

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 23 OCTOBER 2025 AT 9.30AM IN JAMES HOUSE

PRESENT:

- (6)** Mr Frank McManus (Vice-Chair)*
Mr Gerry Kelly MLA
Ms Marian Cree
Dr Kate Lavery*
- (8)** Mrs Linda Dillon MLA
Mr Les Allamby
Mr Peter Osborne
- (7)** Ms Nuala McAllister MLA*

EX-OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Tommy O'Reilly

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

- (1)** Ms Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating Officer*
- (4)** Mr Bobby Singleton, Deputy Chief Constable
- (1)** Mr Mark McNaughten, ACO Corporate Services
- (4)** Chief Superintendent Sam Donaldson
- (2)** Head of Procurement & Logistics
- (3)** Director of Information & Communications Services

NIPSA OFFICIALS

- (5)** Ms Tracy Godfrey (Departmental Secretary, PSNI)*
- (5)** Mr Warren Scott (Assistant Secretary, PSNI)*

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Sam Hagen, Director of Resources
8 x Board Officials

- (1)** Items 4.1.1 to 4.1.3
- (2)** Items 4.1.2 & 4.1.3
- (3)** Item 4.1.1 only
- (4)** Item 4.1.5
- (5)** Item 4.2 only
- (6)** Not present for item 4.1.5
- (7)** Item 4.1.1 to close
- (8)** Open of meeting to part of item 5

*Attended meeting via video-conference facility.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from, Mr Trevor Clarke MLA, Mr Peter McReynolds MLA, Mr Keith Buchanan MLA, and Mr Alan Chambers MLA.

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

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 SEPTEMBER 2025

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2025.

Members requested that the September minutes be updated to include:

- The reference made at the September meeting to a possible expert advisory panel to support the PSNI Firearms Licensing deep dive, and,
- An update to the title at item 4.2 of the minutes in order that it reads PSNI Strategic Deep Dive – Firearms Licensing. **AP1**

Subject to the above amends, it was **RESOLVED** that:

- The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 25 September 2025 be approved. These minutes will be published on the Board's website.

4. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Ahead of inviting PSNI to join the meeting the Committee Vice-Chair asked the NIPB Director of Resources and his team to provide a brief overview of the papers provided in support of agenda items 4.1.1 to 4.1.3 and item 4.1.5. The Director highlighted several salient points in relation to the Digital Strategy, Procurement and Finance briefings ahead of PSNI being invited into the meeting.

4.1 PSNI ITEMS

4.1.1 PSNI Annual Digital Strategy Update - Indicator 3.3 of Policing Plan

The Committee Vice-Chair welcomed Ms Pamela McCreedy, PSNI Chief Operating Officer (COO), Mr Mark McNaughten, ACO Corporate Services and the Director of Information & Communications Services (ICS) to the meeting and invited them to present their briefing to the Committee.

In relation to the update on the current Digital Strategy, Members were updated on recent developments in relation to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the use of Voice to Text technology and next steps in terms of AI generated interview summaries, related governance arrangements including the AI Steering Group, and AI Agents which use ethical 'guardrails' to interact with PSNI systems. PSNI also updated the Committee on the recent launch of the My PSNI Portal where victims can create an account and use this service to request investigation updates from their investigating officer.

Other notable updates included:

- An update on the numbers using on-line payments to settle Fixed-Penalty fines.

- The implementation of 'Queue Buster' on the 101 service in June 2025 which gives callers their queue position and offers the option to be referred to PSNI's online reporting facility.
- The Collision Reporting Mobile App, which was launched in June 2025.
- The PRÜM Vehicle Registration Database which allows PSNI to search for European Car & Driving Licensing information.
- The National Law Enforcement Data Service (NLEDS) which will replace the Police National Computer (PNC), and
- Resilience planning and lessons learned following Storm Eowyn.

In relation to the new Digital Strategy 2025-30, PSNI noted that they hoped to launch this in November 2025. Members discussed the importance of ensuring data quality as the use of AI increases and steps taken by PSNI to assure data quality, the impact of network coverage challenges across NI and possible engagement and collaboration with the NI Assembly in relation to working with schools to highlight career opportunities in this area.

Members' questions following the presentation focused on:

- Governance arrangements around the use of AI, including further discussion around the use of 'guardrails' and rule sets put in place for the use of AI Agents.
- Community engagement by PSNI to promote public confidence around PSNI's use of AI.
- How officers are managing their time to ensure updates are input to the new 'My PSNI Portal' and how, in the event of officer absence, line managers ensure relevant updates are made in a timely way.
- How the implementation of the 'Queue Buster' has impacted call waiting times and whether PSNI have seen a corresponding reduction in time to answer calls or abandoned calls. PSNI agreed to revert to the Committee in writing on this point. **AP2**

- Whether, in relation to the AI Steering Group and taking cognisance of the relevant recommendations in the 2023 Human Rights Report – Review of Privacy and Policing, there had been any consideration of external input or membership of the group. PSNI noted that this was an area of consideration for them and agreed to revert to the Committee in writing on this point. **AP3**
- Data Ethics and where PSNI currently sits in relation to the use of facial recognition. PSNI noted the work going on nationally in relation to this and advised that currently PSNI capabilities are limited to retrospective use.
- The level of return on digital investment, how much of this investment supports business-as-usual and how the benefits will be collated by the new Digital Change & Innovation Group.

The Chair thanked PSNI for the presentation and the Director of ICS left the meeting.

4.1.2 PSNI Procurement Annual Report

The Committee Vice-Chair welcomed the PSNI Head of Procurement & Logistics to the meeting alongside ACO McNaughten and COO McCreedy and invited them to introduce the Annual Procurement Report 2024-25.

ACO McNaughten and his colleague, the Head of Procurement & Logistics provided Members with a briefing on the Annual Procurement Report 2024-25 noting that PSNI have over 350 contracts in place and that the spend on third party contracts increased 3.8% in the 2024-25 year from £184m in 2023-24 to £192m at the end of the 2024-25 year.

The Committee was updated on:

- Governance arrangements and the outcome of recent audit activity in the procurement area.

- Collaboration with PSNI departments and also via public sector frameworks to deliver the best value for money (VFM).
- Procurement training being delivered across the organisation, and,
- Procurement spend, broken down by department.

Members' questions following the briefing related to:

- Potential efficiencies in the system, the large number of contract managers and whether this could be considered the best use of resources.
- The procurement framework, safeguards in relation to human rights and due diligence carried out further up the supply chain and how this is balanced with ensuring VFM. PSNI noted that much of this due diligence is carried out early in the initial procurement processes ahead of any contracts being awarded.
- The number of contracts due to expire within the next 18 months and governance arrangements in place to ensure procurement processes are commenced in a timely way to ensure VFM in the next contract. PSNI noted the internal contract review process and the approximate time frame of 12 months for commencing the procurement process for high value contracts.

A Member referenced an example in relation to the PSNI fleet where a number of Electric Vehicles (EVs) were purchased following which it came to light that the necessary infrastructure was not in place to fully deploy the purchased EVs. PSNI was asked to comment on what lessons had been learned from this experience and the internal decision-making processes from a strategic perspective. PSNI acknowledged that in terms of this example, delivery had fallen short due to a number of initial assumptions made at the outset of the process, but that learning had been taken from this experience.

The Committee Vice-Chair thanked the ACO Corporate Services and the Head of PSNI Procurement & Logistics and invited ACO McNaughten to brief the Committee on the PSNI Finance Report.

4.1.3 PSNI Finance Report

ACO McNaughten provided a briefing on the PSNI Management Accounts and Financial information to the end of September 2025. Members were advised that, as at the end of September, PSNI is continuing to forecast a year-end pressure of £23 million. PSNI advised they are cautiously optimistic that pressures in relation to both the in-year pay award and in-year recruitment (totaling approx. £14m) may be addressed during the next funding round, however the timing of this is still uncertain.

PSNI also noted the year-to-date breakeven position regarding overtime, the likely pressure of approximately £20m being projected into next year regarding the Finucane Inquiry and the ongoing position in relation to the business cases for the Data Breach settlement, Holiday Pay and Workforce Recovery, all of which remain unfunded.

Discussion with PSNI following the Finance briefing focused on:

- How the remaining in-year gap would be closed should PSNI get the £14m in respect of in-year recruitment and the pay award. PSNI noted that some of the remaining gap related to depreciation costs which they may be able to cover and that engagement would be ongoing with DoJ to manage the remaining gap.
- Whether the current capital underspend would be resolved by year end. PSNI noted efforts to profile this expenditure earlier in the year but advised they remained confident they would meet their capital expenditure before year end.
- The impact on recruitment for the 2026-27 year should the overall Workforce Recovery business case remain unfunded. PSNI noted

that even if the £7m is provided for in-year recruitment, this has not been baselined for the following year and would therefore create a pressure which may impact on the PSNI's ability to progress with planned recruitment next year.

- The impact of individual test cases going before the court in November should no resolution be found in terms of the Data Breach universal settlement.
- Escalating costs in respect of Ill Health Retirements, and,
- Whether any overspends by the Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF) and Op Kenova would need to be met out of PSNI's main grant. PSNI confirmed that would be the case.

The Committee Vice-Chair thanked COO McCreedy and ACO McNaughten and they left the meeting.

At this point the Vice-Chair advised Members that he needed to leave the meeting for a short period and that Committee Member Les Allamby had agreed to Chair the meeting for the next item which the Vice-Chair noted would be item 4.1.5, Update on PSNI Data Breach Recommendations (see item 4.1.5).

4.1.4 PSNI Above Delegated Authority requests (ADAs)

The Committee Vice-Chair invited the Strategic Planning & Governance Manager to brief Members on the Above Delegated Authority (ADA) requests before the Committee for consideration.

Members were advised that there were four ADAs for consideration and noted that two of these related to PSNI's legal costs in relation to the Omagh Bomb Inquiry (OBI), and two related to compensation claims taken against the Chief Constable and MoD regarding legacy related cases.

Regarding PSNI's OBI legal fees, Members noted that while these costs do not usually come to the Board for approval, DoJ have, in this instance, requested Board approval due to the public interest and sensitivity of the Inquiry.

In respect of the remaining two ADAs, the Committee was advised that these relate to cases where the PSNI and MoD are co-defendants and that the sums under consideration were for settlement amounts and the plaintiffs' legal fees. The Committee was advised that in both instances the amounts payable in legal fees is now a matter for the Court's Taxing Master whose finding will be legally binding once delivered.

Members considered the cost breakdown provided in respect of all four cases, including the percentage breakdown in costs and settlement between PSNI and MoD in respect of the latter two cases.

Following consideration, the Committee **AGREED** to recommend only two ADAs to the Board for approval, these being the two legacy related cases where PSNI and MoD are co-defendants. **AP4**

In addition, Members **AGREED** that correspondence be issued to the PSNI requesting an update be provided to the Committee once the decision of the Taxing Master on costs is known. **AP5**

In respect of the remaining two ADAs pertaining to costs associated with the OBI, Members **AGREED** that, to allow the Committee to discharge its due diligence, further information on the breakdown of costs should be provided ahead of recommending these to the Board for approval. This information has been sought and will be further considered at that November Resources Committee. **AP6**

4.1.5 Update on PSNI Data Breach Recommendations

Mr. Allamby (temporary Chair of this agenda item) welcomed DCC Singleton and Chief Superintendent Donaldson to the meeting and invited them to provide an update on the on the implementation of the recommendations in the Data Breach Independent Review.

PSNI advised of the governance arrangements in place including the Service Data Board (chaired by the DCC) and the Data Delivery Group (chaired by C/Supt Donaldson) which have oversight of delivery against the Independent Review recommendations. PSNI noted that 61% of the recommendations have now been fully implemented and that the terms of reference (ToR) for the Independent Review Group to carry out a follow up review have now been agreed. PSNI advised that they are now gathering data/evidence or providing narrative on why not all recommendations have been realised.

Members were updated on work being progressed via Operation Thistle and noted that recruitment for this operation has now been completed.

The Committee was also updated on separate data-related matters including:

- The Data & Information Risk Strategy 2025-30.
- The Action Plan to address Subject Access Request (**SAR**) and Freedom of Information (**FOI**) backlogs, mindful that the ICO are seeking full compliance (90%) by 31 December 2025. Regarding FOIs, PSNI also noted work ongoing internally to address issues which lead to FOI requests being received from police officers and staff.
- The possible future appointment of a Chief Information Officer, and,
- Increased staffing in the Data Protection Branch/Office.

Members' questions following the briefing centered on:

- Reference in the Data & Information Risk Strategy to the use of AI and predictive policing technologies and the balance between openness and transparency with data protection. PSNI noted at the moment this is aspirational and that any adoption of new technology would be human rights and privacy law compliant.
- Internal FOI's and potential cultural issues within the organisation which would lead staff to seek information via an FOI request as opposed to through their line manager. PSNI acknowledged this as an issue and expanded on earlier discussion in relation to work, for example, on their publication scheme which identified gaps which once addressed may lead to some reduction in the receipt of internal FOI requests.
- Challenges in the sharing of biometric data (for example via the PRÜM Framework or with the ICRIR). PSNI noted that the PRÜM Framework allows PSNI to share information with services across Europe and further afield, however challenges remain in terms of sharing information with both Italy and the Republic of Ireland (RoI) as a result of the UK's exit from the EU. In relation to the ICRIR, PSNI noted that while work is ongoing, they are not yet at the point where all the necessary data sharing agreements have been completed or DPIAs carried out to allow for unrestricted sharing of information, and finally,
- Whether PSNI have any specific concerns about those recommendations which have not progressed to plan. PSNI advised of their current focus on FOI/SAR given the deadline for full compliance set by the ICO and that 21 of the outstanding recommendations would be met via Operation Thistle.

Mr. Allamby thanked DCC Singleton, and C/Supt Donaldson and they left the meeting. Having returned to the meeting during the final stages of this discussion, the Committee Vice-Chair assumed the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

After this briefing Members discussed issuing correspondence to PSNI regarding the PRÜM Framework and specifically the challenges referenced in sharing information with RoI. Following discussion and in agreement with the Committee, a Member agreed to forward a written question to the Chief Constable on this issue (see below at item 7).

4.2 NIPSA Briefing

The Committee Vice-Chair welcomed Ms Godfrey and Mr Scott to the meeting and invited them to brief the Committee on the key areas of concern for their PSNI Police Staff membership.

Ms Godfrey thanked the Committee for the invitation, and she and Mr Scott went on to discuss a number of current and emergent issues with Members. These included:

- Matters previously raised in relation to security and police staff contacting NICS pensions directly with personal information. Members were advised that while PSNI have approved the appointment of an ASO to act as a liaison between PSNI police staff and NICS Pensions, due to delays in the security clearance process this appointment has still not been realised. Ms Godfrey noted NIPSA's preference for an audit to be carried out of the information held by the pension provider and dip sampling to be done in terms of who is accessing the pensions database.
- NIPSA employee surveys being conducted in departments where there is evidence of high union activity. To provide context some examples of survey responses and concerns raised by police staff were provided to Members.
- Concerns raised in relation to police officers being positioned in roles previously carried out by police staff (for example when the police staff member leaves on a secondment). NIPSA representatives noted that this

practice limits opportunities for police staff and can impact on police staff morale.

The Committee Vice-Chair thanked the NIPSA representatives, and they left the meeting.

4.3 PPIB PAPERS

4.3.1 Police Pensions and Injury Benefits – Cases for October 2025

The Police Pensions and Injury Benefits Manager presented a paper asking Members to consider the outcome of decisions taken by Selected Medical Practitioners (SMP) in respect of **17** assessments considered and provided opinion on, and the decisions taken by Independent Medical Referees (IMR) in respect of **4** assessments.

Members were also asked to consider **2** anonymised submissions provided via the CJSM platform, in respect of SMP reconsideration requests and, based on the information provided, advise if the Committee is content that these cases should now be forwarded for reconsideration by the SMP.

Following discussion Members:

- **NOTED** the outcome of the decisions made by Selected Medical Practitioners and **CONFIRMED** the implementation and reassessment dates for the **17** assessments outlined,
- **NOTED** the outcome of the decisions taken by Independent Medical Referees and **CONFIRMED** the implementation and reassessment dates for the **4** assessments outlined,
- **AGREED**, on the basis of the information provided, that the **2** anonymised reconsideration applications should be forwarded for SMP reconsideration,

4.3.2 Pension Scheme Manager Report (Verbal Update)

The T/Director of PPIB provided a brief verbal update on issues related to the Board's role as Pension Scheme Manager. Key points highlighted included:

- An update on the Police Pension Board meeting which took place on 1 October 2025.
- An update on progress in relation to the issuing of RSS Statements, and,
- The high number of refunds in owed contributions paid back by the PSNI Pension Branch in October and November.

The Committee **NOTED** the Pension Scheme Manager's Report.

5. UPDATE ON COMMITTEE ACTION LOG

The Committee **NOTED** the information provided in the Committee's action log and the related verbal updates provided by the Director of Resources in respect of each of the actions. These included:

5.1 PSNI responses to issues raised at September Resources Committee

Members noted the correspondence from PSNI dated 22 October 2025 in response to the letter issued from the Committee Chair following the September 2025 Resources Committee meeting. This correspondence included information requested by the Committee in relation to:

- PSNI's job-share/flexible working policy and the availability of flexible working arrangements within PSNI, and,
- The scheme of delegations regarding the approval process for business cases within PSNI.

In addition, Members noted the updates provided by the Director of Resources in relation to several other actions including:

5.2 Correspondence to MoJ in respect of the unfunded universal settlement offer regarding PSNI Data Breach legal case.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Board Chair to the Minister of Justice which was issued following agreement at the September Resources Committee. The Director of Resources advised that this action would now be closed on the Committee action log. NOTED.

5.3 Correspondence from Board Chair to Chief Constable – PSNI Deep Dive on Firearms Licensing

The Director of Resources briefed Members on a cover paper and related correspondence from PSNI which included proposed Terms of Reference (ToR) for the PSNI Strategic Deep Dive on Firearms Licensing. The Director highlighted several aspects of the proposed ToR including:

- That the review would be carried out by an externally sourced consulting firm and therefore this would not be PSNI reviewing themselves.
- That PSNI would meet the cost of the review.
- The linkages to the current policing plan, specifically Indicator 3.3 (making best use of resources), and
- The scope of and governance arrangements which will be put in place regarding the review.

Following consideration of the proposed ToR, Members considered that there were several further areas that should be covered in the review, and it was **AGREED** correspondence be issued to the PSNI requesting the inclusion of the points below in the ToR for the PSNI Strategic Deep Dive on Firearms Licensing.

- The length of time on average it takes to complete a standard firearms application, and the time for a complex application.
- What is the correct staffing level for the branch compared to what the current establishment/actual is.
- How many police officers are employed in the Branch and how many police staff, and what are the business reasons for requiring police officers in the branch.
- A view on whether full cost recovery is reasonable, and what costs are reasonable to recover. **AP7**

5.4 Correspondence to NPCC regarding the Terms of Reference (ToR) for Data Breach Follow-Up Review

The Committee noted correspondence issued to the NPCC following the September Resources Committee and their response confirming the views of the Committee have now been reflected in the ToR for the follow up review. Members noted this action would now be closed on the Committee action log. NOTED.

Members were also provided with a synopsis of the remaining actions on the log which can now be closed and noted that AP2 from the September meeting regarding the definition of 'Deployable Resources' would remain open until the further information requested was brought back to the Committee.

6. CHAIRPERSONS BUSINESS

The Committee Vice-Chair invited the Director of Resources to provide a brief overview of the 2 items under Chairpersons Business.

6.1 Police Pay Award

Members noted correspondence copied to the Board from the Chief Constable to the Minister of Justice regarding the outstanding police pay award. NOTED.

6.2 Police Federation appeal to Secretary of State regarding '*Funding Crisis*'

The Committee noted correspondence from the Chair of the Police Federation (PFNI) to the Secretary of State requesting he step in to address the 'chronic funding crisis facing policing'. NOTED.

7. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

Two Members agreed they would submit written questions to the Chief Constable following the meeting. One in relation to The PRÜM Framework and challenges around the sharing of biometric data with European police services (further to agenda item 4.1.5), and the second being a follow up question further to the response provided by the PSNI at item 5.1 regarding PSNI's job-share/flexible working policy and the availability of flexible working arrangements within PSNI.

8. COMMUNICATION ISSUES/OPPURTUNITIES

None

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Director of Resources noted that due to the revised scheduling of Resources Committee meetings commencing in 2026, the January Committee meeting is now due to be held on Thursday 15 January 2026. Members considered the challenges for PSNI and Board officials in preparing material for Members' consideration ahead of this meeting given the Christmas and New Year holiday period and following discussion, **AGREED** the cancellation of the January 2026

meeting of the Resources Committee. It was also **AGREED** PSNI presentations scheduled to take place in January 2026 would now be moved to the February 2026 meeting. **AP8**

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted the next meeting of the Resources Committee is scheduled for **Thursday 27 November 2025** in James House.

The meeting closed at 1:45pm

CHAIR

RESOURCES DIRECTORATE

October 2025