Performance during Q1, 2024/25



Q1 comparisons 24/25 to 23/24

Across the branch disruptions, searches, value of PACE Cash seizures and the value of drugs seized have all increased.

- Disruptions: 38 % increase
- Searches: 26 % increase
- Cash seized (PACE): 30 % increase
- Value of drugs seized: 342 % increase

Investigation

- On 24 May 2024, detectives, supported by colleagues from Downpatrick Neighbourhood Policing Team, Tactical Support Group, Dog Section, Air Support Unit and ANPR Interceptor Unit, conducted a number of searches in the Killyleagh area of mid-Down for drugs and related articles.

Quantities of Class A and B controlled drugs were recovered across five searches, along

with suspected criminal property, mobile phones and two motor vehicles. A male has been arrested and bailed pending further enquiries.

- During May 2024, detectives conducted five searches in relation to suspected money laundering activities and the supply of controlled drugs by persons believed to be involved in organised criminality in the greater Belfast area. In total, approximately £125,000 cash has been seized.

During an associated search at business premises in the Stranmillis area of South Belfast, Class B controlled drugs with a potential street value of around £75,000 was recovered. Two men and a woman were arrested. The woman and one of the men were charged to Court with a number

of drug offences. The second man was released on Police bail pending the outcome of further enquiries.

- Detectives working in partnership with UK Border Force officers made an arrest and seized suspected cocaine, MDMA and ketamine with an estimated street value of £100,000.

During a follow-up search of premises in the Shankill area of North Belfast, officer's recovered drug-related paraphernalia and approximately £40,000 in cash. A man was arrested on suspicion of a number of drug related offences and the possession of criminal property. He was released on police bail to allow for further enquiries to be conducted.

- Officers from the Roads Policing Interceptors stopped a lorry in the Ballymena area. Following a search of the vehicle, Class B controlled drugs with a potential street value of £300,000 were recovered. The driver was arrested and subsequently charged to Court with a number of drug related offences.

A number of follow up searches were carried out at properties in the Ballymoney, Coleraine and Armoy areas and a second man has been arrested. He has been bailed



Class B drugs seized from a lorry in Ballymena

to enable further enquires to be conducted.

- During June 2024, detectives arrested a man and seized cannabis with an estimated street value of more than £1.5m in North Belfast. A sophisticated cannabis factory was uncovered at a commercial warehouse on Limestone Road, Belfast.

Follow up enquiries led to the recovery of a large quantity of cannabis from a lorry in Hollywood. The driver was arrested and charged to Court with the offences of possession of a Class B controlled drug with intent to supply and cultivating cannabis.



Cannabis factory found on Limestone Road

- During June, a confiscation order to the value of £72,092 was granted against a man at Londonderry Crown Court. This followed an investigation in August 2016 when detectives seized herbal cannabis with an estimated street value of £280,000 and £10,470 cash in the Londonderry area.

Court Outcomes

- A 16 month custodial sentence was given to the driver of a lorry stopped in Larne Harbour in November 2021 during which £1m of herbal cannabis was recovered.
- A woman has been sentenced for her part in the 2020 investigation that led to the



recovery of a large amount of cash and cannabis with the estimated street value of £3.3m in Belfast and Heathrow Airport. Detectives have identified her as a significant member of an organised crime gang involved in a number of large cash and drug transactions.

She was sentenced to a total of three years and nine months (one year in custody and the rest on licence).

- A man was sentenced to 27 months at Newry Crown Court and ordered to serve 13½ months in prison, with the remainder to be spent on licence. This followed the 2020 investigation into offences associated with the recovery of cocaine with a potential street value of £240,000 in the Armagh area.
- A woman from the Belfast area was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment, suspended for three years, at Belfast Crown Court. This followed her conviction for fraud by abuse of position, and a number of drug related offences. This related to her abuse of position as a receptionist in a GP Surgery in West Belfast where she fraudulently created prescriptions, obtaining a total of 46,000 Co-codamol and Zopiclone tablets. The investigation was conducted in partnership with the Medicines Regulatory Group, Public Health Agency and the Department of Health.

- On 20 May 2024, PCTF officers charged a man to court for a number of drug related offences. This is in connection with an ongoing investigation into the South East Antrim UDA and follows searches conducted in the Carrickfergus in 2022 where a quantity of Class A and Class B controlled drugs were seized, along with a quantity of cash.



Drugs and edibles seized from Carrickfergus

Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF)

Investigation

- In May 2024, officers carried out searches of three properties in North Belfast. This was part of an ongoing investigation into suspected criminality linked to the West Belfast UDA.

A quantity of cash was seized along with a number of mobile phones, which were removed for forensic examination.

- On 12 June 2024, officers carried out a number of searches in North and South Belfast and made three arrests under the Terrorism Act 2000. This was part of the ongoing investigation into suspected criminality linked to the West Belfast UDA. A report will be submitted to the Public Prosecution Service.

Court Outcomes

- In June, PCTF welcomed the sentence of two years imprisonment suspended for three years, imposed on a man from East Belfast for a number of drug related offences. This followed the investigation into drugs criminality linked to East Belfast UVF in July 2023, where cash and herbal cannabis with an estimated value of £135,000 cash was recovered during the search of a property in East Belfast
- During July, a man was sentenced to 20 months (10 months in prison and 10 on licence) for possession of an imitation firearm with intent to cause fear of violence.

This related to an incident that occurred in June 2023, when footage was shared across social media platforms showing a taxi driver threatening another male with what appeared to be a suspected firearm.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Unit



Chief Constable Jon Butcher, AGS Commissioner Drew Harris and Cardinal Vincent Nichols, President and Chair of Santa Marta Group

In June, Chief Constable Butcher, accompanied by members of the Services' Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU), joined An Garda Síochána Commissioner Drew Harris at the Santa Marta Group Conference in Cork.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland has a long history of involvement with the Santa

Marta Group and events such as these are crucial to keeping the threat and harm caused by human trafficking and modern slavery high on collective national agendas. This enables us to build sustainable partnerships which are key to our ongoing ability to assess threats and target those who prey on the most vulnerable in our society.

Last year, detectives in our MSHTU investigated seven Organised Crime Gangs involved in this form of criminality, and in the process, safeguarded 53 individuals by conducting routine safeguarding visits and referring victims for appropriate help and support.

Cyber Crime

On 18 June 2024, a man from County Antrim was sentenced at Antrim Crown Court to serve 26 months in prison, suspended for three years, for numerous cybercrime offences.

The outcome followed two investigations, one led by the National Crime Agency (NCA) and the other by the Police Service, Cyber Crime Centre.

The NCA-led investigation focused on a massive cyberattack in December 2016, which significantly impacted numerous USA websites and services. The attacks were carried out by a group known as 'Star Patrol'. The male was one of a number of suspects and the only one of the group from Northern Ireland.

The PSNI led investigation focused on his role in the development of malicious software used to attack networks of vulnerable computer systems globally during 2017 and 2018. A further version of malicious software developed by him exploited device vulnerabilities for the purpose of mining Ethereum cryptocurrency.

Serious Crime Branch

Investigation

- Detectives from Criminal Investigation Department have charged a man and woman with possessing firearms and ammunition in suspicious circumstances and attempting to make explosives under suspicious circumstances. This followed a search at their home in South Belfast on 14 May 2024. Among the items recovered were three shotguns, handguns, ammunition, other items which can be used for making explosives, knives, machetes crossbows and 25 mobile phones.
- Detectives from Terrorism Investigation Unit have charged two men with a number of offences, including preparation of terrorist acts, possessing explosives with intent to endanger life or cause serious damage to property and possessing explosives under suspicious circumstances, following searches in the Enniskillen area on 3 July 2024. This was part of a cross border investigation into Dissident Republicans.
- Detectives from Major Investigation Team have charged a man in connection with the murder of 81 year old Patricia Aust in Bangor on 2 June 2024.
- Detectives from Major Investigation Team have charged a man in connection with the murder of 74 year old Michael McConville in Crossmaglen on 15 June 2024.

Court Outcomes

- A 65-year-old man was sentenced to serve seven years (three in custody and four on licence) for manslaughter by way of diminished responsibility in relation to manslaughter of Susan Baird in August 2020.
- A female pleaded guilty and was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of Tony

Browne in west Belfast in 2022. She will serve a minimum 14 years in prison.

- A man pleaded guilty to the murder of Natasha Melendez in Lisburn in April 2020. He was sentenced to life imprisonment. A tariff hearing will be held at a later date.
- A man was sentenced to a 30 month custodial sentence (minimum of two thirds to be served before being eligible for release). The sentencing is in connection with an attack at Enniskillen Police Station on 15 March 2021, which was claimed by the Continuity IRA and linked to a number of security alerts in March 2021, and the discovery of an improvised firearm in Enniskillen.
- A man has been sentenced to three months in prison for committing arson in Derry / Londonderry earlier this year where he set fire to material in the communal hallway of a complex of residential flats.
- Two men have been sentenced for their role in an assault which left the victim with life-changing injuries. One man was sentenced to 9 ½ years' imprisonment (half in custody/ half on licence) for grievous bodily harm with intent. The second man was sentenced to two years' custody, suspended for three years, for the offence of wounding. Restraining orders were also issued. The charges relate to the stabbing of a man in Belfast in April 2022.
- Two men have been sentenced following an attempted robbery of a shop in Limavady in June 2021. One man was sentenced to 4 ½ years' imprisonment (half in prison/ half on licence) for attempted robbery while the second man received a 12-month sentence suspended for two years for assisting an offender.
- A man has been sentenced to 10 ½ years in prison after stabbing two people in



Belfast City Centre in July 2022. He pleaded guilty to two counts of wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm and to possessing a bladed article in a public place following two separate indiscriminate attacks. He was also given a three year extended licence to be served upon his release from prison.

Public Protection Branch

PSNI (Public Protection Branch) recently awarded a contract for Behavioural Change.

Graham Goulden is a former Scottish Police Officer and Chief Investigator and expert in training and a passionate advocate of the **'Bystander Approach'** to help develop personal and organisational leadership, create safe and supportive learning environments, workplaces and performance teams. All of these environments face challenges which, if unchecked, can impact detrimentally on performance and reputation.

Using this approach Graham is able to provide a prevention focus on a range of current social issues, including: Sexual Harassment, Domestic Abuse, Bullying, Initiation, Mental Health, Sexual Violence and Hate Crime.

Graham will work alongside us and help deliver behavioural change workshops complimented with 'Train the Trainer' support, to build on changing culture.

Policing Parades and Bonfires

Planning for the Twelfth of July this year was complicated, to an extent, by the need to factor in the impact of potential strike action by NIPSA and Unite members in the run up to and over the Twelfth period.

This necessitated mobilising additional resources from across the organisation to cover critical roles such as Call Handling and Detention Officers.

Thankfully the leadership and members took the decision to pause industrial action when an interim agreement was reached.

As is typical over this period, planning followed a Gold, Silver Bronze Command structure with ACC Singleton again undertaking the role of Gold Commander.

We estimate that in the region of 4,000 police officers and police staff were on duty at the height of our operations, which encompassed approximately 300 bonfire locations and 45 notified parades on the Eleventh night, approximately 400 notified parades on the Twelfth, including 18 Orange Order demonstrations and the Independent Loyal Orange Institution demonstration. There were around 50 parades / events on the Thirteenth of July, including the "Sham Fight" at Scarva where over 100,000 people are estimated to have attended.

Largely there were no significant issues with regard to any of the parades, however, three Orange Lodges who were party to the 2016 Twaddell Avenue agreement, notified a return parade on the afternoon of the Twelfth and also applied for a return parade on the morning of the Thirteenth. The Parades Commission subsequently issued a determination prohibiting this parade from passing the Ardoyne Shop Fronts. This resulted in significant anger and frustration with the Parades Commission and Police.

The Lodges were fully compliant with the determination on the Twelfth and, withdrew their parade on the morning of the thirteenth. However, the possibility of these parades necessitated plans for a more significant policing and public safety operation than originally anticipated.

The total cost of parades and bonfires in **2023** was circa £4.5m, this was more than £1m down on the previous year. This year, the impact of reduced officer numbers, averted industrial action and heightened tensions in North Belfast means costs will likely be considerably higher.



Outcome 2

We Have Confidence in Policing

Right Care Right Person

Our Right Care Right Person (RCRP) data baseline collection has now been completed and analysis is underway to provide health partners with a clearer picture of health related calls to the Police Service. This work will be used to inform RCRP policies and processes while placing the person in crisis at the centre of the response from the right agency.

A new Health Needs Assessment (HNA) has been completed to inform the final stages of roll out of the custody healthcare nurse led model. This HNA gives ourselves and health partners an updated evidence base of the vulnerabilities of the detained population.

Online Reporting

We are working to ensure that our online reporting service is as user friendly as possible. To help improve this service, we ask those who complete the form to share their feedback. Since we added the feedback questions in May 2024, over 70% of respondents have rated online reporting as very good or good. User comments have included complimenting the straightforward process for reporting online, ease of use, how they have found it a convenient alternative to phoning 101, and the ability to get a reference number straightaway.

This is the first time that we have introduced a live system of user feedback and we will look to share the learning from this across the organisation in support of our commitment to have engaged and supportive communities.

Outcome 3

We Have Engaged and Supportive Communities

Key Campaigns and Events

Safer Summer Together 2024

Our Safer Summer Together campaign takes place over July and August and aims to educate on summer safety, empowering everyone to feel confident and avoid becoming a victim of crime. Themes this year include, respecting the local community, ensuring house and garden safety, water safety, safe nights out, anti-social behaviour, scams and rural crime.

The campaign will include a range of activity such as website guidance, media releases, media liaison and videos where appropriate.



Our People, Your Service

Student Officer and Police Staff Appointments

Despite the significant budgetary challenges we face, the Police Service will be progressing further Student Officer and police staff appointments throughout the coming months in order to maintain our minimum operating numbers at 6,360 police officers and 2,344 police staff. We welcomed 34 student officers into training during July and will be progressing further training courses from September 2024 through to March 2025.

We are also planning for an Administrative Support Officer recruitment campaign later this summer and a new Student Officer campaign in early 2025.



Role Adjustment Project

In June 2023 a Role Adjustments Working Group (RAWG) was established in recognition that there existed, or was perceived to exist, increased concerns on the subject of police officers and police staff with duty restrictions or duty adjustments. These concerns included the impact on capacity and capability of the Police Service, fairness and consistency of treatment of our workforce and wider understanding of decision making.

The RAWG have proposed 25 recommendations, including changes to language, IT and recording, rationalisation of current adjustments and the implementation of panels. Agreement has been given for the group to progress these recommendations and they are currently developing a new Service Instruction and a series of “Pathways” which will provide clear guidance for those with adjustments, their line managers and senior leaders.

A new language guide and Terms of Reference for local, departmental and organisational panels will also be developed, along with a briefing and education programme to support all officers and staff across the Service, in particular, first line managers.

It is anticipated that a consultation phase with staff associations will take place over the summer, with the briefing and education programme being delivered from early Autumn right through to the end of the calendar year.

Collision Investigation Unit

The Services' Collision Investigation Unit (CIU) marked 14 years since its formation by hosting an Open Event at Sprucefield on 5 July 2024.

CIU are exclusively responsible for the investigation of serious road traffic collisions which result in fatalities within Northern Ireland. The team work very closely with external partner agencies such as The Coroner's Office, Public Prosecution Service (PPS), Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS), Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS), the Department of Infrastructure and the Driver and Vehicle Agency, to ensure a meticulous investigation is undertaken for each fatal road traffic collision.



Senior PSNI Officers who attended the CIU event

Among the 100 guests in attendance were senior police officers and staff and representatives from the broad spectrum of specialisms whose support is critical to the exceptional work delivered by CIU. On the day strategic external partners included representatives from the PPS, Coroners, State Pathologists, An Garda Síochána, NIFRS, NIAS, Air Ambulance and Belfast Harbour Police.

A staged crash car and blue light partner fleet provided the backdrop for input from key partners as to their roles, responsibilities and priorities on arrival at the scene of a fatal road traffic collision.

We are grateful to colleagues and partners for taking the time to join us at the event, which enabled sharing and learning and showcasing of the vital work performed by CIU.



Senior members from partner agencies

HeForShe

The Police Service are engaged in the national 'HeForShe' movement which, in simple terms, is "an invitation for men and people of all genders to stand in solidarity with women to create a bold, visible and united force for gender equality."

Chief Superintendent Sam Donaldson is the HeForShe lead and is linked in to the national project. To date a HeForShe Steering Group has been established and almost 90 officers and staff from across the Service have volunteered to be HeForShe Champions.

As part of a three year plan, training is being rolled out to our champions and a number of projects will commence to address gender equality matters. A particular focus will be on maximising the number of female officers in specialist roles.



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