



Police Service
of Northern Ireland

Accountability Report

Presented at Policing Board Meeting:

1 October 2026



**we care
we listen
we act**

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Chief Constable's Foreword



In September, the Police Service joined the Department of Justice and The Executive Office in launching the second phase of the Power to Change campaign, focusing on online misogyny and the attitudes and behaviours that can contribute to harm.

Policing has an important role when behaviour becomes criminal, but we also need to think about what happens before that point. The words we use, the jokes we tolerate, what we like and share online and what we allow to go unchallenged can all contribute to an environment in which harmful attitudes and behaviours become normalised.

This phase of Power to Change focuses particularly on online misogyny and encourages young men and boys to reflect on, question and challenge the attitudes and behaviours they encounter online. During 2025/26, there were 1,971 reports of online stalking and harassment, an increase of 12%; 591 reports of online blackmail, an increase of 11%; and 110 reports involving the sharing of indecent images or so called revenge pornography, an increase of 21%. Behind each of these figures is a person who has experienced behaviour which can have a profound impact on their life. Where that behaviour crosses the line into criminality, we will act. I would encourage anyone who experiences this type of behaviour to report it

to us. Please have the confidence to come forward and allow us to help you.

These messages were brought to life at the launch event. I was particularly struck by the courage of Jodie Morrow, who spoke about her experience of online stalking and harassment and the profound impact it had on her life. Her contribution reinforced the campaign's central message that online words and actions can have serious offline consequences. I was also impressed by the work of the Walkie Talkie Girlies Society and its Project Pink initiative, which brings students and the wider community together in solidarity against violence against women and girls. Their message was clear: women's safety cannot be left to women alone; it is a shared responsibility, and small acts of respect and solidarity can make a real difference.

Of course, if we are asking others to challenge misogyny and inappropriate behaviour, we must be prepared to do the same within our own organisation. This is an issue we have tirelessly pursued through the Rachel Langdale KC review, with a clear organisational focus on not accepting unacceptable behaviour.

In September, I issued a public apology on behalf of the Police Service following the Employment Tribunal judgment concerning

former Chief Inspector Ursula Merrick. The Tribunal found that the Police Service had acted unlawfully on the grounds of sex discrimination, whistleblowing detriment and disability discrimination. I recognise the significant personal impact these matters have had on Ursula and the fact that, when she raised concerns, our internal processes did not identify and address what was happening. That should not have happened.

We must also reflect carefully on the wider learning from this, including how our internal processes respond when concerns are raised. I have spoken previously about my determination to better understand and address sexism and misogyny within the Police Service. We rightly expect high standards from our officers and staff and the overwhelming majority demonstrate those standards every day. Where behaviour falls short, however, we will confront it. In recent years, we have exited a number of people from the organisation for falling below the standards required of those who serve within it.

Just as importantly, people must feel able to speak up when something is wrong. They need to know that concerns will be taken seriously, that inappropriate behaviour will be challenged and that they will be supported when they raise legitimate concerns.

There is a clear connection between what we ask of the public through the Power to Change campaign and what we expect of ourselves. We must continue to listen, learn and demonstrate through our actions the standards we expect of others.

Two significant developments in September again highlighted the importance of accountability and learning.

The conclusion of the inquest into the tragic death of Noah Donohoe brought into sharp focus the devastating loss experienced by Noah's family and those who loved him. The jury found that Noah died before he was reported missing to police and that no police errors or inaction contributed to his death. It did, however, identify

a number of subsequent failings in the police investigation which impacted upon its ability to reach conclusions on aspects of the circumstances surrounding what happened to Noah.

We will always carefully note such findings and will consider and apply the learning identified through the inquest process. Where lessons are identified to improve our practice, we will ensure that they are. I recognise that no process can diminish the profound loss experienced by Noah's family and friends, and my thoughts remain with them. My heart goes out to Noah's mum and loved ones.

The publication of the Robert Hamill Inquiry Report in September brought renewed focus to Robert's murder in Portadown in 1997, and identified serious and unacceptable failings in the policing response and subsequent investigation.

The Inquiry identified failings in the initial policing response and subsequent investigation, including the debriefing of officers, the recording and pursuit of information, investigative direction and oversight, and the handling of the allegation concerning the conduct of a police officer. These were serious matters and the Inquiry concluded that failures obstructed the murder investigation. During my time in charge of Operation Kenova I met panel members and took time to understand the issues that were examined. Foremost with the publication of this long overdue report is that my thoughts are with Robert's family.

Policing in Northern Ireland has changed fundamentally in the almost three decades since Robert's murder. However, neither the passage of time nor organisational change diminishes the gravity of those findings or our responsibility to learn from them.

We will carefully assess the Inquiry's findings and recommendations against our current policies, training, governance and assurance arrangements. The Inquiry is clear that the

standards expected of policing at the time were not met. Where its findings identify further learning for us, we will act upon it. This is an important part of maintaining public confidence in policing.

On Sunday 27 September, it was our privilege to host National Police Memorial Day in Belfast, welcoming families and colleagues from across the United Kingdom to remember police officers who have lost their lives in the course of their duties. This year's service felt particularly poignant following the deaths in August of Police Constables Matthew Blades and Tom Clough of Cleveland Police, who lost their lives while on duty. Their deaths were felt across the policing family and our thoughts remain with their families, friends and colleagues.

Northern Ireland understands only too well the sacrifice made by police officers and their families. National Police Memorial Day provided an important opportunity for us to come together, to remember those colleagues who went to work to serve their communities and did not return home, and to demonstrate to their families that their service and sacrifice will not be forgotten. It was a privilege to welcome the wider policing family to Belfast and to join them in remembering all those who have served and sacrificed.

Looking to the wider challenges facing the Police Service, I remain deeply concerned about our financial position. We are now half way through the financial year and neither the Board nor the PSNI has an agreed budget. Rather, we are operating with an 'indicative allocation', which is subject to change. This is not a credible position by any standard and we hope that the recent talks between our new Secretary of State and the NI Executive can satisfactorily resolve the funding deadlock sooner rather than later. In the interim, the police budget is in a precarious position with the projected funding gap for this year now estimated at £70m. This equates to around 1,200 police officer posts, at a time when we have secured agreement from the Executive for our Workforce Recovery Plan aimed at bolstering officer numbers.

I cannot contemplate such a scenario or the impact this would have on the Service, but rather remain committed to restoring the Service to adequate levels. The gap is a direct consequence of chronic underfunding since devolution and effectively means that PSNI is continuing to run with an operating deficit. In recent years, this deficit has been resolved by in-year allocations, but these have not been reflected in adjustments to subsequent baseline budgets.

Having carefully considered our options with my Senior Team, we are determined to lobby for increased funding to support headcount, improve the service we provide and put PSNI on a sustainable footing. In addition, we will make every effort to secure separate funding specifically to deal with the financial burden of legacy.

Against this backdrop, I have shared our updated Resource Plan with the Board, and I am asking for the Board's support and for it to advocate alongside us in securing a better financial settlement for policing. In last month's accountability report I updated the Board that the procurement process for an independent strategic partner to undertake a Strategic Review of the Police Service's resourcing and operating model was live. I can now confirm that we have formally appointed a strategic partner to undertake this significant work. Our immediate priority is to formally initiate the Review and agree a programme of engagement with the strategic partner, the Board and other key stakeholders. These perspectives will be central to developing a shared vision for the future of policing in Northern Ireland. I am of the view that this work will be crucial in halting the long term erosion of policing capacity in Northern Ireland and establishing, on an independent and evidence based footing, the resourcing that PSNI actually needs. In parallel, we must continue to take every opportunity to recruit and retain the people needed to sustain the service.

On 12 October, we will launch our next student officer recruitment campaign, which will remain open until 30 November. I want to encourage people from all backgrounds and all communities across Northern Ireland to consider a career in policing. We want the very best people to join us, and I want a Police Service that reflects the communities we serve. The campaign is timed to occur between the release of Series 4 of Blue Lights on 29th September and the broadcast of Series 2 of Peelers: the PSNI for Real, in late October.

The various plot lines in the Blue Lights drama are based on actual events that have occurred in the PSNI, which is a sobering reality of policing in Northern Ireland. The Peelers 'fly on the wall' documentary shows the true life drama and complex challenges that our front line officers' bravery encounter every day. I would encourage people from all walks of life to consider the incredible and life changing profession of policing as a career – have you got what it takes? Reach out to find out. Policing is the most rewarding public service anyone can do, come and help us keep society safe and make a positive difference to Northern Ireland.

We are reminded of how important policing is for our communities as we mark the 25th anniversary of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. The ambition established through the Patten Report was for a Police Service capable of securing the confidence and support of the community as a whole, with leaders across society having an important role in encouraging people from their communities to consider policing as a career. Earlier this year, the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee reinforced that message, making clear that encouraging representative recruitment is not solely a policing responsibility, it is incumbent on all of us to support policing.

As we launch this latest campaign, I therefore ask political, community, faith, education, sporting and other civic leaders across Northern Ireland to support it and encourage people from every background to consider a career in policing. A representative Police Service,

drawing on the experiences and perspectives of the communities it serves, strengthens public confidence and our ability to respond to the needs of people across Northern Ireland. And to anyone considering their own future, policing offers an opportunity to make a real difference to people's lives and to play an important role in the future of policing. Policing is vocational, it isn't just a job.

Ultimately, recruiting and retaining the people we need is about ensuring that we have the capacity and capability to deliver the policing service our communities deserve. The operational activity detailed throughout this month's report demonstrates the breadth of the demand our officers and staff continue to meet. During the month, this has included operations to disrupt organised drug criminality, alongside arrests, charges and the seizure of suspected controlled drugs and criminal assets. Across Northern Ireland, colleagues have progressed investigations into serious violence, domestic and sexual offending, child protection and exploitation, while providing lifesaving intervention and compassionate support to people in acute crisis and to their families.

These examples provide only a snapshot of the work taking place across Northern Ireland every day. Behind them are officers and staff working hard to protect vulnerable people, investigate crime, support victims and keep communities safe, often in difficult circumstances.

I remain extremely grateful for their continued professionalism and commitment. Despite the challenges facing the Police Service, our focus remains on improving the service we provide and delivering the effective and professional policing that the people of Northern Ireland rightly expect.



Jon Boutcher QPM
Chief Constable
Police Service of Northern Ireland

Our Performance

The information in this section is extracted from our Official Statistics published reports. The full reports can be accessed via the following link. <https://www.psnl.police.uk/about-us/our-publications-and-reports/official-statistics>.

Police Recorded Crime in Northern Ireland

In the 12 months from 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026:

- There were 94,334 crimes recorded in Northern Ireland, a decrease of 610 (-0.6%) on the previous 12 months.
- There were 49 police recorded crimes per 1,000 population¹, the same as in the previous 12 month period.
- Lower crime levels were recorded in violence without injury (-677), violence with injury (-595), theft offences (excluding burglary) (-320), sexual offences (-76), burglary (-75), criminal damage (-74), drug offences (-45) and public order offences (-42). Higher crime levels were recorded in stalking and harassment (+832), possession of weapons (+131), miscellaneous crimes against society (+100) and robbery (+53).
- A clarification issued in the Home Office Counting Rules in April 2025 has contributed to an increase in Business robbery offences of 51.4% (+54 offences).
- All policing districts experienced a lower level of crime with the exception of Lisburn & Castlereagh City, Ards and North Down, Belfast City and Causeway Coast and Glens.
- Lower crime levels were seen in violence against the person. The largest decrease was in violence without injury, with a smaller

decrease seen in violence with injury and an increase in stalking and harassment.

- Lower crime levels were also seen across sexual offences, burglary, theft, criminal damage, public order and drug offences.
- Higher crime levels were seen in robbery, possession of weapons offences and miscellaneous crimes against society.

Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents

In the 12 months from 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026:

- There were 44,552 anti-social behaviour incidents in Northern Ireland, a decrease of 543 (-1.2%) on the previous 12 months. This continues to be one of the lowest 12 month figures since the data series began in 2006/07.
- Between September 2025 and August 2026, seven of the months recorded lower levels of anti-social behaviour when compared with the same month in the previous year. Higher levels were recorded in January, February, May, June and July 2026.
- When comparing the current and previous 12 months, seven policing districts showed lower levels of anti-social behaviour. Ten policing districts showed lower levels in August 2026 compared with July 2026.
- Between September 2025 and August 2026, each of the four months from September to December 2025 recorded the lowest levels of anti-social behaviour for those months since the start of the data series in April 2006. Of

¹Crime per 1,000 population based on mid-year population estimate of 1,927,855 for 2024, the latest mid-year estimate available at time of compilation. [Mid-year population estimates are available from the NISRA website \(opens in a new window\)](#).

the remaining months, April 2026 recorded the second lowest level in the data series, while January, February, March, June and August 2026 recorded the third lowest levels.

- The latest month (August 2026) was 573 incidents lower than July 2026. Levels in August have been lower than those in July in each year since 2017, with the exception of 2022.

Domestic Abuse Incidents and Crimes

In the 12 months from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026:

- There were 31,961 domestic abuse incidents recorded, showing an increase of 2,236 (7.5%) on the previous 12 months.
- The number of domestic abuse crimes recorded by the police rose to 18,904, an increase of 560 (3.1%) on the previous 12 months.
- There were 17 domestic abuse incidents and 10 domestic abuse crimes per 1,000 population², compared with 15 domestic abuse incidents and 10 domestic abuse crimes recorded during the previous 12 months.
- When comparing the current and previous 12 months, all eleven policing districts showed an increase in the number of domestic abuse incidents, and seven policing districts showed an increase in the number of domestic abuse crimes. Belfast City policing district, which accounts for more than a quarter of all domestic abuse incidents and crimes recorded in Northern Ireland, showed a 0.3% increase in the number of incidents and a 1.7% decrease in the number of crimes.
- Levels rose across all major offence classifications, with the exception of breach of non-molestation orders.

- The largest volume increase in domestic abuse crimes was seen within Violence against the person which showed an increase of 307 (2.1 per cent). Within this classification, Violence with injury rose by 70 (1.6%), Violence without injury decreased by 211 (-3.2%), and Stalking and Harassment rose by 448 (12.9%). The largest percentage increase of 19.5 percent was within Sexual offences.
- The number of domestic abuse incidents was higher in each month when compared with the equivalent months in the previous 12 month period, with the exception of September 2025. The number of domestic abuse crimes shows a similar pattern when compared with the equivalent months in the previous 12 month period, with the exception of September and October 2025.

Domestic abuse homicide

In the 12 months from 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2026 there were five homicides with a domestic abuse motivation recorded by the police, seven lower than the level of domestic abuse homicides recorded in the previous 12 months³. Four of the victims were female and one was male, compared with nine female victims and three male victims during the previous 12 months. All five domestic abuse homicides were murder offences.

What is the difference between a domestic abuse incident and crime recorded by the police?

Not all domestic abuse incidents will result in the recording of a crime, as what has occurred in the incident may not be of the level of severity that would result in a domestic abuse crime being recorded. Some domestic abuse incidents will result in multiple crimes being recorded. Domestic abuse crimes are included in the incident count and the two should not be added together.

²Crime per 1,000 population based on mid-year population estimate of 1,927,855 for 2024, the latest mid-year estimate available at time of compilation. Mid-year population estimates are available from the NISRA website ([opens in a new window](#)).

³Homicide consists of the offences of murder, manslaughter, infanticide and corporate manslaughter.

Incidents and Crimes with a Hate Motivation

In the 12 months from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026:

- The number of incidents recorded rose across four of the six hate motivations (race, sectarian, disability and faith/religion) when compared with the previous 12 months.
- The number of incidents with a race motivation was the highest 12 month level since the recording of these motivations began in 2004/05.
- The number of crimes recorded increased across two of the six motivations (race and sectarian) when compared with the previous 12 months.
- The number of crimes with a race motivation was the highest 12 month level since the recording of these motivations began in 2004/05.
- Incidents and crimes with a race motivation showed the largest increases (503 more race incidents and 268 more race crimes).
- Incidents and crimes with a transgender identity motivation showed the largest decreases, with both measures falling by 7.

Overall summary of hate motivated incidents and crimes

	Incidents July 2024- June 2025	Incidents July 2025- June 2026	Incidents Change	Crimes July 2024- June 2025	Crimes July 2025- June 2026	Crimes Change
Race	2,058	2,561	503	1,347	1,615	268
Sexual Orientation	358	356	-2	214	212	-2
Sectarian	925	986	61	618	637	19
Disability	71	82	11	45	39	-6
Faith/Religion	93	99	6	71	69	-2
Transgender Identity	61	54	-7	35	28	-7

Police Recorded Security Situation

In the 12 months from 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026:

- There were no security related deaths, as was the case during the previous 12 months. The last such death occurred in January 2024, more than two and a half years ago.
- There were 16 bombing incidents, compared to 11 during the previous 12 months and 15 shooting incidents, compared to 11.
- There were 21 casualties of paramilitary style assaults, compared to 22 during the previous 12 months. The greatest number of assaults occurred in Belfast (6) followed by Ards and North Down (5) and Antrim and Newtownabbey (5). All 21 casualties were aged 18 years or older.
- There were 4 casualties of paramilitary style shootings, compared to 5 during the previous 12 months. There were 2 such attacks in Belfast, one in Ards and North Down and one in Derry City and Strabane. All 4 casualties were aged 18 years or older.
- There were 19 security related arrests under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000, compared to 23 during the previous 12 months.
- 5 persons were subsequently charged, the same number as during the previous 12 months.

Finds of Firearms, Explosives and

Ammunition: *These refer to the seizure or recovery of all illegal firearms, ammunition, explosives, rocket/mortar launchers, detonators and bomb making material/equipment. Replica/blank firing firearms, petrol bombs and petrol bomb making materials, grenades and munitions from World War 1 or World War 2 found on the beach or in attics etc. are not recorded as finds.*

Firearms Finds

There were 11 firearms found during the past 12 months, compared to 6 during the previous 12 months.

Explosive Finds

There were 0.55kg of explosives found during the past 12 months compared to 0.85kg during the previous 12 months.

Ammunition Finds

There were 439 rounds of ammunition found during the past 12 months compared to 432 rounds found in the previous 12 months.

Use of Stop and Search Powers

During the 12 months between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026:

- 20,445 persons were stopped and searched/questioned, 10% more than the previous 12 months (18,632).
- Non-counter-terrorism powers, including the Police and Criminal Evidence Order, the Misuse of Drugs Act and the Firearms Order, collectively accounted for 83% of all stop and search powers used while counter-terrorism powers, the Justice and Security Act and the Terrorism Act, collectively accounted for 17% of all powers used.
- There was an overall increase (9%) in the use of non-counter-terrorism powers compared to the previous 12 months; the use of the Misuse of Drugs Act increased by 10% (from 13,524 to 14,920), while the use of the Police and Criminal Evidence Order remained similar (2,371 compared to 2,373). The use of the Firearms Order and other less frequently used powers increased, albeit by smaller amounts.
- There was an overall increase (29%) in the use of counter-terrorism powers compared to the previous 12 months. The increase was driven by a rise in the use of the Terrorism Act, from 559 to 1,971 (253%). Conversely the use of the Justice and Security Act decreased by 26% (from 2,270 to 1,670).
- 23% of stops resulted in some form of outcome. The arrest rate was 7%.

- 8% (1,691) of those stopped were aged 17 and under. Of these, nearly two-thirds (64%) were stopped and searched under the Misuse of Drugs Act.
- 86% of those stopped were male, while 34% were aged 18 to 25.
- There were 11 persons stopped for every 1,000 people in Northern Ireland.

**alone or in combination with other powers.*

Motoring Offence Statistics for Northern Ireland

In the 12 months from 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2026:

- There were 38,636 detections for motoring offences in Northern Ireland, of which 97% were dealt with by means of a fixed penalty notice or referral for prosecution.
- The remaining 3% (1,257) resulted in the completion of a speed awareness or safer driver course.
- Total detections increased by 6% on the 36,474 detections recorded in the previous 12 months.

- Eleven of the 19 offence groups showed an increase in detections over the year, in particular the construction and use group which rose by 44% to 4,629, representing an increase of 1,409 detections.
- The largest offence group was insurance offences with 6,804 which, along with careless driving (4,692) and construction & use offences (4,629) accounted for 42% of the total detections.
- The highest speed detected by PSNI officers in the latest 12 months was 145mph, on the M1, Dungannon.
- Over the last 12 months:
 - The number of motoring offences detected increased by 6% to 38,636.
 - Offences referred for prosecution fell by 4%.
 - Endorsable fixed penalties increased by 11%, while non-endorsable offences increased by 48%.
 - Number of speed awareness courses increased by 13%.
 - Safer driver courses increased by 38%.

Number of motoring offences by disposal type, 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2026*

	1 August 2024 - 31 July 2025	1 August 2025 – 31 July 2026	Change over last 12 months	Percentage change over last 12 months
Endorsable Fixed Penalty	6,847	7,618	771	11
Non Endorsable Fixed Penalty	4,432	6,581	2,149	48
Referred for Prosecution	24,177	23,180	-997	-4
Speed Awareness Course	606	687	81	13
Safer Driver Course	412	570	158	38
Total	36,474	38,636	2,162	6

**Figures are provisional and subject to change.*

Safer driver courses were introduced in Northern Ireland in May 2023 as an alternative disposal to the new fixed penalty notice for careless driving. This report provides statistics on the number of motoring offences detected by police in Northern Ireland from 1st August 2025 to 31st July 2026. It does not include any detections by the NI Road Safety Partnership (NIRSP). It presents the most recent motoring offence statistics based on figures extracted on 21st September 2026. Referred for prosecution figures from 1st January 2025 onwards remain provisional and therefore subject to amendment, as do the remaining disposals for the 2026 period only.

Police Recorded Injury Road Traffic Collisions and Casualties

Between 1 January 2026 and 30 June 2026:

- There were 2,481 road traffic collisions recorded by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), compared with 2,396 between January and June 2025 – an increase of 85 collisions (3.5%).
- There were 36 fatalities, 531 people seriously injured and a further 3,209 people slightly injured.
- Seven out of the eleven districts showed an increase in their Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) casualties between January and June 2025 and this year to June. The largest increase in KSI casualties was in Belfast City district which recorded 22 additional KSIs compared to the same period in the previous year. In contrast, Lisburn and Castlereagh City district showed a decrease of 9 recorded KSI casualties over the same period.
- Derry City and Strabane was the only district to record zero road deaths between January and June 2026. Belfast City district had the most people seriously injured with 96 recorded during this period.
- Only one road user group showed a decrease in KSIs between January to June 2025 and January to June 2026, pedal cyclists KSIs decreased by 4.
- Single vehicle collisions resulted in 10 fatalities or 27.8% of all fatalities during January to June 2026. In the equivalent period of 2025 there were 7 single vehicle collision fatalities or 30.4% of all fatalities.
- The most common principal causation factors for KSI casualties during the reporting period were 'inattention or attention diverted' (85 KSI casualties), 'wrong course/position' (53) and 'impairment by drugs or alcohol - driver/ rider' (46).

Outcome 1

Victim Focused

A victim focused police service recognises that the impact of crime can be lasting, particularly for people who are vulnerable or have experienced abuse, violence or exploitation. It means responding with compassion and respect, taking concerns seriously, keeping people informed and working with partners to reduce the risk of further harm. This month, officers and staff have continued to protect people at risk of serious harm. From safeguarding children vulnerable to criminal exploitation and managing sexual offence risk, to progressing domestic abuse and serious violence investigations, the focus has been on early intervention, thorough investigation and support for victims. The Service has also worked with partners on campaigns addressing sexual violence, online misogyny and domestic abuse, while frontline officers responded to people in immediate crisis.

Safeguarding Children and Managing Sexual Offence Risk

Protecting children from sexual and criminal exploitation remains a priority. The Child Sexual Exploitation Team and Neighbourhood Policing Teams in Derry City and Strabane have piloted a Child Criminal Exploitation screening tool with the Education Authority. Queen's University Belfast and the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland are analysing the pilot data to inform the development of a Child Criminal Exploitation risk assessment and review model. The model is intended to support a more consistent approach to assessing risk and reviewing safeguarding arrangements.

On 11 September, the "New Directions in Response to Child Criminal Exploitation" conference was held at Ulster University, Belfast. Developed with colleagues from the National County Lines Co-ordination Centre and Ulster University, the event brought together practitioners, academics and voluntary sector organisations to consider research, policy and emerging practice in responding to child criminal exploitation in Northern Ireland and across the United Kingdom.

Alongside this preventative and partnership work, the Child Sexual Exploitation Team continued to investigate suspected online sexual offending against children. On 25 August, officers executed a search warrant at an address in Bangor as part of an investigation into the online purchasing of indecent images of children. A person has been arrested and devices were seized for examination.

On 1 September, a further search warrant was executed at an address in Dungannon. One person was arrested for drugs offences and a number of devices seized in connection with an investigation into alleged sexual communication with a child. They have been charged to Court in respect of the drug offences and released on bail for the sexual offences pending examination of the seized devices.

Public Protection Branch also continued to manage the risks posed by registered sexual offenders. On 1 September, officers acted on information concerning a managed registered sex offender. A device was seized and initial

examination identified evidence of indecent images of children, alongside evidence of an alleged breach of a Sexual Offences Prevention Order. The individual was arrested and charged in respect of the alleged order breach. Following liaison with the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, their licence was revoked and they were remanded in custody following a court appearance.

Protecting children also required the effective investigation of offending and the progression of cases through the criminal justice system. On 4 September, a man pleaded guilty at court to the following offences against his daughter: Rape of a child under 13, causing a child under 13 to watch a sexual act and an adult causing or inciting a child under 13 to engage in sexual activity. A date for sentencing is awaited.

Protecting Victims and Delivering Justice

Officers and detectives continued to progress investigations into domestic abuse, serious violence and offending against vulnerable people, alongside supporting victims through the criminal justice process.

In one particularly serious domestic abuse and sexual violence investigation, officers were contacted by hospital staff on 14 August after a woman reported that she had been assaulted and subjected to serious sexual offences by a former partner. The suspect was arrested at the hospital, his vehicle seized, and a discarded prohibited weapon recovered. He was subsequently charged to court with 12 offences, including rape, assault occasioning actual bodily harm and possession of a prohibited weapon and was remanded into custody.

Investigations into domestic abuse and sexual offending continued to deliver criminal justice outcomes. On 25 August, a man was sentenced to four years' imprisonment, with half to be served in custody and half on licence, for offences including common assault aggravated by domestic abuse and possession of an offensive weapon with intent. The offending related to an incident at the victim's workplace.

On 2 September, a man received a five month custodial sentence for theft, criminal damage and breaches of non-molestation and restraining orders arising from a domestic abuse incident. The court also imposed a three year restraining order.

On 8 September, a man was sentenced to five years' imprisonment, with half to be served in custody and half on licence, after pleading guilty to grievous bodily harm with intent against his former wife. The conviction followed a serious assault involving a knife.

Preventing Violence, Abuse and Exploitation

Prevention is an essential part of protecting victims and reducing future harm. During September, the Police Service joined the Department of Justice and The Executive Office in launching the second phase of the *Power to Change* campaign, which focuses on online misogyny and the attitudes and behaviours that can contribute to harm. The campaign encourages young men and boys to reflect on, question and challenge harmful content and behaviour online.

Public Protection Branch supported the Department of Justice's *Rape Myth* campaign, launched on 10 September. The campaign aims to challenge harmful misconceptions about rape, improve understanding of consent and sexual violence, and encourage a more informed and supportive public response to victims.

On 19 August, the Police Service launched *Every Victim Matters*, in partnership with the Men's Advisory Project, to raise awareness of male victimisation in domestic abuse, challenge misconceptions, encourage reporting and promote available support. During its first three weeks, the campaign generated 554,319 impressions across Meta platforms. Supporting all victims to recognise abuse, report it and access appropriate support remains an important element of our victim focused service.

Protecting People at Heightened Risk

Detectives and local officers continued to investigate serious offending affecting individuals and communities, including serious violence and crime affecting older people.

Following a report of a stabbing in Lurgan on 6 September, local officers responded and provided immediate first aid to the injured man while enquiries began to locate the suspect. The suspect was identified and arrested shortly afterwards, and has been charged with attempted murder and remanded in custody.

In Newtownabbey, Major Investigation Team detectives charged a man in connection with the death of a woman in October 2025. The charges include non-fatal strangulation, domestic abuse and assault occasioning actual bodily harm.

In Bangor, CID detectives charged a man with a number of offences, including arson with intent to endanger life, following an arson attack in September.

In the Banbridge area, officers responded to reports of burglary and criminal damage affecting older residents. Following enquiries into three burglaries and associated criminal damage, where victims were aged between 72 and 82, a suspect was identified, arrested, charged and remanded in custody. The investigation involved local knowledge, engagement with victims and detailed enquiries.

Protecting Life and Responding to Vulnerability

Police officers are often called upon to respond when people are in acute crisis. Across Belfast and South Area, officers provided emergency intervention, first aid and compassionate support to people and families when they needed help most.

In Belfast, officers responded to several incidents in which people were at immediate risk. An off duty officer intervened when a vulnerable woman was in danger at the Grosvenor Road Westlink Bridge, remaining with her until further police and

partner agency support arrived. In South Belfast, two probationary officers attending a concern for safety report identified an immediate risk to life, entered the property and provided first aid until urgent medical assistance was available.

Officers also acted quickly in two separate medical emergencies. Following a report that a man had entered the River Lagan from Ormeau Bridge, an officer entered the water and brought him to safety for assessment and treatment by paramedics. In the Bridge Street area, Belfast Central Neighbourhood officers responded to a man who had collapsed and was not breathing. They began CPR, obtained a defibrillator and worked with colleagues and the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service to restore cardiac activity. Although the man later died in hospital, his family expressed appreciation for the professionalism, care and compassion shown by officers.

In South Area, officers responded to an unresponsive man following a suspected overdose, immediately commencing CPR and working with ambulance colleagues to help revive him. The officers also progressed investigative actions and provided support to the man's family.

These incidents illustrate the range of difficult and often unpredictable situations frontline officers encounter, and the care, professionalism and courage required when protecting life.

Outcome 2

Community Focused



Communities are best served when police work alongside local people and partner organisations to understand what matters to them, prevent harm and take action where it is needed. Since our last report, neighbourhood teams have worked with residents, schools, community organisations and statutory partners on issues including scams, road safety, unlawful e-scooter use and drug related harm. Local and specialist teams have also progressed investigations and taken action against the crime and behaviour that can affect people's sense of safety.

Community Partnership, Engagement and Prevention

Neighbourhood policing is central to addressing local concerns, strengthening confidence and working with partners to prevent crime and harm. Since our last report, officers and staff have continued to respond to local concerns through prevention, targeted enforcement, problem solving and partnership working.

In Antrim and Newtownabbey, neighbourhood officers hosted an Age Friendly Joint Multi-Agency Crime Prevention and Latest Scams event at Mossley Mill. Working with statutory, community and voluntary sector partners, the event provided older and vulnerable residents with practical advice on crime prevention, scams and personal safety, alongside access to safety equipment and support services. The initiative provided an opportunity for residents to engage directly with police and partner organisations on issues affecting their safety and wellbeing.

Officers in Antrim and Newtownabbey have also worked with Road Safe NI to develop a school based road safety education package. The initiative combines road safety education and information on legislation, supported where necessary with the attendance of a police officer. This approach seeks to improve understanding, influence behaviour and promote safer road use.

Antrim Neighbourhood Policing Team has also responded to community concerns about the unlawful use of e-scooters and other electrically powered vehicles being used in public places. In an operation supported by local colleagues and making use of drone capability, seven e-scooters were seized. Enforcement was accompanied by public information explaining the legal position and potential consequences of unlawful use. Community feedback has been positive.

Following two fatal road traffic collisions in 2022 at the same location on the M1 eastbound near Dungannon, PSNI's Collision Investigation Unit (CIU) identified a potential road safety concern and raised with the Department for Infrastructure whether road conditions may have been a contributory factor. The unit also identified five further injury collisions at the location and worked with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and its road management partner to examine the issue. CIU arranged for a specialist from Ulster University to undertake road surface testing, with the resulting findings provided to the DfI.

Both lanes of the motorway at the location have since been resurfaced, and a safety barrier installed. No further collisions have been reported at the location since these improvements were completed.

In South Belfast, neighbourhood officers have continued work to address drug related criminality and associated harm in the Holylands, Botanic and university areas. Over the last nine months, this has included high visibility patrols, intelligence development, searches and targeted activity. Days of action during August resulted in three arrests and remands in connection with suspected drug dealing.

The team has continued high visibility patrols and engagement with residents and partners to provide reassurance and address issues contributing to drug related harm. Working with Belfast City Council, housing providers, social services and RASSO colleagues, officers have also continued to safeguard vulnerable people, including vulnerable women and victims of crime.

Across Derry City and Strabane, neighbourhood teams supported a range of local events and initiatives, including the *Foundations and Future – Conversations with Purpose* event at Ulster University, the Europe Triathlon Cup and Rural Crime Week. Officers engaged with children, families, rural communities and local residents, providing reassurance and crime prevention advice while building relationships with the communities they serve.

Responding to Local Crime and Concerns

Alongside engagement and prevention work, local officers continued to act on information and intelligence about crime affecting communities. This included drug related criminality, burglary, fraud, disorder and other offending that can affect people's sense of safety.

On 26 August, neighbourhood officers in Antrim and Newtownabbey, supported by the District Support Team, executed two warrants and located a cannabis cultivation operation. Cannabis with an estimated street value of

approximately £15,000 and Class A controlled drugs were recovered. A suspect was charged with drug offences, cannabis cultivation and dishonest abstraction of electricity.

Elsewhere in Mid and East Antrim, officers in Larne progressed a number of intelligence led interventions, recovering controlled drugs, drug paraphernalia and cash, and making arrests. This included the recovery of approximately 500g of cannabis following an arrest, and a separate recovery of suspected cocaine and cannabis with an estimated street value of £15,000 to £20,000. Together, these operations reflect the role of local policing in using intelligence and targeted action to address drug related criminality affecting local communities.

In Lurgan, officers identified and entered a suspected cannabis cultivation site near Old Kilmore Road, recovering and destroying more than 40 mature plants. Two suspects were remanded in custody while the investigation continues.

In Moygashel, officers attending a domestic incident recovered Class A controlled drugs with an estimated value of £15,800 concealed in a vehicle. The suspect was charged after making admissions to supplying controlled drugs.

Local officers also continued to investigate burglary, fraud and other offending that can have a direct impact on residents, businesses and vulnerable people.

In August, officers from Road Policing Interceptors carried out a proactive anti-burglary operation in the Armagh area. A vehicle was identified and, following a pursuit towards the border, was stopped by police. Two men were arrested on suspicion of burglary and driving offences. Both were subsequently charged and remain on remand. The operation involved colleagues from CID, Local Policing and the Air Support Unit, with An Garda Síochána providing supporting patrols to prevent the vehicle crossing the

border. This is an excellent example of internal PSNI and cross-border co-operation to tackle suspected criminality and bring those responsible before the courts.

In a separate investigation, Banbridge Neighbourhood Policing Team used local knowledge, house to house enquiries, CCTV and forensic opportunities to identify a suspected prolific offender linked to three burglaries and criminal damage offences. The suspect was charged and remanded in custody.

Officers also targeted rogue trader activity affecting vulnerable people. One suspect was charged with offences including fraud by false representation, criminal damage, harassment, common assault, aggressive commercial practice and misleading quotations, and was refused bail. In one reported case, a victim had transferred £10,000 for work alleged to have been unwanted and of poor quality. Further arrests were made in relation to suspected fraud, theft and intimidation involving a vulnerable victim.

In Belfast, a coordinated response to repeated serious incidents affecting healthcare workers at Belfast City Hospital resulted in an individual being charged with 13 offences. The work involved Local Policing, Neighbourhood Policing, Custody, the Vulnerability Hub, the Case Progression Team and healthcare professionals. Belfast Trust expressed appreciation for the multi-agency response and the support provided to affected healthcare workers.

Belfast POET secured the charge and remand of a 27 year old in connection with riot, disorderly behaviour, indecent behaviour, obstruction of a road and assault on police arising from disorder on the Stewartstown Road in July.

In Derry City and Strabane, officers responding to dangerous and evasive criminal behaviour made an arrest following a pursuit supported by the Air Support Unit on 27 August. Two police vehicles were damaged and taken off the road. The incident reflects the risks faced by officers when responding to serious criminality.

Disrupting Serious and Organised Crime

Serious and organised crime can cause substantial harm to communities through the supply of controlled drugs, the exploitation of vulnerable people and the accumulation of criminal assets. During the reporting period, Organised Crime Branch and the Paramilitary Crime Task Force carried out proactive operations against suspected organised criminality and paramilitary linked drug distribution.

On 26 August, Organised Crime Branch detectives conducted warranted searches at two properties in the Newtownabbey area, following the arrest of a man from Northern Ireland by An Garda Síochána, during which more than 100kg of cannabis was seized. The searches recovered a further 70kg of cannabis, almost 1kg of suspected cocaine, cannabis edibles and oil, and £16,000 in cash. Officers also seized 22 imitation firearms, which remain subject to forensic assessment. The Proactive Economic Crime Team obtained an Account Freezing Order to the value of £41,000.



Imitation Firearms seized in the Newtownabbey area

On 27 and 28 August, detectives from the Paramilitary Crime Task Force, supported by local District Support Teams, carried out coordinated searches across Derry/Londonderry to disrupt local drug supply and suspected paramilitary linked distribution networks. Officers seized electronic devices,

drug related paraphernalia and quantities of suspected Class A and Class B controlled drugs. A man was arrested in connection with suspected drugs supply offences and later released on bail, while three further individuals were reported to the Public Prosecution Service.

plea, with half to be served in custody and half on licence.

Tackling Terrorism Related Offending and Serious Public Disorder

Alongside work to tackle serious and organised crime, detectives continued to progress terrorism related investigations and secure court outcomes in cases involving terrorism related offending and serious public disorder.

A female was charged with 11 terrorism related offences, including alleged possession of articles for use in terrorism and preparation of terrorist acts.

On 2 September, detectives from Organised Crime Branch welcomed the sentencing of a man from Lurgan to 18 months' imprisonment, comprising 12 months in custody and six months on licence, for offences relating to collecting and communicating information likely to be useful to terrorists. He will also be subject to Counter Terrorism Registration requirements for ten years. The sentence followed a 2020 investigation in which forensic examination of a seized telephone identified footage of police vehicles at Lurgan Police Station being shared through a social media account.

Court outcomes also continued following the investigation into the serious public disorder in Ballymena, Larne, Coleraine and Newtownabbey in June 2025. 26 adults have now been convicted, receiving outcomes ranging from community service to up to 60 months' imprisonment. Twenty nine youth case files had been submitted to the Public Prosecution Service, with 26 directed for Youth Conference outcomes.

In a separate case involving hate motivated disorder in summer 2024, a man was sentenced to 27 months' imprisonment following a guilty

Outcome 3

Workforce Focused



Leading and Supporting Wellbeing

Supporting the health and wellbeing of officers and staff is essential to sustaining an effective workforce and delivering a high quality service to the public. This requires both accessible professional support and leaders who recognise their responsibility for creating healthy and supportive environments.

On 8 September, Occupational Health and Wellbeing delivered the Healthy Working Lives Conference for 94 senior police officers and police staff. The conference focused on the role of leaders in translating the Service's approach to wellbeing into everyday leadership practice, including leading with care, creating psychological safety and supporting colleagues through challenging circumstances. The event also provided an opportunity for leaders from across the Service to share learning and consider their collective role in promoting workplace health and wellbeing.

Occupational Health and Wellbeing has also taken possession of an Oscar Kilo Wellbeing Van, permanently on loan from the National Police Wellbeing Service. The mobile facility will enable health and wellbeing support to be taken directly to officers and staff across Northern Ireland, including frontline colleagues who may find it difficult to access traditional services during the working day.

It can be deployed to police stations, events and other appropriate locations in response to local or organisational need. The van is intended to

provide an accessible way for colleagues to access health advice, peer support and other wellbeing provision, including support at major events and incidents.

Developing a Safe, Capable and Supported Workforce

Protecting and supporting the workforce also means ensuring that officers and staff have the knowledge, information and organisational support they need to work safely and effectively.

Occupational Health and Wellbeing has continued work to improve awareness and understanding of blood borne viruses among police officers and staff. Information and education have been strengthened, including visits by Occupational Health and Wellbeing practice nurses and business support colleagues to custody suites to provide practical health information and address concerns. Education has also been strengthened within officers' initial vaccination programmes, and a training package for student officers is being developed jointly with the Police College.

The Service has also introduced its first centralised police staff induction programme, with the inaugural event taking place on 7 September. The monthly programme is designed to provide new staff with a consistent, professional and values led introduction to the organisation, including clear information on security, wellbeing and

organisational standards. By establishing a common induction for new staff, the programme is intended to ensure colleagues are welcomed, informed and supported from the outset, while providing greater consistency in the information and expectations communicated across the Service.



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