

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2026 AT 9.40AM IN JAMES HOUSE, BELFAST

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Mukesh Sharma (Chair)
Mr Brendan Mullan (Vice-Chair)
Mrs Marian Cree
Ms Cheryl Brownlee MLA
(1) Miss Nuala McAllister MLA
(2) Mr Tommy O'Reilly
(3) Mr Les Allamby
(4) Mr Alan Chambers MLA
(5) Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
(1) Mrs Linda Dillon MLA
Mr Gerry Kelly MLA
(6) Mr Keith Buchanan MLA
Mr Patrick Nelson
(7) Dr Kate Laverty
Mr Peter Osborne
(8) Mr Frank McManus
(1) Mr Colin McGrath MLA
(9) Ms Deirdre Hargey MLA
(1) Mr Peter McReynolds MLA

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

(10) Mr Jon Boutcher, Chief Constable
(10) Mr Bobby Singleton, Deputy Chief
Constable
(10) Ms Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating
Officer
(10) Ms Melanie Jones, Assistant Chief
Constable
(10) Mr Davy Beck, Assistant Chief Constable
(10) Mr Anthony McNally, Assistant Chief
Constable
(10) Ms Clare Duffield, Assistant Chief Officer
People and Organisational Development
(10) Mr Ryan Henderson, Assistant Chief
Constable

- (10) Ms Aldrina Magwood, Assistant Chief Officer Strategic Planning & Transformation
- (10) Mr Mark McNaughten, Assistant Chief Officer Corporate Services
- (10) Chief Superintendent
- (10) Three Staff

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

Mrs Sinead Simpson, Chief Executive
Mr Sam Hagen, Senior Director of Resources
Mr Adrian McNamee, Director of Performance
Ms Sarah Reid, T/Director of Police Pensions & Injury Benefits
Ms Paula Gow, T/Director of Partnership
Three Officials

**OTHER OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Aonghus Kelly, Human Rights Advisor

- (1) Left after public session
- (2) Left after public session, back at 2.15pm
- (3) Left at 3.20pm
- (4) From 9.45am, left after public session
- (5) From 9.50am, left at 2.20pm
- (6) Left at 3.45pm
- (7) Left at 3.30pm
- (8) Left at 2.50pm
- (9) Left after public session, back at 2.45pm
- (10) Item 10 only

The Chair opened the meeting and set out the programme.

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

Members **AGREED** the agenda.

The Chair welcomed Mr Aonghus Kelly to his first full Board meeting as the Board's new Human Rights Advisor and wished him every success in the new role.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

Members did not indicate any matters they wished to raise under 'Any Other Business' at agenda item 12.

3. DRAFT MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING:

3.1 Thursday 11 December 2025

The Chair asked Members to consider the draft minutes of the Board meeting held on Thursday 11 December 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The draft minutes of the Board meeting held on Thursday 11 December 2025 be **APPROVED** for publication on the Board's website.

4. QUESTIONS TO THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

4.1 Chief Constable's Accountability Report

Members **NOTED** the Chief Constable's accountability report to inform discussion with the PSNI leadership team at today's meetings in public and in private.

4.2 Individual Members Written Questions and Responses

Members **NOTED** the follow up responses from PSNI to oral questions at the Board meeting held on 11 December 2025 and the PSNI responses to Members' written questions since the last meeting.

4.3 Committee Written Questions and Responses

Members **NOTED** the PSNI written response to a question from the Board's Resources Committee.

Members were reminded of the revised processes in respect of Member questions whereby responses to individual member questions will be submitted to the relevant committee for consideration.

4.4 Key Issues of Public Interest

Members **NOTED** a paper from the communications manager which detailed recent issues of public interest relevant to the Board's areas of work.

Members were advised that web links to media items can be accessed via the Board's digital sharing platform, and Board officials are exploring options to provide Members with access to media websites requiring a subscription.

Members advised the Chair and Chief Executive of additional questions to the Chief Constable and PSNI leadership team at the public and private sessions later in the meeting.

Members were reminded to keep their questions brief to ensure sufficient time for responses and to allow all questions to be taken. Members were asked to

note that written responses can be requested from PSNI for any additional detail required.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

5.1 Performance Committee – Thursday 4 December 2025

The Board **NOTED** the Performance Committee Chair's report and draft minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 4 December 2025.

5.2 Resources Committee – Thursday 18 December 2025

The Board **NOTED** the Resources Committee Chair's report of the meeting held on Thursday 18 December 2025.

The Committee Chair advised of the Committee recommendation to approve a charitable donation, and it was subsequently **AGREED** by Members to:

- **APPROVE** the PSNI Above Delegated Authority Request for the charitable donation to the Police Arboretum Memorial Trust to assist with ceremony costs to mark the fifth anniversary of the Memorial.

In relation to the Cultural Audit update provided in the Chair's report, a Member noted that it warranted further discussion on culture within PSNI. Members were advised this matter will be considered in more detail by the Board's Resources Committee.

5.3 Audit & Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) – Thursday 18 December 2025

The Board **NOTED** the ARAC Chair's report of the meeting held on Thursday 18 December 2025.

5.4 Partnership Committee – Thursday 22 January 2026

The Board **NOTED** the Partnership Committee Chair's report and draft minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22 January 2026.

The Committee Chair advised of the Committee recommendation to publish the Independent Community Observers Annual Report 2025.

It was subsequently **AGREED** by Members to:

- **APPROVE** the publication of the Independent Community Observers Annual Report 2025 on the Board's website.

6. BOARD BUSINESS

6.1 Policing Plan Performance Monitoring – Outcome 3

The Director of Performance presented a paper to provide Members with an overview of the Chief Constable's first accountability report to the Board on Policing Plan Outcome 3 – 'PSNI has a representative, valued and enabled workforce'.

Members were advised of a number of strategic questions at the outcome/indicator level that Members may wish to ask PSNI at today's meeting, as follows:

- Representativeness of PSNI and long term trends in respect of the numbers of female officers and officers from the CNR community, and whether adequate progress has been made.
- In respect of the 2025 recruitment campaign, reasons for the low number of applicants from female candidates and the CNR community.

- Factors contributing to a decrease in the number of Professional Standards Department (PSD) investigations since 2024 and a reduction in the number of breaches of the Code of Ethics during the year 2024-25.
- Impact of increasing demand and workload alongside a reduction in workforce and actions being taken to mitigate, and PSNI plans to fully utilise the workforce to meet current and emerging demands as recruitment begins to increase officer and staff numbers.
- Plans in place to address ongoing high levels of sickness absence within PSNI.

Members **NOTED** the update provided and discussed a range of matters including the current officer recruitment campaign; PSD; management of sickness absence and barriers including training/ development for officers in temporary promoted roles; Estates strategy including rationalisation plans and timescales; PSNI leavers statistics with 47% for medical reasons compared to 5% in England and Wales; representativeness and whether joining PSNI is becoming less attractive for some members of the community; flexible working and job sharing arrangements; and the importance of first line manager training.

6.2 Election process for Board Chair & Vice-Chair and amendments to NI Policing Board Standing Orders

The Chief Executive reminded Members of previous discussions at the recent Board Development Event in respect of the nomination and election process of the Board Chair and Vice-Chair.

Two options were provided for the Board to consider, option one to continue with the current nomination/ election process, and option two, a revision of the nominations process and voting system.

Members were asked to **NOTE** that the paper included further detail on the advantages and disadvantages of both options.

Members raised the following matters:

- Concerns regarding the nomination process on election day if a nominated Member is not present in the meeting to confirm acceptance of their nomination.
In response options were discussed in respect of adjourning the meeting if necessary to contact Members.
- Whether the current Chair and Vice-Chair are eligible for re-nomination, with confirmation given that their term of appointment is two years, but that they can be re-nominated. Members were reminded of the conventions where a. the overall balance of the chair/vice-chair positions is representative of the Board as a whole and b. there has been rotation in the perceived community background of the Chair/ Vice-Chair and the positions are held by independent members.
- Transparency of the election process to ensure it is fully democratic and that the proposed 'secret ballot' of option two does not fulfil this criteria, and that it placed a disproportionate pressure on Board officials to ensure confidentiality. In response a Member suggested that more focus needs placed on inclusivity rather than transparency and that the view of some Members that previous elections were not inclusive could not be ignored.
- That final voting numbers for each nomination should not be announced in the meeting and this was agreed

- The simple majority concept for decision making as set out in standing orders for Board decisions which has been interpreted to date as the highest vote carries the decision. For election of chair and vice-chair positions Members expressed a preference that an actual majority carries the decision. So, in effect, if there are three candidates voted on, the top two would proceed to a second vote until an actual majority is achieved. The Board standing orders will be amended to reflect this for the election of chair and vice-chair positions only
- Potential outcomes were discussed including a situation where the number of votes were tied for the Chair position.
In response Members were advised that the newly elected Chair will have a casting vote should there be a tie in the election of the Vice-Chair. In the event of a tie for the position of Chair the vote would be re- run until there is a majority.
- Whether the accepted convention of electing Independent Members to these roles should continue to maintain balance and mitigate against political control, and it was acknowledged that Political Member nominations were permitted but unlikely due to the time commitment required.

Following discussion, a proposer and seconder were received for both options, with the two amendments to be applied to option two regarding voting majority and confirmation of nominations, and it was subsequently **AGREED** to proceed to a vote on each option.

Following the voting process and a show of hands it was **RESOLVED** by way of a simple majority that:

- Option two, subject to the two amendments, was the preferred option for the process to elect a new Board Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board.

The Chief Executive provided an overview of the practical aspects of the election at the Board meeting in April 2026, and that revised Committee membership will follow after the election.

Members were advised that a paper will be brought to the next Board meeting in March 2026 to reflect the agreed election process, role description for chair and vice-chair positions, and the required amendments to the Board's Standing Orders. **(AP1)**

6.3 25-year anniversary plans and Terms of Reference for Strategic Oversight Group

The Chief Executive advised Members that following a briefing on plans for the 25-year anniversary of new policing arrangements in NI at the recent Board Development Event, Members were now asked to consider the amended Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Strategic Oversight Group (SOG) established to give direction to this work.

The Chief Executive outlined that key changes were to provide clarity in relation to governance matters and to define the role of the SOG in contrast to the Steering and Working groups which sit below it.

Finally, Members were advised of a proposed monthly meeting schedule for the SOG and this will be shared after the meeting. **(AP2)**

Members requested further clarity on Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) community events for the anniversary and highlighted potential barriers due to current PCSP workload and budget challenges, and whether there was an option to use small grants to support PCSP activities.

In response the Chief Executive advised that the Board's Partnership directorate will continue to engage with PCSP managers to develop a

programme and options available including the concept of a small grants programme but noted that budget challenges might restrict our ambition with the 2026-27 budget to be confirmed.

Members also discussed representativeness of those participating in the event, the role of serving officers [while noting it is a policing event not a PSNI event]; the role of PCSPs; and the budget allocated for the programme.

A Member agreed to share a proposed amendment to the TOR on the role and authority of the Group.

In response the Chief Executive advised that plans were well advanced on the 2-day programme and an events management company would be procured to support logistical arrangements for the conference and other events, confirmed attention was being paid to representativeness and engagement of PSNI and PCSPs [and others] in the overall programme of events which goes beyond the 2 day conference. Members were also asked to note that there was no additional funding currently being set aside to deliver the event and activities outlined, that costs will be managed closely, with sponsorship options currently being explored.

Following discussion Members:

- **NOTED** The update provided, and
- **AGREED** the revised Terms of Reference for the Strategic Oversight Group, subject to the amendment outlined above.

6.4 McCullough Review Report

The Chief Executive asked Members to **NOTE** an update on actions agreed following the publication of the McCullough Review report, an independent review into conduct by PSNI arising from concerns raised in relation to

surveillance of journalists and other groups, and highlighted the following matters:

- A response is awaited on Mr Angus McCullough KC returning sooner than originally planned, but early indications suggest this will not be possible given his diary commitments.
- Legal advice has been received on potential misconduct issues arising from the report and where appropriate this will be referred to the Board's Discipline Committee.
- The Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office has declined a request to meet with the Board but has agreed to meet with the Board Chair and Vice-Chair when diaries allow.
- A recent meeting of the Group of Experts and Stakeholders (GoES) and consideration being given to restating calls for the implementation of the Patten recommendation on an Oversight Commissioner for covert law enforcement in NI, noting that the GoES shared Board Members concerns regarding the lack of assurance that can be derived from the current framework.

Following discussion Members **AGREED** to:

- Issue correspondence to the Secretary of State (and the Justice Minister) in relation to the implementation of the Patten recommendation for a Commissioner for Covert Law Enforcement in Northern Ireland. **(AP3)**

6.5 HMICFRS and CJI – Proposal Paper for the Inspection of Call Handling and Management by PSNI 2026

The Director of Performance presented a paper to advise Members that during discussions on the 2025-26 Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Inspection, the Board requested that the PSNI's response to 999 and 101 calls should be included in any forthcoming inspection.

HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJI) Inspectors have worked in partnership to produce a joint proposal for undertaking this Inspection.

In relation to funding the CJI budget will fund the majority of the costs, with additional funding to be provided by the DOJ.

Members welcomed the proposal outlined and following discussion it was **AGREED** to:

- **APPROVE** that the Board Chair issues correspondence to the Minister of Justice to commission the HMICFRS element of this inspection on Call Handling and Management by PSNI. **(AP4)**

6.6 Review of Structure of NI Policing Board & Next Steps

The Chief Executive presented a paper to update Members on the outcome of the review of the structure of the Board and proposed next steps.

As background the specialist HR consulting firm 'HeadsTogether' produced a report in October 2025 with proposals on the Board's executive team structure.

Members were advised that the independent review of the Board (Sweeney review) made a number of recommendations about the functioning of the Board including the need for an increased focus on strategic direction and horizon scanning and the proposed structure was designed to enable the executive team of the Board to better support that ambition. Members were provided with a summary of the proposals including restructuring of current grades within the Board's Senior Management Team (SMT), an increased focus on the Board's

outreach/engagement/ partnership with key stakeholders, that costs were minimal to implement changes to the grading structure.

Members raised the following matters:

- Broad approval for the proposal outlined but noting a need for further detail to be provided. Members requested access to the full report from HeadsTogether in order to ensure full transparency and allow Members to reach a fully informed decision.
- The ongoing need to keep the post of the Director of Police Pensions & Injury Benefits (PPIB) temporary with the Chief Executive highlighting the level of uncertainty regarding where the Ill Health Retirement (IHR)/ Injury on Duty (IOD) responsibilities would sit in the future, and subsequent impact on resourcing requirements within the PPIB Directorate.
- Concerns about proposals to regrade some of the directorates at a higher level, and the potential impact this may have on staff at lower grades not provided the same opportunity for a grading reassessment, with the Chief Executive noting that one did not automatically follow the other but that any cases made would be considered in line with normal procedures, noting that a number of posts had been reviewed during 2025 and some of those had been uplifted.
- Whether the new gradings can be reviewed under the Job Evaluation & Grading Supports (JEGS) process by an approved third party, with the Chief Executive noting that the only provider for grading posts at this level is Beamens.

- Agreement to the general need to bolster support for the Chief Executive role with additional resource facilitating a more strategic, outward facing way of working.
- Concerns about the potential impact on already demanding Directorates should there be additional workload, with the Chief Executive noting that working through Sweeney has required additional workstreams and the proposed structure would assist in maintaining this.
- Concerns regarding proposed structure of and potential disproportionate impact on some Committees, and whether it is Board's role to note or agree the proposals. The Chief Executive confirmed the Board had a role to agree the proposals, as noted in the cover paper, and confirmed the proposals would have no impact on the Committee workloads.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** to share the full HeadsTogether report with Members and to schedule a single item Board meeting to discuss the report and proposals further, with a date to be arranged. **(AP5)**

7. **ACTION LOG**

Members **NOTED** the action log for the Board meetings held on 11 December 2025, 6 November 2025, and 3 July 2025.

In relation to the open action points from the Board meeting held on 11 December 2025 the Chief Executive provided the following updates:

- Action point 1 – this relates to an issue raised by a Member on mutual aid officers and compliance with Human Rights. This matter has been raised with the Member asking that they provide additional details and a response is awaited.

- Action point 8 – this relates to housekeeping issues at the Board meeting in December 2025. This matter has been escalated to those responsible and can now be closed.

In relation to action point 6 from the Board meeting on 6 November 2025, an update was provided on amending existing legislation to allow Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) to access detainees records. DOJ officials are expected to present proposals to the Justice Minister and this action will remain open to monitor progress.

Members **NOTED** the updates provided.

8. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

8.1 Chair's Report

The Chair asked the Board to **NOTE** the Chair's report and associated addendum which advised Members of:

- The Chair's engagements carried out during the period 9 December 2025 to 27 January 2026.
- A full list of correspondence issued and received by the Chair during the period 9 December 2025 to 3 February 2026.

In respect of engagements which may be of particular interest Members were referred to Appendix 1A of the report for a summary of the key issues discussed.

The Chair thanked Members for their attendance and contribution at the recent Board Development Event.

The Chief Executive advised that a paper would come to the Board meeting in March 2026 summarising the discussion at the Board Development Event, suggesting actions arising from it which can form part of a Board business improvement plan which will include remaining recommendations from the Independent Review of the Board (The Sweeney Review).

Members discussed the last minute changes to the Board development event agenda and limited preparation time for Members; options to engage an event facilitator at future events to keep discussions on track; the awaited DOJ response to the Sweeney Review recommendations; and the need to take away key learning points for future Board development events.

Members were advised that following consideration at the development event the revised Members' Code of Conduct will be brought to the next Board meeting in March 2026.

The Chief Executive provided a summary of Members views from the development event on the Chief Constable's proposal to agree a Joint Commission to assess the future needs of the service in terms of numbers of officers and staff and skill set needed.

As background, this builds on the consulting firm 'Leapwise' Report on PSNI demand and capacity completed in 2024, and it is anticipated that a further review can be commissioned in due course with clear, deliverable outcomes.

Members' views included an acceptance that the work needs to be completed; that its scope must be sufficiently robust to address current supply and demand challenges and reflect a changing policing landscape; that Members should have sight of the Terms of Reference and the opportunity to comment; but that, as the accountability and oversight body, the Board should not jointly commission the review with PSNI.

Following discussion Members **AGREED** to issue correspondence from the Chair to the Chief Constable on the proposed Joint Commission, setting out the Board's views. **(AP6)**

Members raised the following matters in respect of the Chair's Report:

- Terms of Reference for the PSNI community background project and assurance regarding a technical point relating to the exercise of police stop and search powers under the Justice and Security (NI) Act and Terrorism Act.
- Action required upon receipt of the Office of the Police Ombudsman NI Second Five-year report and it was confirmed that the report will be considered further by the Board's Performance Committee prior to a Board response.
- Status of a request from the Independent Reporting Commission (IRC) to meet with the Board and it was confirmed that a delegation from the Board is scheduled to meet with the IRC in April 2026.

In relation to correspondence the Chair drew Members' attention to the following matters:

- Correspondence from PSNI regarding a Ukrainian study visit to PSNI, approved by the Board's Resources Committee, and a request to meet with the delegation to outline the role of the Board and attend the public session of the Board meeting in March 2026.
- Correspondence from 'The Katie Trust' and request to meet with Members to share themes emerging from their work including insights and lived experiences that could support system learning and contribute

to maintaining strategic focus on progressing the Violence Against Women and Girls strategy.

- Correspondence to all Members on the Members' code of conduct outlining Members obligations under the code, as discussed at the recent Board Development Event. Work is continuing and it is anticipated that a revised code of conduct will be presented at the Board meeting in March 2026, following which Members will be asked to sign and recommit to the Code at the beginning of the Board's new term in April 2026.
- Correspondence from a member of the public on PSNI escorting of explosives and non-recovery of associated costs. Members were advised this matter had been considered by the Board previously and that PSNI had attempted to recover costs; however, as the activity was deemed not to fall under 'Special Police Services', recovery was not permitted. Following discussion, Members indicated they were content for Board Officials to seek comments from PSNI, which will be considered further. **(AP7)**
- Correspondence from the National Crime Agency (NCA) Director General (DG) in relation to the recent publication of the Government White Paper on Police Reform and the need to explore this issue further and the implications for policing in Northern Ireland.
- A 'Save the Date' for 17 March 2026 from the NI Bureau for a breakfast event in Washington DC with Members agreeing that attendance would not represent the best use of Board resources given the time, cost and anticipated benefits.

- Correspondence from the Chief Constable to provide an update on the PSNI Inclusion Survey and the Board's Resources Committee will continue to engage on this matter.
- An Invitation from Assistant Chief Constable McNally to attend the Justice Department Recognition Event on 24 March 2026.

Members raised the following matters:

- In relation to the Ukrainian study visit Members asked for more information on attendees and purpose of the visit, and it was agreed that Board Officials would seek this information and share with Members.
(AP8)
- In relation to correspondence from 'The Katie Trust' Members discussed the potential precedent set by agreeing to a meeting, expressed support for the work carried out by the Trust, and agreed the request should be approved. Members also considered whether the meeting should take place at one of the Board's Committees, and following discussion it was agreed to explore options to facilitate this. **(AP9)**
- In relation to signing the Members' revised code of conduct whether a failure to do this will be treated as a breach of the code, with confirmation that the revised Code would provide for this being a breach.

On other issues the Chair provided the following update:

- Members were asked for their views on the provision of information around the accountability structures for the role of MI5 in Northern Ireland. At the Board meeting in December 2025 the NCA DG noted the discussion Members had on the subject and had agreed to assist member understanding.

- Members noted in discussion that the Board had no role in oversight or accountability of MI5 and that while the DG NCA could provide some information in his next update to the Board on the oversight/accountability of MI5, there should be no engagement beyond that which would compromise the principles set down in Annex E to the St Andrews Agreement.

Following discussion officials agreed to ask the NCA DG to provide a brief summary of the accountability arrangements for MI5 in his next report to the Board. **(AP10)**

Members **NOTED** the updates provided.

9. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Members **NOTED** a report from the Chief Executive which provided an overview of governance and organisational matters and to inform the Board of key items of correspondence relating to Board business.

The Chief Executive drew Members attention to the following matters:

- On senior officer matters, a grievance has been received and is being progressed in line with the protocol agreed by PSNI and the Board for such matters. A Chief Constable nominated by the National Police Chiefs' Council has been appointed and findings will be considered in the first instance by the Board's Discipline Committee with a remit to consider whether there has been any misconduct.
- On governance, the Board's annual business plan performance monitoring document for quarter 3 has been provided for Members information.

- In relation to Operation Constraint and the theft of ammunition from the PSNI Steeple complex an update was provided on correspondence received on the issues, how same had been handled and the intention to review the Board's records retrieval and follow-up systems. Members were also advised the Office of the Police Ombudsman NI (OPONI) will also carry out a review of the PSNI handling arrangements for the correspondence in this case.
- Legal advice from the Crown Solicitors Officer (CSO) on the roles and responsibilities of the Board's PPIB Directorate and the potential to move the management of the IHR/IOD processes from the Board to PSNI. The legal advice confirms that significant regulatory amendments would be required to enable a transfer of the roles and responsibilities to the Chief Constable and there is currently no scope for delegation.
- Members were advised that work will continue with PSNI to improve the process and Members **NOTED** correspondence from PSNI to the Board Chair on suggestions to tighten medical guidance to SMPs/ IMRs.
- Following discussion, it was agreed to request a meeting with the Barrister who provided the legal advice, along with CSO and the PSNI legal advisor. **(AP11)**
- In relation to a complaint to the Board regarding an Ill Health retirement payment to a former Officer and alleged abuse of the IHR system, a Board response was issued stating that no comment will be issued. Members were advised that
following receipt of legal advice and engagement with legal representatives of the individual concerned the complaint will be handled in accordance with the legal advice received, and if necessary, considered further by the Board's Resources Committee. Additionally,

due to the sensitive nature of this complaint Members were reminded of the need not to make any comments to the media on this matter.

- The Board has recently achieved an internationally recognised reaccreditation from Investors In People (IIP) with Members noting the impressive 76% staff response rate from to the IIP survey in October 2025.

In relation to correspondence the Chief Executive highlighted the following items:

- Anonymous correspondence received outlining the experiences of officers from the CNR community. As the correspondence was general in nature and the identity of the sender could not be established to determine geographical or chronological context, it is difficult to progress the issues raised. PSNI response has been shared with members and notes general work to address equality, diversity and inclusion issues.
- Correspondence to the Deputy Chief Constable following a visit by the Chair, Vice-Chair and Chief Executive to officers and staff in the Fermanagh & Omagh district as part of planned engagements with District Commanders. Positive feedback from the visit included strong support from Occupational Health & Wellbeing within PSNI, and an issue was raised regarding student officers and probationers being advised that they will not be posted to their home area, despite local postings often supporting stronger community engagement and improved policing outcomes.
- Correspondence received by some Members detailing allegations against PSNI, and a response has been issued on behalf of Members with an encouragement that the correspondent continues to engage with

OPONI. Views have also been sought from the Chief Constable and a response is awaited.

- Correspondence from ACC Jones in respect of Patten Recommendation 65 and the annual opinion of the assessment that NI has not yet reached the peaceful environment envisioned by Patten to fulfil the objective of moving towards a routinely unarmed police service.
- Correspondence from DOJ to all accounting officers in relation to budget challenges and implications of any overspend on future funding in the multi-year budget period.
- Correspondence received regarding a complaint about PSNI handling of an FOI request and other issues, not previously brought to the Board due to an administrative oversight.

Members were advised that as the response did not address the question of PSNI handling of FOI requests and information provided to Information Commissioner's Office, it was agreed that a response to this issue should be obtained for the next Board meeting in March 2026.

(AP12)

- Correspondence from the NI Assembly Justice Committee seeking the Board's views on the draft budget and a response is being considered by Officials.
- Correspondence to PSNI outlining the Scheme Manager and Police Pension Board Chairs disappointment that the PSNI Pension Administrator and IT department were unable to meet the extended Dashboard connection deadline for the PSNI Pension Scheme.

Members raised the following matters:

- Further details requested on the grievance highlighted as part of the senior officer matters update.
- The Vice-Chair welcomed the progress made in developing the new PSNI Code of Ethics, particularly the introduction of a Duty of Candour article. This represents a substantial strengthening of the Code and marks the PSNI as the first public body in the UK to incorporate such a provision.
- On the Board's management accounts further detail was requested on the projected year-end financial position, and Members were advised that latest figures will be shared with the Board's Resources Committee.
- Status of funding in respect of PSNI Holiday pay given the communication from DOJ that any funding for Holiday pay will be managed centrally by the NI Executive.
Members were advised that in relation to budget planning the PSNI will present a Resource plan to the Board's Resources Committee when the budget has been confirmed.
- The Vice-Chair offered congratulations to Board officials on achieving reaccreditation from 'Investors In People' following the results of the IIP survey.

Members **NOTED** the updates provided.

9.1 International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) 2026

The Chief Executive advised that a paper will be brought to the Board to outline key learnings from IACP 2025, with feedback from all those who attended including Board officials, DOJ, and PSNI.

Members were advised that IACP 2026 would offer a valuable opportunity for operational officers and staff to participate and showcase ongoing work, and that early planning had considered attendance as a means of further engaging on policing in Northern Ireland and the associated accountability mechanisms. However, in the context of budget challenges across the entire Justice sector the Chief Executive advised there will not be a proposal to attend the conference again in 2026, and that PSNI may consider sending operational officers with a final decision yet to be taken.

Following discussion Members **AGREED** with this approach.

10. PRIVATE SESSION WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE AND PSNI SERVICE EXECUTIVE TEAM

The Chair welcomed Members to the private session and invited any remaining questions from Members which had not been asked in this morning's session.

A Member noted reports indicating a potential compensation figure of £7.5k per PSNI Officer affected by the data breach. The Member asked whether this represents a final settlement offer, or if claimants may seek additional compensation beyond this amount. The Member also asked whether the total provision for the claim includes associated legal costs.

The Chief Constable confirmed that the £7.5k payment is a universal offer to all PSNI officers. He noted that, following discussions with the Head of Legal, only in exceptional circumstances would a higher amount be considered, and any officer seeking an increased award would be required to justify their claim.

The PSNI confirmed that approximately 9,500 individuals were affected by the data breach. The business case includes provision for individuals who may choose to pursue separate legal actions seeking additional compensation. The standard compensation for general damages is £7,500, plus £1,000 (ex. VAT)

for legal costs. Any claimant seeking compensation above this universal amount must provide documented justification for the higher award.

A Member noted that, in relation to the PSNI data breach compensation process, there are four lead cases. If these proceed separately, clarification was sought on the potential financial implications for PSNI beyond the universal £7,500 offer.

The Chief Constable advised that he had a positive meeting with NIPSA and emphasised that allowing exceptions to go unchallenged increases the risk of further claims. He confirmed that any requests for compensation above the universal amount would be rigorously challenged. The Board Chair thanked the Chief Constable and his leadership team for their responses and they left the meeting.

11. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

The Communications Manager asked Members to **NOTE** the date for the Chair, Vice-Chair and Chief Executive to attend the NI Affairs Committee on the Inquiry into Policing and Security in Northern Ireland.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next full Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 5 March 2026 at 9.30am in James House.

The meeting closed at 4.10pm.

Strategic Planning & Governance
February 2026

Chair