

**NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE HELD  
4<sup>th</sup> December 2025 at 9:30am**

<b>PRESENT:</b>		Mr Gerry Kelly, Chair Mr Les Allamby, Vice Chair Mr Frank McManus* Ms Cheryl Brownlee Mr Thomas O'Reilly (2) Mr Colin McGrath Ms Deirdre Hargey Mr Patrick Nelson Mr Peter Osborne
<b>EX-OFFICIO MEMBER IN ATTENDANCE</b>		N/A
<b>POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	(1) (1) (1) (1)	ACC ACC Davy Beck Det Chief Superintendent Zoe McKee PSNI Head of Strategic Performance and Insight NISRA Principal Statistician
<b>OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:</b>		Mr Adrian McNamee, Director of Performance Mr John Wadham, Human Rights Advisor, 6 Officials

(1) Present to Item 6.1

(2) Present to Item 6.4

\*Attended via video conferencing

## 1. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

The Committee agreed the agenda for the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Deirdre Hargey to her first Performance Committee meeting and thanked Cathal Boylan for his contribution to the Board. The Chair also acknowledged that it is John Wadham's final Committee meeting and thanked him for his contribution to the Performance Committee over the past seven years and wished him all the best for his future retirement.

The Chair asked Members to advise of any items they wished to raise at Item 9 under "Any Other Business". No items were raised.

## 2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interests were declared.

## 3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee considered the draft minutes of the Performance Committee meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

It was **AGREED:-**

That Minutes of the Performance Committee meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025 were agreed.

#### **4. UPDATE ON ACTION LOG**

The Director of Performance provided an update on the open actions listed on the Action Log.

The Director provided an update on AP3 from the meeting held on 11 September 2025 - Human Rights Advisor to respond to the letter from IPCO. Letter issued from HRA on 15<sup>th</sup> September. The Board is currently awaiting a response.

The Director provided an update on AP4 from the meeting held on 11 September 2025. Officials to request PEELER guidance from ACC Henderson - Officials requested this information on 17<sup>th</sup> September. PSNI has provided the Guidance and its is included at Item 4.1. Members were content with this response and this action is now closed.

The Director provided an update on AP1 from the meeting held on 13 November 2025 - Chair to respond to ACC Beck letter of 7th November on CHIS/VAWG and for the Human Rights Advisor to follow up directly with ACC Beck. The letter issued on 14th November to ACC Beck. The Human Rights Advisor advised that he has followed up directly with ACC Beck who has confirmed that the Human Rights Advisor will get redacted access to the materials on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2025. Members were content with this response and this action is now closed.

The Director provided an update on AP2 from the meeting held on 13 November 2025 - Members to provide officials with any further areas for consideration to be included in the 3 Year Programme of Work. Members were content to close this action.

## **5. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS**

The Director of Performance advised Members that an update has been received from PSNI on Recommendation 7 of the Children and Young People's report. This was not expected at this time, and it is expected that this will form part of the PSNI's 12 month response to this report that is due in January 2026. The Chair confirmed that there were no other items of business.

## **6. ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

### **6.1 Policing Plan Indicator 1.1 The Effectiveness in Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls**

A Board Official informed the Committee that Indicator 1.1 monitors the performance of the PSNI in regard to its *Effectiveness in Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls* (VAWG) and that progress is measured through the impacts identified within the Policing Plan 2025 to 2030.

A Board Official referred to the update provided by the PSNI, advising that the VAWG offences are trending downwards in recent years. Furthermore, the percentage of victim-based crime VAWG offences is also trending downwards, although the current 365-day figure has increased slightly. Members were informed that the attrition rate has lowered in recent years, however, a contributing factor will be the number of cases yet to conclude their journey through the judicial process and are yet to 'be assigned an outcome'. The Official stated that despite this progress, VAWG still accounts for 50.4% of all violence against the person and sexual offences, showing the scale of the challenge. Domestic-related VAWG remains high at 45.8% of all VAWG offences, with little change over five years.

Members were informed that the current definition of VAWG (violence against the person or sexual offence with a female/transgender victim) is under review for consistency with national standards. The Official advised that there remains a lack of available crime data by gender in England and Wales which limits UK-wide comparisons. However, the report card does provide statistics on the average annual rate of female homicide per 100,000 female population in the last 10 years across European countries, stating Northern Ireland is ranked 14th out of the 35 countries, slightly better than England and Wales. The female murder rate in Northern Ireland remains relatively stable at 5.44.

A Board Official advised Members they were provided feedback from the recent Conversations with Purpose event which is a new initiative involving direct, purposeful and strategic engagement sessions with key stakeholders and representative groups and that these thematic events are linked to specific indicators within the policing plan.

The Chairperson welcomed PSNI ACC Beck, Detective Chief Superintendent McKee and colleagues to the meeting. He invited them to brief Members on the work relating to Indicator 1.1 '*The Effectiveness in Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls*'.

PSNI began by informing Members that VAWG offences have reduced by 4% in the 365 days to 1st November 2025, totalling 22,082 crimes, down by 928 from the previous year. This marks a 9.7% reduction against the five-year average, with the victim attrition rate at its lowest in five years. PSNI provided statistics in relation to who the perpetrators are - 28% are acquaintances, 27% are intimate partners, 20% are family members and 11% are strangers. 57% are happening in private and 25% in public space. 46% of VAWG has a domestic motivation and VAWG constitutes half of all violent crime.

PSNI advised that there is an assertion, based on a misinterpretation of statistical data, that Northern Ireland is the most dangerous place in Europe for women. This claim arose from a Eurostat (European Statistics Agency) error in uploading the data for 2017, which incorrectly inflated Northern Ireland's rate of female homicide. This data was only based on a single year of data from 2017 when NI had one of the highest rates of female homicide, however, in other years, rates were some of the lowest in Europe, such as 2016.

Data from PSNI shows that, over the past 25 years, the level of female homicide has ranged between 2 and 9. The rate of female homicide has remained stable at around 0.6 per 100,000 female population which matches the UN estimate and is below England and Wales.

Members engaged in discussion regarding the following areas with the PSNI officers:

- A Member sought further information on how PSNI have informed the public and stakeholders of the incorrect statistical data as it is still being used by the media;
- A Member queried what PSNI are doing to make victims feel they will be taken seriously when reporting incidents;
- A Member queried why only four Stalking Prevention Orders (SPOs) have been granted over a two-year period and can it be compared with complaints and the number requested;
- A Member asked about the timeline in relation to the VAWG review by Rachel Langdale;
- A Member asked for more information on the VAWG definition including engagement with the Executive and South of Ireland, what data will be used going forward and how it will be used to stop misinterpretation;

- A Member referred to the homicide statistics presented and if PSNI had statistics on comparisons with Europe;
- A Member stated that while there is a high focus on victims and victims support, and rightly so, should there be more focus on perpetrators, what work is being done to identify and challenge behaviours both with the public and internally and what is out there in regards to perpetrators behaviours and how to challenge this;
- A Member spoke of the positive feedback in relation to the Conversations with a Purpose event in Derry/Londonderry including the use of victim hubs such as the Foyle Justice Centre. They highlighted other common topics raised and discussed training and PSNI not having the resources to follow up with victims in a timely manner. The Member queried if victim hubs could be rolled out in other areas, if the training delivered to officers and staff regarding VAWG involve representative groups and/or lived experiences of victims and the need for timely updates for victims;
- A Member referred to the 400 repeat perpetrators and sought clarity on how PSNI manage the process of repeat offenders while supporting repeat victims and if PSNI are making enough use of Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPOs) and Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPNs); and
- A Member queried what impact resourcing and being 1,000 officers short will have in relation to the attrition rate.

The PSNI provided the following responses to Members: -

- In relation to the incorrect statistical data that was provided PSNI have put the corrected data online. PSNI advised that they wanted to explain to the Board where the figure originated from and what they would be doing going forward which includes providing evidence to the

Justice Minister and contacting stakeholders as going forward it is critical that incorrect data is challenged;

- The PSNI informed Members that there is a real challenge with victims coming forward and advised of the vital work that is happening with stakeholders such as Women's Aid, White Ribbon etc to remove as many barriers as possible for the victim. PSNI also have consistent messaging and use a trauma-based approach and how they can use the Serious Sexual Assault Strategy to reduce attrition and track reporting;
- The PSNI stated that there are in the region of 20 SPOs at various stages in the process and at the peak it was around 30. This is a very complex area and there are significant challenges in preparing these. There has been a reduction of 200 stalking offences and the legislation is only 2 years old. PSNI advised that there may be more serious elements involved in these cases including bail conditions, non-molestation orders etc and these are weighted up to see if they are more tangible to be used quicker. HMIC have done a national review and are finding the same issues but there is definitely a willingness to increase the number of 4. PSNI are building this into the internal training for officers and DoJ are also looking at legislative changes that empowers Public Prosecution Service (PPS) to apply for an SPO at order of conviction or acquittal;
- In relation to the Rachel Langdale report, PSNI advised that the initial draft is completed and it is at the accuracy fact checking stage. The final report will be ready by early January, and her report will be utilised to refresh and update the VAWG action plan;
- With regards to VAWG definition PSNI advised that the current definition needs refined as it is too broad and they believe the time has come to refine it and debate what offence types should be included. One issue is whether VAWG should be violence against children which would capture young males. The PSNI would be willing to work with

the Committee on a new definition in due course and they are working with the National Centre for Public Protection;

- In relation to where Northern Ireland sits in comparison to Europe, there are no comparative figures for Domestic Abuse available. However, the Annual Domestic Abuse Trends Report 2024/25 which was published on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025 provides comparative figures for England and Wales. While Northern Ireland follows the same Home Office counting rules as England and Wales a key difference is that England and Wales exclude types of domestic abuse experienced by people aged 16 under years;
- The PSNI stated that the ongoing Bystander and Power to Change campaigns have received a lot of traction both internally and externally. There is also the Pursue element of the VAWG action plan and Operation Vigilant regarding the nighttime economy. This helps identify what perpetrator behaviours are and encourages calling it out. There has been internal work ongoing such as vetting, statement of intent, Professional Standards training at the start of an officer's career and mandatory eLearning within the force. PSNI stated that the same focus needs to be on perpetrators as well as repeat offenders and the work between Serious Sexual assault team and the PPS in identifying these quickly and processing through the courts in a timely manner;
- The PSNI informed Members that they would welcome any further rollout of Hubs but that they are resource intensive and sits outside of the PSNI's remit. This was also picked up by the Rachel Langsdale review. PSNI reference the Barnabus Model, included in the Gillen Report, that provides children and young people across Scotland with access to trauma-informed recovery, support and justice. PSNI advised Members that in some cases victims can receive updates online, the challenges surrounding Neighbourhood Policing Teams resources and the collaboration with a range of partners involved in the internal training of officers such as Women's Aid and White Ribbon etc

which gives the victim a voice. 9,000 training places have been provided in recent years with a trauma informed approach. There has been 84 arrests per month for Domestic Abuse and 70 arrests per month for non fatal strangulation;

- In relation to repeat victims and offenders, PSNI informed Members that two or more instances constitutes as a repeat victim with indications being risk and threat to harm. The vast majority of these would involve 2 offences and around 20 in the 20 plus offences category. PSNI have a dedicated response to high risk victims with applications such as TECH SAFE and the devising of an automatic emergency tool. This is a similar picture with repeat offenders and higher elements should be reduced first so identification can happen earlier. PSNI informed members that DAPOs and DAPNs can be labour intensive and more work is required around the utilisation of these, that they are working with DoJ to formalise the use of these to ensure proper outcomes in an effective and cost effective way that their vision to commit to a pilot scheme is progressing well and should be ready early 2026. PSNI advised members that operational wise certain sexual and violent offenders repeat offenders automatically fall under Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland (PANNI); and
- In relation to resourcing, PSNI informed Members and that the attrition rate is steady, that they are under resourced by 200 staff in Public Protection and 305 staff across the overall crime department. PSNI advised that they are committed to investigating all these crimes. The complexity of cases can be challenging to investigate, and the horrendous nature of these crimes is having an impact on the officers investigating them. They are trying to be innovative and are working on streamlining cases with the use of AI etc, the collaborative work in aligning the Serious Sexual Offences Strategy with the Public Prosecution Branch (PPB), Public Prosecution Service (PPS) and the entire Local Policing Team (LPT).

The Chairperson thanked the PSNI for their attendance and briefing and they left the meeting.

## **6.2 Code of Ethics – Update on Consultation**

The Director of Performance advised Members that the draft Code of Ethics went out to public consultation on 18 August 2025 and closed on 10 November 2025. The Board held a public consultation event on 29 October 2025 in James House. At the close of the consultation the Board had received 18 responses. Members were provided with an update on the analysis of those replies and informed of next steps for consideration in finalising the draft Code of Ethics for approval by the Board. Officials recommended to Members reconvening the Working Group that compiled the draft Code of Ethics earlier in the year to consider the responses that have been received in the consultation process and whether any further changes should be made to the current draft. Officials also recommended inviting the Deputy Chief Constable and the Head of Professional Standards Department to the Working Group meeting to represent the Chief Constable at the discussion.

Members engaged in discussion:

- The next steps in the process;
- A Member highlighted that the feedback received was largely positive and reflected on the amount of work that was involved to get the process to this stage; and
- A Member highlighted that KC John Beggs was very complimentary regarding the revised draft document.

Following discussions it was:-

## **AGREED**

The Code of Ethics Working Group should reconvene, along with representatives of the Chief Constable to consider the consultation responses and prepare a final Draft Code of Ethics 2026 which will be tabled at the February 2026 Performance Committee for approval.

### **6.3 Draft Terms of Reference - Community Background Monitoring Research**

The Director of Performance reminded Members that the Committee discussed a first draft Terms of Reference at its September meeting and requested that officials arrange for updates on the issue from both PSNI and the Independent Reviewer of JSA. Both these updates were provided at the November 2025 Performance Committee meeting. Taking into consideration the updates provided at November Committee, officials have further developed the draft Terms of Reference for further discussion. Members were informed that officials have been working with both Ulster University and Queen's University to establish a Policing Research Partnership. Members were also informed that the Partnership Committee is undertaking the Advocacy research, and the Terms of Reference has been agreed with the Research Partnership.

Members engaged in discussions around minor wording changes to the draft Terms of Reference. Officials recorded Members suggested amendments and

Following discussions it was:-

## **AGREED**

Officials to write to CC to inform him of the agreed Terms of Reference in relation to Community background Monitoring. **(AP1)**

#### **6.4 Human Rights Advisor's Update**

The Human Rights Advisor provided Members with an overview of areas within his current work programme during the period November 2025 including:

- The McCullough Review: ACC Crime and assurance review;
- CHIS and domestic violence discussions;
- Consideration of Board's role with MI5 and relevant national security issues;
- JSA Reviewer;
- Briefing Board Members on covert surveillance;
- ICVs and access to custody records (with PSNI lawyers); and
- TACT v PACE (the PSNI are making further changes to its guidance following the Chair's recent letter and will provide a final text for reference once completed).

The Human Rights Advisor also outlined his work plan for December 2025.

The Director of Performance updated Members on the new Human Rights Advisors Developed Vetting timelines and various options.

Following discussions it was:-

#### **NOTED**

Members were content with the Human Rights Advisors Update Report and the remaining schedule of work for December 2025.

It was:-

**AGREED**

Officials to seek Human Resources advice on status of the Human Rights candidate in the competition. **(AP2)**

### **6.5 DoJ Misconduct Regulations - Update**

The Performance Manager informed Members that over the last three years the Board has discussed and identified a number of changes to the current police officer misconduct regulations. In May 2024, the Board participated in a process where initial stakeholders were invited to give their views on the issues being considered. During that exercise views were sought on seven proposals, all of which require legislative change. After reviewing the responses, in September 2025, the Department launched a formal stakeholder consultation on a total of nineteen proposals for reform, which incorporated the original seven and an additional twelve proposals from the PSNI. The Minister states that after considering all responses to the consultation that 18 out of the 19 proposals supported by the Board were accepted. The proposal which wasn't accepted was in relation to Misconduct hearings in public which the Minister has stated will be reconsidered at a more appropriate time.

Members engaged in discussions around timeframes of the introduction of these legislative proposals and

Following discussions it was:-

**AGREED**

Officials to seek clarification on time frame of the introduction of legislative proposals 4 – 19 relating to Police Officer Misconduct Matters. **(AP3)**

**7. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF CONSTABLE**

**7.1** A Member stated they will submit a question to the Chief Constable in relation to femicide rates in Northern Ireland.

**8. COMMUNICATION ISSUES**

No other communication issues were identified.

**9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No items were identified.

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next Performance Committee meeting would take place on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at 9:30am.

Meeting closed at 12.49pm.

**PERFORMANCE DIRECTORATE**

**4<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

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**Chairperson**