

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 28
NOVEMBER 2024 AT 9.30AM IN JAMES HOUSE**

PRESENT:

- Mr Frank McManus (Chair)
- Ms Marian Cree
- Mr Gerry Kelly MLA
- Mrs Linda Dillon MLA*
- Dr Kate Lavery
- Mr Keith Buchanan MLA
- (1) Mr Peter Osborne
- (2) Ms Nuala McAllister MLA
- Mr Peter McReynolds MLA

**POLICE SERVICE
OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- Ms Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating Officer
- Mr Mark McNaughten, ACO Corporate Services
- Ms Aldrina Magwood, ACO Strategic Planning & Transformation
- (3) Director of ICS
- (3) Head of Transport
- (4) Head of Estates

**EX OFFICIO MEMBERS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- (5) Mr Brendan Mullan

**NORTHERN IRELAND
POLICING BOARD
OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- Mrs Sinead Simpson, Chief Executive
- Mr Sam Hagen, Director of Resources
- Mrs Sarah Reid, T/Director of Police Pensions and Injury Benefits
- Six Board Officials

- (1) From 11.15am
- (2) Left at 11.45am
- (3) Item 6.2.1 – 6.2.3 only
- (4) Item 6.2.3 – 6.2.4 only
- (5) Left at 13.15pm

*Attended meeting via video-conference facility.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mr Trevor Clarke MLA, Mr Les Allamby and Mr Alan Chambers MLA.

The Committee agreed the agenda for the meeting, and no one raised any business they wished to discuss at agenda item 9 under 'Any Other Business'.

2. **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 OCTOBER 2024**

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2024.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 24 October 2024 be approved.

4. **COMMITTEE ACTION LOG**

The Committee **NOTED** the updates and correspondence detailed in the action log and the related verbal overview provided by the Director of Resources.

Updates were provided on correspondence issued and received for agenda item 4.1.

4.1 PSNI responses to matters raised at the Resources Committee meeting in October 2024

In respect of action points one to two from the Committee meeting in October 2024, Members **NOTED** the responses from PSNI in relation to the following matters:

- Member visit to Kinnegar site, and
- An issue arising out of the Committee's consideration of an ADA request.

The Committee noted that in relation to the Kinnegar site a further update would be provided by PSNI later in the meeting.

In respect of action point three the Resources Committee Effectiveness Questionnaire the Director of Resources informed Members that this would be discussed later at agenda item 4.2

In respect of action point four 'Amendments to Removal and Relocation Policy for PSNI Chief Officer and Senior Civilian Staff Equivalents' the Director of Resources informed Members that this would be discussed later at agenda item 4.3

In respect of action point five 'Senior Case Management Review Panel for Legal Cases' the Director of Resources drew Members' attention to the written response received from PSNI to a question submitted to the Chief Constable following the October Committee meeting.

Members expressed concern at the lack of detail provided in the response noting that the Committee had asked for the panel to be established specifically to review all long running cases at regular intervals to ensure where appropriate, cases are settled at the earliest opportunity and

escalating legal costs are mitigated.

Following discussion it was **AGREED** to write to PSNI on this issue and additionally, that a question would be put to the Chief Constable in the private session of the upcoming Board meeting seeking assurance on the wider scope of the work of the panel and confirmation that all long running cases will be reviewed to ensure they are brought to a conclusion in as timely a manner as possible.

In respect of action point six 'Exit interviews for those leaving the Service' the Director of Resources provided Members with an update on the reply received by PSNI.

A member then raised concerns about the significant disparity in exit interview participation and it was **AGREED** to raise a question on the community backgrounds of those availing of exit interviews with the Chief Constable at the Board meeting on the 5th December.

4.2 Committee Effectiveness Review Update

The Director of Resources provided Members with an update following a request at October's Committee that a further amendment be made to the Committee Effectiveness Review paper.

The Committee were informed that the wording had now been amended to read 'PSNI presentations to the Committee must include a briefing paper, an executive summary, and a ten-minute presentation'

Following discussion, a Member raised the following point:

- In relation to closed action points that these are clearly shown on the action log as closed before being removed to ensure that the

Committee agree that they should be removed.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

4.3 Amendments to Removal and Relocation Policy for PSNI Chief Officer and Senior Civilian Staff Equivalents.

A Board official provided Members with a further update following a request for a number of amendments to be made to the paper originally presented to the Committee in October in relation to proposed Amendments to the Removal and Relocation Policy for PSNI Chief Officer and Senior Police Staff Equivalents.

Members were provided detail on the following points:

- The need for greater clarity and tightening of the policy to reduce excessive flexibility.
- Requirements for three quotes remain for removal and relocation costs but not for associated purchase-related expenses.
- Travel class for Service Executive Team is based on best available price unless risk assessment or business needs dictate otherwise.
- The £750/month provided for accommodation is a contribution not the total cost.

A Member then requested that the wording in the Relocation and Incidental Expenses be amended to read 'where reasonable' in relation to the requirement for three written quotes. **AP1**

Following discussion Members **AGREED** to:

- Recommend to the Board the changes to the Removal and Relocation Policy for PSNI Chief Officer and Senior Police Staff Equivalents.

5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

The Committee **NOTED** the updates and related verbal overview provided by the Director of Resources in respect of the following agenda items:

5.1 NIPB Management Accounts

The Director of Resources then provided an update to Members that following on from the Committee Effectiveness Review the decision was that there would be a written summary of the Management Accounts provided once every three months and the Management Accounts would then be provided in the other two months.

It was explained that for this reason they are provided today for information.

Members discussion then focused on the following point:

- What the other costs of £87K related to.

On this point it was detailed that the main factor was the cost of the Senior Officer Recruitment and it was explained that there had been a variance in measures in relation to the timing with this.

Costs for compilation of materials and training and the work of Heads Together in providing expert HR advice whilst going through the process

were also detailed.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

5.2 NIPB – Revised Budget Allocation 2024-25

Members were then advised of correspondence received from the Department of Justice in relation to the Revised Budget Allocation for NIPB for 2024 -25.

The Director of Resources detailed that following October monitoring and in line with NIPB's previous submission provided to committee, £220,000 has been surrendered from the resource DEL and this submission has been accepted by the Department.

It was also detailed that the Department have given NIPB a £20,000 allocation for capital, which relates to licenses for CCTV at James House.

In relation to the Board's Management accounts, the Vice-Chair of the Board (ex-officio) raised concerns that he considered that the Committee has not historically given sufficient scrutiny to the Management Accounts, and advised the Committee needs to reflect on how scrutiny of the Board's accounts is improved in the future.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

Before PSNI joined the meeting Board officials provided Members with an overview of agenda items 6.1 to 6.2

6. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1 Police Pensions and Injury Benefits

6.1.1 The T/Director of Police Pensions and Injury Benefits (PPIB) presented a paper asking Members to consider the outcome of decisions taken by Selected Medical Practitioners (SMP) in respect of 22 assessments considered and provided opinion on, and the decisions taken by Independent Medical Referees (IMR) in respect of 7 assessments.

Members were then asked to review and confirm amended implementation dates in respect of two Independent Medical Referee (IMR) assessments.

Members were also asked to consider 5 anonymised submissions, issued via CJSM, in respect of SMP/ IMR reconsideration requests and based on the information provided if these cases should be forwarded to the SMP/ IMR for reconsideration.

Members discussion then focused on the following points:

- Whether a time limit applies for ex-officers making appeals against the decision of the Selected Medical Practitioner (SMP) or Independent Medical Referee (IMR)

On this point the T/Director of PPIB detailed that in relation to an appeal on the decision of the SMP or IMR there is a time limit of 28 days however in relation to a reconsideration there is no time limit within the current regulations.

The T/Director of PPIB then went onto detail ongoing work involving regulatory tightening, linked to the Northern Ireland Audit Office's 2020

report(NIAO) and highlighted the following:

1. Audit and Regulatory Work:

- Work to progress the NIAO 2020 recommendations is ongoing.
- Regulations are under review for tightening and efficiency.

2. Ministerial Confirmation:

- A consultation document is available from NIO and will come under review by the IOB subgroup.

3. Key Recommendations:

- Focus on clarifying roles and responsibilities.
- Aimed at making processes more transparent and efficient.
- Emphasis on addressing the perceived looseness of current regulations.

4. Consultation Status:

- Initial consultation involved two main recommendations.
- Further work and proper consultation on regulatory changes are pending.

- The volume of applications still to be processed within PPIB

On this point the T/Director of PPIB highlighted that following an overtime exercise the backlog for serving officer cases has been reduced to zero and went onto to detail the ongoing work being done to reduce the backlog in other areas of the Branch.

- The likelihood of applicants receiving a definite time period for when their application will be completed.

In response the T/Director of PPIB stated that whilst they are currently not in a position to do this it is hoped that with an increase in staffing, a better focus can be placed on targets with the expectation that applicants can then get a better understanding of time frames.

It was also detailed the importance in case allocation which then allows officers to be provided with information on how their case is likely to progress through the process.

- The cost benefit analysis of overtime and if the backlog cases reduce will FOI applications also decrease.

On this point the T/Director of PPIB provided a breakdown on the numbers of applications processed during the recent overtime exercise and detailed how reducing the backlog would likely have a positive effect on the number of FOIs received.

A Board official also highlighted that overtime is not a replacement for bringing in staff and with the proper staffing compliment the Branch would be in a much better position to address backlogs.

- Engagement between elected representatives and officers around medical case requirements.

On this point a Board official detailed work being done with HR around processing documents electronically and highlighted ongoing collaborative work with PSNI, OHW and Attendance Management.

Following discussion Members:

- **NOTED** the outcome of the decisions made by Selected Medical Practitioners and **CONFIRMED** the implementation and

reassessment dates for the 22 assessments outlined,

- **NOTED** the outcome of the decisions taken by Independent Medical Referees and **CONFIRMED** the implementation and reassessment dates for the 7 assessments outlined,
- **CONSIDERED** the anonymised information provided and **CONFIRMED** the implementation dates listed.
- **AGREED** based on the information provided, that the 5 anonymised submissions, issued to Members via CJSM, in respect of a reconsideration application should proceed to reconsideration by SMP/ IMR.

6.1.2 Pension Scheme Manager Report

The T/Director of PPIB provided an update on Police Pension related work since the last meeting.

An update was provided on Forfeiture cases, and it was highlighted that NIPB is seeing an increase in potential forfeiture cases and plans are in place to formalise a procedure.

Guidance has been received from the Association of Policing and Crime Chief Executives (APACCE) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the procedure, which still requires input from PSNI, will hopefully be presented at a future Committee or Board meeting.

The T/Director of PPIB then provided an update in relation to SMP (Selected Medical Practitioners) fees and detail was given that fees were raised to £1,000 for face-to-face evaluations and £500 for desk based. It was also highlighted that efforts are ongoing to secure consistent rates across providers, as current inconsistencies hinder the recruitment of SMPs.

Additionally, it is the intention that recruitment for an additional SMP will resume once Departmental feedback is received.

An update was then provided on the McCloud Remedy Project and detail was given that HMRC guidance has been obtained for calculating pension adjustments under this project.

The reassessment process for 179 consenting officers will begin in January, as PSNI resources are currently allocated to other priorities and progress is expected to be gradual.

Members discussion then focused on the following point:

- Ensuring that any future recruitment notice be placed in a medical journal in addition to the NIPB website.

In response it was confirmed that this would be looked at during the recruitment process.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

The Chair welcomed the Chief Operating Officer (COO), the Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) Corporate Services, the Assistant Chief Officer Strategic Planning & Transformation (ACO), The Director of ICS and The Head of Transport to the meeting.

6.2 PSNI Finance

6.2.1 PSNI Finance Report

The ACO Corporate Services then presented Members with the monthly PSNI Finance Report as at the end of October 2024 noting that at the six-month mark, the PSNI is facing an overspend of approximately £17 million,

with a projected full-year overspend of £37 million.

The ACO Corporate Services then went on to discuss the positive outcome on the funding gap with confirmation that the £37 million funding shortfall has now been addressed through the October monitoring round.

It was further explained that this extra funding will allow the budget to be presented as break-even at next months' Committee and with the additional funding, overspending concerns for the year-end have been mitigated, aiming for a close-to-budget outcome.

Capital expenditures are also on track, with the exception of uncertainties related to specific projects like the Kinnegar Site purchase and reliance on receipts from Desertcreat.

In relation to overtime, significant progress has been made in bringing expenses under control however challenges remain in keeping this position for the remainder of the year.

The ACO Corporate Services also highlighted the gap in baseline funding detailing that additional funding streams of £120 million have been added to the baseline budget this year (£60 million at the start, £23 million in June, and £37 million recently)

Following the presentation the discussion focused on the following points:

- A significant variance in accommodation spend in the current year when compared to the previous year.

In response PSNI explained that year-on-year accommodation costs have risen by 12-13% due to higher rates, utility expenses, and increased maintenance costs caused by delays in the capital program.

- The factors behind an increase in spending on supplies.

In response PSNI explained that whilst there are a number of predictable expenditures such as cleaning and catering, the procurement of items like uniforms and protective gear which require periodic refresh would be less stable and make up the majority of the referenced increase.

- Budget spend and overtime requirement for People and Organisational Development:

On this point the ACO Corporate Services explained that the £171k overspend is linked primarily to recruitment and training at the college, including mandatory training like firearms and public order training.

In relation to overtime it was explained that this would be required to manage increased recruitment and training demands.

- The replacement of SAP not being shown as a business case:

In response it was explained that the replacement of the SAP system isn't yet listed in the business case registers as discussions are ongoing with suppliers about whether to replace, upgrade, or find a broader back-office solution.

- Delays in the Desertcreat disposal:

On this point the ACO of Strategic Planning & Transformation explained the income from the sale of Desertcreat has been delayed due to a pause in Mid Ulster Council's City deal which affected the purchase timeline. Efforts are ongoing to progress the disposal process.

Members **NOTED** the update provided.

6.2.2 PSNI Annual Digital Strategy Update

The Director of ICS then provided Members with an update on PSNI's Annual Digital Strategy and outlined several strategic advancements and updates in digital and operational efficiency initiatives across key themes including:

- Digital Investigation and Evidence
- Digital Engagement
- Digital Collaboration
- Mobility

The Director of ICS also highlighted some of the progress and advancement in capabilities including:

1. Strategic Themes and Capabilities

- **Voice-to-Text Transcription:**
 - Implemented to address declining typing skills among new recruits.
 - Piloted successfully, showing transcription is 2.1 times faster for non-typists.
 - Now deployed service-wide for officer use.
- **Digital Evidence Submission Portal:**
 - Allows public submission of digital evidence (e.g., dash cam footage).
 - Reduces the need for officers to physically retrieve evidence.
 - Saved approximately £2 million in the past year.
- **Digital Engagement Initiatives:**

- Improvements in call management systems for the 101 service, including wait time estimates and SMS links to encourage online reporting.
- Online crime and incident reporting tools have diverted over 26,000 cases from call queues, automating processes and improving efficiency.
- **Victim Witness Update Portal:**
 - Launching soon to enhance self-service for victims and witnesses seeking case updates, reducing reliance on direct officer communication.

2. Digital Collaboration

- **PRUM System:**
 - Enables near-instant (10-second) access to EU databases for DNA, fingerprint, and vehicle registration checks.
 - Significantly reduces investigation times.
 - PSNI leads the UK in integrating PRUM with its systems.
- **Court System Digital Integration:**
 - Simplifies the payment process for fixed penalties online, reducing reliance on antiquated paper processes.
- **Shared Communication Networks:**
 - Operates across over 140 broadcast sites for emergency services and other organisations in Northern Ireland.

3. Mobile Application Development

- **Federated Search:**
 - Officers can perform person, vehicle, and address checks across multiple databases in one search.
- **Other Capabilities:**
 - Digital recording of intelligence, witness statements, and incident reporting directly from mobile devices.

- Tools for frontline officers and crime scene investigators to streamline workflows.

4. Community initiatives:

- Apprenticeships, student placements, and career days provided by IT suppliers.
- Support for underprivileged groups through e-learning resources, donations, and IT skill development.

5. Efficiency Savings and Future Plans

- Continued automation and digitisation efforts to improve efficiency, enhance user experience, and reduce costs.
- Plans to explore AI applications in call management and expand online self-service functionalities.

Following the presentation Members discussion focused on the following points:

- The impact on current staff in transitioning to voice-driven processes:

In response the Director of ICS explained that typing skills are diminishing as staff retire and transitioning to voice-based input is seen as simplifying workflows.

- Future availability of existing services for users uncomfortable accessing online services:

On this point It was emphasised that phone access (e.g., 101) will remain available for those who have difficulties using online systems.

- Victim Support and AI safeguards:

In response the Director of ICS highlighted the upcoming launch of

enhanced victim support services with awareness campaigns planned via media and social platforms. Further detail was given in relation to dashcam submissions and streamlining the process to require a case-specific link to avoid an unmanageable influx of footage.

On AI transcription tools it was explained that whilst they will assist with drafting, officers must review and verify accuracy to ensure context and critical wording is preserved. Additionally final statements will have to be signed by victims, and audio records retained.

- Achievements and Future Plans:

The Director of ICS highlighted that a digital stocktake showed the majority of the 2021 goals were met, though some were deprioritised or discontinued due to funding or resource limits. A refresh of the strategy is planned for 2025, incorporating emerging technologies like AI.

- Officer Adaption, Connectivity Gaps and Training:

On this point detail was given that mobile apps with offline capabilities aim to address connectivity however it was emphasised that better awareness is required among officers and a nationwide educational campaign will launch in January to address this.

- Future reliability of the Barracuda System:

In response it was detailed that the Barracuda network remains reliable for voice communication. While future opportunities with technologies like 6G are anticipated, the current system is expected to stay effective until at least 2040.

The Committee then took the opportunity to thank the Director of ICS for the presentation given.

Members **NOTED** the update provided

6.2.3 PSNI Annual Fleet Strategy Update

The Head of Transport then provided Members with the annual update on PSNI's Fleet Strategy and highlighted the following key updates and achievements:

- **Fleet Composition and Usage:**
 - The fleet comprises 2,700 vehicles, including aircraft, boats, cars, armoured vehicles, motorcycles, and off-road vehicles, traveling a total of 25 million miles annually.
 - Since 2021, 692 new vehicles have been added, with 80% of the response fleet modernised (up from 30% in 2021).
- **Specialised Vehicles:**
 - New armoured Kodiaq vehicles are replacing older models, offering better space and utility for officers.
 - 20 new "cell vans" with improved safety and technology features, and 16 new dog vehicles enhancing operational efficiency.
 - 50 new motorcycles are boosting response and neighbourhood policing capabilities.
 - Introduction of welfare vehicles equipped with rest facilities for officers on extended operations.
- **Decarbonisation Efforts:**
 - 59 fully electric and 193 hybrid vehicles in non-response roles, with pilots ongoing for alternative fuels like hydrogenated vegetable oil (HVO) for high-performance and armoured fleets.
 - Plans to roll out 700 low-emission vehicles by 2027, supported by expanding charging infrastructure.
- **Community and Technology Focus:**

- Development of community engagement vehicles and electric bikes for enhanced mobility and public interaction.
- Integration of advanced safety and telematics systems across the fleet.

The Head of Transport also highlighted the following challenges:

- **Resource Constraints:**
 - Staffing levels have declined (mechanics dropped from 50 in 2021 to 30 in 2024), leading to increased vehicle downtime and delays in maintenance.
 - Rising costs, including external labour and insurance premiums causing increased financial strain.
- **Supply Chain Issues:**
 - Delays in acquiring parts and vehicles due to global shortages.
 - Electrical and radio component supply disruptions are impacting vehicle deployment.
- **Operational Risks:**
 - Limited workforce and increasing maintenance demands threaten service delivery and fleet availability for frontline operations.
- **EV Transition Challenges:**
 - Pure electric vehicles are unsuitable for response roles due to performance limitations.
 - Balancing decarbonisation goals with operational requirements remains a priority.
- **Future Focus:**
 - Enhance recruitment and retention of skilled staff, address financial pressures, and streamline processes to maintain frontline support.
 - Continued innovation in vehicle technology and expansion of sustainable practices while managing operational risks

effectively.

Following the presentation Members discussion focused on the following points:

- Increasing insurance costs and options for self-insurance:

In response the Head of Transport explained that the whole of the public sector is in the same insurance contract and highlighted how an increase in premiums is being driven by higher average payouts over the last five years.

- Compensation payouts for officers involved in road collisions:

In response it was explained that it was a statutory requirement for PSNI to have third-party insurance. Beyond that PSNI would follow the policy for Government which is to self-insure.

For PSNI self-insurance would be essential due to a lack of insurance companies willing to provide fully comprehensive cover.

- Fleet Management

The Head of Transport explained replacement strategies are based on age, mileage, and condition, with high-performance vehicles lasting six years or 120,000 miles and standard vehicles five years or 100,000 miles.

It was also explained that current vehicles are owned rather than leased due to cost-effectiveness issues with leasing, particularly for specialised vehicles like cell vans.

- General purpose vehicles numbers compared to remainder of fleet.

On this point it was confirmed there are around 700 general purpose

vehicles, which is around a quarter of the overall fleet.

- Mechanic Recruitment and Retention:

The Head of Transport highlighted that retaining mechanics is challenging due to lower pay compared to the private sector.

Detail was also given that PSNI mechanics earn significantly less than their counterparts in other sectors, affecting recruitment and retention. Ongoing efforts include offering additional training, allowances, and exploring apprenticeship programs despite staffing constraints.

- Transition to Electric Vehicles (EVs)

The Head of Transport informed Members that electric and hybrid vehicles are being introduced cautiously, primarily for general-purpose, non-response roles, with concerns about suitability for high-performance needs like emergency response.

There are plans to expand the EV fleet to 500 vehicles, focusing on reducing emissions and targeting general-purpose roles.

EVs face challenges such as limited range, charging infrastructure, and performance issues under strenuous use and hybrid vehicles are currently favoured for balancing performance and emissions reduction.

- Future Vehicle Strategies

On this point detail was provided that alternatives fuel sources like hydrogen and HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) are being explored as part of the decarbonisation strategy and it was emphasised that the focus remains on ensuring operational efficiency while adapting to environmental mandates like the UK's 2035 emissions target.

Members **NOTED** the update provided and thanked the Director of ICS and the Head of Transport for their contributions and they left the meeting.

6.2.4 PSNI Kinnegar Site Purchase

The Chair then welcomed the Head of Estates to the meeting and the ACO for Strategic Planning and Transformation who highlighted to Members that the Estate Strategy prioritises the College Project while also addressing broader organisational goals, with a focus on transparency, stakeholder engagement, and effective governance amidst financial and operational constraints.

The Head of Estates provided Members with an update on the proposed Kinnegar Site Purchase outlining the progress following the last Resource Committee meeting.

Detail was provided on the strategic, operational, and logistical steps being taken towards acquiring and developing a new consolidated college campus.

Key points covered in the presentation included:

Strategic Objectives and Rationale

- **Primary Goal:** Establish a consolidated training site for the College to meet current and future training needs for new and existing officers.
- **Secondary Goals:** Include further development of the site which will rationalise resources, contribute to carbon reduction plans and dispose of inefficient buildings.
- **Cost-Efficiency:** Through the site purchase and subsequent disposal of other sites.

Site Selection Process

- Over 100 sites were initially evaluated, narrowed to 20, and then to 9.

Top Choices

- Kinnegar site stood out due to its appropriate size (54 acres with 40 acres for development), existing infrastructure, and cost-effectiveness.
- Other sites were rejected due to higher costs, asbestos issues, and impracticality for intended use.

Lessons Learned

- Past failures to deliver a college were reviewed to refine strategies.
- The business case is being developed with a focus on size, location, and necessary infrastructure.

Phase Development Plan

- **Initial Phase (3 Years):**
 - Design and business case approvals, detailed risk analysis, and planning.
 - Address funding challenges and infrastructure preparations.
- **Subsequent Phases (Year 4–8):**
 - Repurposing existing buildings, phased demolitions, and new constructions.
 - Ensuring sustainable capital investments and meeting community needs.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Extensive consultations with councils, agencies, and other stakeholders to address concerns such as flood risks, planning permissions, and road access.

- Notable mitigation measures include raised floor levels, improved flood defences, and other engineering solutions.

Risks and Mitigation

- Continuous reviews of risks and governance practices to ensure timely, budget-compliant delivery.
- Plans include peer-reviewed assessments on flood risk, contamination, and traffic.

Cost and Maintenance Considerations

- Anticipated running costs for the new site are lower than the combined costs of maintaining current facilities.
- Avoiding delays saves £56 million over eight years.

Next Steps

- **Immediate:** Finalise OBC1 submission to DOJ and continue consultations with stakeholders.
- **Timeline:**
 - Key decisions by February 6, 2024, for Board approval.
 - Acquisition completion by March 2024.
 - Continued planning and phased delivery over eight stages.

This phased, risk-managed approach ensures alignment with strategic goals while addressing operational and financial challenges.

Following the presentation Members discussion focused on the following points:

- Flooding Concerns and flood defence measures:

On this point the Head of Estates highlighted that:

Recent approval provided for a residential development

Flood walls, sumps and raising buildings by 0.8m for protection, are additional measures that can be used.

The Head of Estates also explained that there are existing flood alleviation projects like the ongoing one along the Lagan River since 2018, which could complement these efforts and informed Members that existing structures on the site have not experienced flooding or subsidence in the past.

- Access Road Issues:

In response the Head of Estates detailed that road improvements are possible including widening and resurfacing. Costs will be assessed and peer reviewed.

- Cost, Collaboration:

On this point it was detailed that the project team is working with consultants to finalise costs and plans, ensuring alignment with broader infrastructure developments and statutory requirements.

- Stakeholder Engagement:

Collaboration with entities like NI Water and Harbour Commissioners continues with the aim to ensure mutual benefits such as improved infrastructure and sustainable development. Discussion with previous owners detailed no major issues with the site.

Members **NOTED** the update provided and thanked the Chief Operating Officer, the ACO Corporate Services, the ACO Strategic Planning & Transformation and the Head of Estates for their contributions and they left

the meeting.

Following discussion Members requested that independent expert reports be made available for consideration at the January Resources Committee meeting. **AP2**

After further discussion Members then **agreed to recommend the Board**

- Allow the D1 process to proceed which may lead to the purchase of the Kinnegar site subject to all queries being satisfactorily addressed.

6.3 Review mechanism for PSNI Data Breach

The Director of Resources presented Members with a paper in relation to the Review mechanism for the PSNI Data Breach and provided context that responsibility for monitoring the data breach has moved from the Board to the Resources Committee.

It was explained that the Committee will use reports from PSNI's strategic review mechanism, supplemented with presentations and discussions with the Deputy Chief Constable and the options for reporting back to Committee were highlighted.

Members discussion then focused on the following points:

- The provision of a glossary of key terms to accompany presentations ensuring clarity and understanding for Committee members.

- The recommendations feeding back into the Policing Plan.

On this point a Board official stressed the importance of robust data management specifically focusing on workforce enablers like people and financial oversight, and strategic alignment with broader public sector improvements.

Following discussion Members **AGREED** that

- Updates and reviews on the breach will be conducted biannually (in March and September)

6.4 Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) and Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB) Update and Steps for the 2025/26 Pay Review

A Board official presented Members with a paper providing an update on the 2024/25 Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) and the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB) and outlined the next steps for the 2025/26 Pay Review.

Detail was given that the Board is required to send a response to the Department of Justice to initiate the 2025/26 pay review process and that the proposed response would align with last year's approach, advocating for parity in pay and allowances of PSNI officers' and senior officers with their counterparts in England and Wales.

A written submission to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) and Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB) must be completed. The PRRB submission must be completed by 24 March 2025 and Members were given the following two options for preparing the submission:

- Form a sub-group, comprising three Members from the Resources Committee, or
- Assign a Board Official to draft the submission, with subsequent approval by the Resources Committee.

Following discussion Members **AGREED** to:

- Include the same wording as last year, i.e., parity in pay and allowances of PSNI officers' and senior officers with their counterparts in England and Wales, in the remit letter to the DOJ to initiate the 2025/26 pay review process; and
- Progress the Board's annual written submission to PRRB and SSRB 2025/26 by having a Board Official develop a submission paper rather than form a sub group.

6.5 Meeting with Women in Policing

The Director of Resources then presented Members with a paper on the items raised during a meeting between representatives from Women in Policing (WIP), and the Boards Chairperson.

Broader issues were also noted, including the PSNI's handling of violence against women and internal misconduct allegations.

Following the presentation Members discussion focused on the following points:

- Raising concerns with PSNI:

On this point Members highlighted the opportunity to align these discussions with broader PSNI goals around gender equality and recruitment diversity.

- Key Challenges:

It was felt that a gap exists between survey data from the Cultural Audit, which suggests no significant gender disparity, and anecdotal evidence from the WPA. Questions remain about whether the Cultural Audit was adequately designed to capture gender-specific concerns.

- Proposed Next Steps:
 - Continue monitoring outcomes of the Chief Constable's engagement with the WPA and the Cultural Audit results.
 - Consider inviting the WPA for further dialogue, ensuring their feedback is taken seriously and incorporated into PSNI recruitment and gender equality strategies.
 - Address these concerns formally at the December Board meeting, coinciding with the 16 Days of Action Against Violence Against Women and Girls campaign.

- Broader Implications:
 - The Committee acknowledged the importance of not just responding to issues raised but also demonstrating a commitment to systemic changes, particularly regarding gender representation, equality, and inclusion.

Members **NOTED** the update provided.

7. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

The Committee agreed two questions be issued to the Chief Constable for written response.

1. Given that exit interviews are voluntary, have you any explanation for why only 20% of Catholic staff and officers complete an exit interview compared to 70% of their Protestant peers?
2. Members expressed concern at the lack of detail in the response and noted that the intention at the outset was not that the panel be established solely for the purpose of considering the Data Breach and Holiday Pay litigation, but rather to review all long running cases at regular intervals to ensure that, as noted above that where it is appropriate to do so, cases are settled at the earliest opportunity.

As the PSNI's Annual Update on Litigation and Financial Compensation Processes is due for consideration at the January 2025 Resources Committee, Members would request that a detailed update on the work and outcomes of the Senior Case Management Review Panel to date, are included with the PSNI's presentation alongside an update on the Panel's schedule of upcoming meetings and the types/volume of other cases they will be considering in due course (in addition to the Data Breach and Holiday pay cases) **AP3**

7.1 PSNI Responses to written questions to the Chief Constable

Members **NOTED** the written responses to two questions submitted by the Committee in relation to the Senior Case Management Review Panel for Legal Cases and the Community background of those leaving PSNI.

8. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES / OPPORTUNITIES

Members requested that following on from the presentation of the Annual Digital Strategy Update that the Board are made aware at December's

meeting of progress in the digital sphere being made by PSNI. It was agreed that this would be referenced by the Chair at the December Board meeting and highlighted on the Board's social media accounts.

Members agreed a line against inquiry should be held in respect of the Kinnegar site.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Police Trainee (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024 were provided for information.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 19 December 2024** at James House.

The meeting ended at 1.35pm

CHAIR

**RESOURCES DIRECTORATE
DECEMBER 2024**