Northern Ireland Policing Board

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

BOARD MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

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MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

October 2026

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Northern Ireland Policing Board

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FOREWORD

This Code sets out the standards of practice expected from all Members of the Northern Ireland Policing Board (the Board). The public expects exemplary standards of behaviour from those serving on the boards of public bodies when discharging their duties. To that end this Code forms part of individual Members' terms and conditions of appointment and underscores the Board's commitment to attaining the highest standards of business conduct.

The purpose of the Code is to:

- Establish and promote a common set of ethics, values and standards of integrity for all Board Members.
- Support the development of exceptional standards of professional practice.
- Promote and maintain confidence and trust in Board Members.

The Board is committed to promoting a culture of candour, transparency and frankness. Members are expected to act openly and honestly in the discharge of their duties and to support the Board in meeting any legal duties of candour arising in connection with inquiries, investigations, inspections, audits or other oversight processes.

In carrying out their responsibilities Members, like others who serve the public, should follow the Seven Principles of Public Life as set out by the Cabinet Office. These guiding principles should inform all Members' actions and decisions when discharging their public duties.

As a Member of the Policing Board, it is your responsibility to ensure you are familiar with and comply with all relevant provisions of this Code. It should be read in conjunction with the statutory duties contained in the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 and other relevant legislation.

Any queries regarding the application of this Code should be directed to the Chairperson of the Board.

1. OVERVIEW

1.1 SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest demands.

In applying the principle of openness, Members should act with candour and frankness and should not knowingly withhold, conceal or misrepresent material information relevant to the discharge of the Board's public functions.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

1.2 Scope

This Code is binding on all Members of the Northern Ireland Policing Board and requires that each person is familiar with it. For the purposes of this Code, the term Member(s) includes all Independent and Political Board Members. While the Code can only be binding on Members of the Board, it will be the responsibility of Members to ensure that Advisors and Political Party Researchers, also comply with the spirit and intent of the Code. This is further elaborated on throughout the Code

1.3 Commitment to the Code

Each Member is required on appointment and annually, thereafter, to sign the Declaration of Understanding set out in Appendix 1 acknowledging that they have read the Code, understand its provisions and related obligations, and will comply with it. When signed, the Declaration of Understanding is to be returned to the Board Secretary for record purposes. Failure or refusal to sign the Declaration will be viewed as a breach of the Code and the Member will be subject to the procedures for dealing with a breach of the Code detailed in Appendix 2.

1.4 Review of Code

This Code of Conduct was formally reviewed during the period July 2025 to May 2026. The Board will undertake periodic reviews of this Code [at least every two years from the last review was completed] to ensure it continues to meet the Board's needs and remains appropriate.

1.5 Breach of Code

A failure to comply with the obligations of candour, transparency or cooperation set out in this Code may constitute a serious breach requiring referral.

If an incident occurs where there may have been a breach of the Code, or if there is an allegation of a breach, it will be handled in accordance with the procedures for dealing with a breach or potential breach of the Code set out in Appendix 2.

If a Member is arrested or becomes aware of the fact that she or he is under criminal investigation or becomes subject to proceedings which may result in the Member

being disqualified from holding office, the Member shall without delay inform the Chairperson.

EXPECTED STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

2.1 Use of Official Funds

Members have a duty to ensure impartiality, integrity and objectivity in relation to stewardship of public funds and the proper custody of assets which have been publicly funded.

Members must carry out their fiduciary obligations responsibly, taking appropriate measures to ensure that the Board manages resources efficiently, economically and effectively, avoiding waste and extravagance.

2.2 Allowances

Member attention is drawn to the Board Guidelines for Payment of Allowances referenced at section 3 of this document.

Members must comply with the rules set by the Board regarding remunerations, allowances and expenses. It is the responsibility of an individual member to ensure compliance with all relevant HM Revenue and Customs' requirements concerning payments, including expenses.

Member expenses are subject to publication.

2.3 Gifts and Hospitality

Member attention is drawn to the Gifts and Hospitality Policy referenced at section 3 of this document.

Members must not accept any gifts or hospitality which might, or might reasonably appear to, compromise personal judgment or integrity or place the Member under an improper obligation. Members must never canvass or seek gifts or hospitality.

Members are responsible for their own decisions on the acceptance of gifts or hospitality and for ensuring that any gifts or hospitality accepted can stand up to public scrutiny and do not bring the Board into disrepute.

Where a gift or hospitality has been accepted, or even if it has been declined/returned, Members should immediately notify the Board Chairperson and the Chief Executive and ensure that this is recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality Register. This disclosure requirement also relates to gifts/hospitality which are presented to spouses, partners or other associates if it can be argued or perceived that the gift or hospitality is in fact for the benefit of the Member.

The Gifts and Hospitality Register will be periodically reviewed by the Board's Audit Risk and Assurance Committee.

Members may only offer hospitality, at the expense of the Board, with the prior approval of the Chairperson and the Chief Executive or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairperson and the Chief Executive. A pre-condition for any such hospitality is that it will be in the direct interests of the Board and will assist the Board in fulfilling its statutory responsibilities. As a minimum requirement, there must be one person present who is not a Member of the Board or its staff.

2.4 Use of Official Resources

Members must not use Board resources or their position as a Member of the Board for political purposes or to obtain a benefit, whether for themselves or another person, or to cause another person to suffer a detriment. Members should be aware that a person who holds public office may commit a criminal offence where they engage in such conduct and know, or ought to know, that it is seriously improper. 'Resources' in this context includes, but is not limited to, facilities, equipment, stationery, telephony and other services. Member obligations in this regard extend to the actions of their advisors and researchers.

2.5 Use of Official Information

Members must not disclose to any person[1], other than another Member or an authorised Board official[2], any information, whether written or verbal or electronically recorded, generated or received in the capacity of a Member, which breaches the level of confidentiality placed on the information by the Board or which would be injurious to the interests of the Board or unfairly prejudicial to any other body or person without the authorisation of the Chairperson of the Board.

All information, data and correspondence that Members have access to, as part of Board duties, should be treated with an appropriate level of sensitivity irrespective of any Protected Marking that may or may not be in place.

Members must not disclose to any person, other than another Member or an authorised Board official, the contents of any document or any part thereof or an electronic record bearing any of the protective markings listed in the Board Information and Data Security Guide without the authorisation of the Chairperson of the Board.

Members have a duty to safeguard all documents and equivalent electronic records furnished by virtue of membership of the Board or its Committees. Any breach or loss of information must be reported to the Chief Executive within 72 hours of the incident.

Members must not misuse information gained in the course of their public service for personal gain or for political purpose. Members of the Board should be aware of the provisions of the Official Secrets Acts 1911 to 1989. Unauthorised disclosure of any information gained in the course of appointment on Board duties or its use by the Member or others for personal advancement would be regarded as a grave breach of trust.

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[1] 'Any person' includes family members, legal advisers, political party colleagues not represented on the Board.

[2] 'An authorised Board official' means a Board official duly authorised by the Chief Executive.

Members should be aware that the misuse of information obtained through their position as a Board Member, including the use of such information to obtain a benefit for themselves or another person, or to cause another person to suffer a detriment, may constitute serious misconduct. A person who holds public office may commit a criminal offence where they engage in such conduct and know, or ought to know, that it is seriously improper.

Members work with the Board is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Legislation.

The duties set out above continue to apply after a Member has left the Board or its Committees.

Member's must ensure that their advisors or researchers adhere to the requirements of this section and any breach by an advisor or researcher will be treated as a breach by the member and will be handled in accordance with the procedures for dealing with a breach or potential breach of the Code set out in Appendix 2.

Board documents are required to be returned to the Board Secretary after the retirement or resignation of a Member.

2.6 Duty of Candour and Cooperation with Investigations

Members shall act with candour, transparency and frankness in matters connected with Board business.

Where an inquiry, investigation, inspection, audit, review, inquest or other lawful oversight process concerns the Board, its functions or matters arising from Members' duties:

- Members shall cooperate fully and in good faith;

- Members shall disclose information relevant to the process subject to any legal or statutory restrictions on disclosure;
- Members shall not knowingly conceal, destroy, alter or withhold relevant information;
- Members shall promptly correct any material error or omission in information previously provided;
- Members shall assist the Board in complying with any statutory duty of candour applicable to public authorities or public officials.

2.7 Public Conduct and Communications

The Chairperson is the official spokesperson of the Board. They may, if considered desirable or appropriate, designate the Vice-Chairperson, a Committee Chairperson or another Member to comment publicly on a specific subject, consistent with the Board's position on the subject in question.

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson or the Chief Executive may determine what information is to be made public.

The dual mandate that political members of the Board have, and the challenges this brings for them, is recognised. It is accepted that political members of the Board are often the party policing spokesperson and that this means they are often best placed to speak on behalf of their party on policing matters. It is however incumbent on political members to make clear that they are speaking in a political capacity when commenting on policing matters.

Invitations may be received to speak at a meeting or event. Members should consult with the Chairperson or Chief Executive prior to accepting an invitation to speak on behalf of the Board. Officials of the Board may assist with such invitations accepted in connection with the Board Member role. The content of any speech or presentation must reflect the corporate position of the Board. Attendance at such events should be notified to the relevant Committee, or Board.

Board members must notify the Chairperson, Chief Executive or Head of Communications of any information/comment requests from, or engagement with, the media that directly relate to Board business, or which the member otherwise thinks should be brought to their attention. The Chairperson, Chief Executive or Head of Communications are happy to provide advice in this regard. This obligation extends to advisors and researchers.

Whenever a Member expresses a personal or political opinion on an issue touching the Board or its statutory functions it must be made clear by the Member from the outset that the Member is not purporting to speak on behalf of the Board.

Members must ensure that statements made in connection with Board business are accurate, fair and not misleading. Members shall not knowingly or recklessly make statements, or omit material information, in circumstances where doing so may mislead the public regarding matters connected with the Board's statutory functions.

Members should be aware that seriously improper conduct which misleads the public may constitute a criminal offence and may expose the individual concerned to personal liability.

The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be mindful of their representative positions on behalf of the Board in making public comments of a personal or political nature touching on the Board or its statutory functions.

Members are reminded that the same standards of behaviour and conduct apply on-line as would be expected off-line in the posting of information or in commentary made on social media platforms. The same rules also apply with social media as with other traditional forms of media in terms of libel, copyright and data protection laws.

In public sessions of Board meetings, questions should not be asked nor answers given where they are likely to identify individuals in a context or situation where the consequence of the individual being so identified might cause the individual to suffer

a real and immediate risk of harm or disproportionately infringe any other human rights of the individual or the individual's family; or where the questions and answers might unfairly deprive the individual of due process or a fair procedure. Members should exercise care in questions in either public or private session in order not to jeopardise misconduct proceedings, ongoing PSNI or PONI investigations, or ongoing judicial proceedings.

When commenting on policing matters Members should exercise discretion and not identify individuals where the consequence of the individual being identified might cause the individual harm or might unfairly deprive the individual of due process or a fair procedure

2.8 Engagement with PSNI officers and staff

As part of Members' role in holding the PSNI to account Members of the PSNI SET, and PSNI officers and staff at other levels, will regularly attend Committee and Board meetings to answer questions and provide updates/briefings on a broad spectrum of issues. These sessions are an integral and important part of how the Board meets its obligation to hold the PSNI to account, however Members are asked to be mindful of ensuring these exchanges remain respectful and professional in tone and don't stray into the area of individual performance management of PSNI senior staff.

Members should exercise professional judgment in their contact with members of PSNI outside formal Board/Committee meetings.

It is acknowledged that Board members may at times engage with PSNI in order to reflect community sentiment on an operational policing matter. In such circumstances Members should ensure that the PSNI officers are aware that the engagement is not in their capacity as a Board member.

Members should consult with the Chair or Chief Executive if in any doubt as to their engagement with PSNI, or the extent of their role in relation to requests to intervene or mediate in issues, that could be considered operational policing matters.

Members should ensure that they declare an interest in any subsequent Board discussion about an operational policing matter where they have provided a community impact assessment.

2.9 Political Activity

If a Member engages in political activity they should at all times, remain conscious of their responsibilities to the Board and exercise proper discretion. Members acting as members of political delegations and having contact with government or police officers must not purport to be acting in their capacity as Board Members.

2.10 Fairness and Equality

Members should deal with the public and their affairs fairly, efficiently, promptly, effectively and sensitively, to the best of their ability. Members must not act in a way that unjustifiably favours or discriminates against particular individuals or interests.

2.11Employment and Appointments

If a Member takes up new employment or appointments during their term of office, they must inform the Chairperson of the Board.

2.12 Members' Interests

Member attention is drawn to the "Conflicts of Interest Policy - Members of Board", referenced at section 3 of this document.

Members must not use, nor attempt to use, the opportunity of public service to promote their personal interests or those of any person, firm, business or other organisations with which they are connected.

Members must not use their position as a Member of the Board to obtain a benefit, whether for themselves or another person, or to cause another person to suffer a detriment. Members should be aware that a person who holds public office may commit a criminal offence where they engage in such conduct and know, or ought reasonably to know, that it is seriously improper.

Members must comply with the Board's rules on handling conflicts of interest. As a minimum, these require Members to declare any private interest that may, or may be perceived to, conflict with Board duties. Members should be mindful of the fact that the appearance of a conflict of interest can be as damaging as an actual conflict of interest and that both shall be avoided. In general, all financial interests should be declared.

Members must ensure that no conflict arises, or could reasonably be perceived to arise, between their public duties and their private interests - financial or otherwise.

In relation to withdrawal from proceedings, Members attention is drawn to section 5 of the "Conflicts of Interest Policy - Members of Board", referenced at section 3 of this document.

The procedures in relation to Registration of Interests, set out at section 2.10, are aimed at ensuring that any potential conflicts are identified at an early stage or declared during the conduct of business so that appropriate action can be taken to resolve them.

2.13 Registration of Interests

The Board will maintain a Register of Interests for each Member. It is the Member's responsibility to ensure any personal or business interests, financial or otherwise, which the public might reasonably think could influence the Member's judgment, are declared on the Register. Members must ensure their entry in the Register is accurate and up-to-date.

Members should also declare any relevant past interests or potential future interests where the public could reasonably perceive these to influence their judgment.

Members will be requested to notify the Chief Executive of all such registerable interests. Any subsequent changes or additions to a registration should be notified

immediately in writing to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will ask Members to confirm the accuracy of the Register of Interests every six months.

The interests listed for each Member in the Register, and the fact that the public have access to this Register, will be reported once a year in the Board's Annual Report.

Members may be exempted from listing an interest in the public Register of Interests if such a disclosure could compromise the security of the Member or their family. For Members, this exemption will be at the discretion of the Chairperson who may seek advice from the PSNI. An exemption in respect of the Chairperson will be at the discretion of the Board, with authority delegated to the Chief Executive.

A record of all such exemptions will be maintained by the Board.

Members must declare a personal or business interest, financial or otherwise, immediately upon becoming aware of the potential conflict or before discussion on an agenda item begins. Interests of immediate family members and persons living in the same household should also be declared. Members should consider the need to disclose relevant interests of other connected persons or past and potential interests which might be perceived to affect the Member consideration of any matter.

Additionally, as the Board is required to follow International Financial Report Standards (IFRS), Board Members must facilitate compliance with the requirement, under International Accounting Standard 24 for material transactions with related parties to be disclosed in financial statements. 'Related parties' include family members or members of the same household who may be expected to influence, or be influenced by, Board Members or senior management.

Queries on any matter relating to the above should be directed to the Board's Chief Executive.

2.14 Active Participation in Board business

Members should play a full and active role in the work of the Board and should fulfil their duties responsibly, and as set out in the Board Member Handbook. At all times Members should act in good faith and in the best interests of the Board, in line with its' strategic objectives.

Where a corporate position has been reached that a Member has disagreed with, they, or their researchers/advisors, should not actively or publicly seek to undermine that position.

Members of the Board should act diligently and in good faith to the full extent of their skill and knowledge, in the best interests of the public.

Members should take meaningful steps to ensure awareness of, and access, relevant information as necessary to enable the duties of the Member role to be performed to a high standard.

Members should make all reasonable endeavours to attend all Board meetings and meetings of the Committee(s) on which they serve and be well prepared by reading relevant papers in advance and contributing to decision-making.

Members attendance at Board and Committee meetings will be reviewed by the Chairperson of the Board, and data on same will be included in the Board Annual Report and Accounts and published on the Board's website.
Members should actively support any inquiry, investigation, inspection or review concerning the Board and should take reasonable steps to ensure that relevant information within their knowledge is identified and brought to the attention of the appropriate authority.

2.15 Responsibilities towards Board Officials and advisors

Members will treat anyone working within or for the Board in any capacity or others engaged with as a result of Board business with courtesy and respect. It is expected

that Board Officials and staff and others will show Members the same consideration in return.

Members will not ask nor encourage anyone working within or for the Board, in any capacity, to act in any way that would conflict with his/her own Code of Conduct.

The proper channel of communication between Members and Board officials in relation to any aspect of the Board's statutory functions is through the Chief Executive, or a Board official duly nominated by the Chief Executive to communicate with Members in relation to a statutory function of the Board.

Subject to the above, Members must not seek to issue instructions to any Board official.

2.16 Public Interest Disclosures

Should confidential information in relation to PSNI be leaked to a Member in their capacity as a Member of the Board the Chief Executive should be immediately advised, who will in turn advise the Chairperson of the Board. The Chief Executive will ensure the matter is brought to the next Board meeting to determine how the confidential information should be handled. Members may wish to seek legal advice where the matter poses implications regarding the Public Interest Disclosure Act and NICS guidance on the Public Interest Disclosure (NI) Order 1998. Member attention is drawn to the Board Whistleblowing Policy which can be found linked in the Board Member Handbook.

Consistent with the principles of candour, transparency and frankness, Members should ensure that concerns relating to wrongdoing, maladministration, governance failures or potential breaches of legal obligations are raised promptly through appropriate channels.

2.17 Non-disclosure of information to Board

Where information relating to the Board's functions is proffered to the Chairperson, and/or the Vice-Chairperson, on the basis that it is confidential and is not to be disclosed to the Board they may normally only receive that information and withhold it from the Board if it is agreed between the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson that it is in the best interests of the Board that the information be received and not disclosed to the Board.

2.18 Personal liability as a Member

Although any legal proceedings initiated by a third party are likely to be brought against the Board, in exceptional cases proceedings (civil or, in certain cases, criminal) may be brought against the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson or other individual Board members. For example, a Board Member may be personally liable if he/she makes a fraudulent or negligent statement which results in loss to a third party.

A Board Member who misuses information gained by virtue of his/her position may be liable for breach of confidence under common law.

2.19 Raising a Concern

The Board is committed to fostering an environment where Members and officials feel able to raise concerns they may have and to ensuring that any concerns raised are carefully listened to and prompt action is taken.

If a Member has a concern about possible issues or irregularities within the Board, this should be raised in the first instance with the Chairperson. The Chairperson shall deal with such concerns, at all times respecting as far as possible the confidentiality of the identity of the Member who disclosed such concerns, and in an appropriate manner that ensures a meaningful follow-up of matters raised.

In the event that the matter has not been resolved by the Chairperson or where the matter relates to the Chairperson, a Member may raise concerns directly with the Chair of the Board's Audit Risk and Assurance Committee.

If a Member finds evidence of non-compliance with any statutory obligations applying to the Board, the Member should immediately bring this to the attention of fellow Members through the relevant Committee or Board meeting with a view to having the matter rectified. The matter shall also be brought to the attention of the Board's Audit Risk and Assurance Committee by the Chairperson indicating (i) the consequences of such non-compliance and (ii) the steps that have been or will be taken to rectify the position.

Members who become aware of information suggesting that the Board, a Member or an official may have failed to comply with the obligation to maintain ethical conduct, candour, transparency and frankness, or may have provided misleading information in connection with the Board's functions, should raise those concerns promptly in accordance with this section.

Members are also afforded the right to make a disclosure about a matter of concern connected to Board business which can be considered for the protections afforded under the Public Interest Disclosure Act and NICS guidance on the Public Interest Disclosure (NI) Order 1998.

Further advice can be found in the Board's Whistleblowing policy referenced at section 3 of this document.

3.0 Related Policies and Procedures

All these policies can be accessed through the Board Member Handbook which is saved in the Resources section of Decision Time

REF	TITLE
312296	Conflicts of Interest Policy Members of Board
293142	Board Gifts and Hospitality Policy

269318	Board Guidelines for Payment of Allowances
368233	Board Security/ Data Incident Reporting Policy
346102	Board IT Acceptable Use Policy
317926	Board Policy on the Use of Electronic Devices During Meetings including new policy on use of Board email accounts etc [Phil etc to complete]
368571	Board Information and Data Security Guide
564357	NIPB Raising a Concern Policy

Appendix 1

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

I have read, and understood, the Code of Conduct for the Northern Ireland Policing Board and its Appendices (including all guidance and directions regarding the policies and procedures of the Board) and agree to be bound by same.

Signed: _____

Name: _____ (block capitals)

Date: _____

Appendix 2

PROCESS FOR HANDLING A BREACH/POTENTIAL BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

PRINCIPLES

1. If an incident occurs where there may have been a breach of the Code by a member, or if there is an allegation of a breach, it will be immediately referred to the appropriate person. The appropriate person will be the Vice Chairperson of the Board unless as specified in paragraph 2 below.

2. In the case of a breach/alleged breach by the Vice Chairperson, the role of appropriate person will be discharged by the Chairperson and the role of the Chairperson will be discharged by an independent person appointed by the Chief Executive, on behalf of the Board, to perform the role.

3. In the case of a breach/alleged breach by the Chairperson, the appropriate person will be the Vice Chairperson and the role of Chair, as defined in the following sections, will be discharged by an independent person appointed by the Chief Executive, on behalf of the Board, to perform the role.

4. All those involved in the process for handling complaints of a breach/potential breach will seek to address the issues as expeditiously as possible and in a fair and objective manner.

5. The steps set out in paragraph 7 below outline the process to be followed in considering the potential breach. It is not an exhaustive list and the nature of some allegations may negate the need for some of the steps below or may call for additional steps. This process will be kept under review and updated in light of experience handling complaints, and to ensure it reflects good practice.

6. The process for considering potential breaches of the Code by members is an internal process. A member may choose to be accompanied by a friend to

meetings connected with the process for the purposes of observation. There is no provision for legal representation.

DETERMINATION OF A BREACH

7. The appropriate person:
   - will in writing advise the member who is alleged to have breached the code that an incident has occurred, or allegation made, giving rise to a potential breach of the Code of Conduct, and will seek their comments.
   - will advise the next full Board meeting that an allegation has been made or incident occurred giving rise to a potential breach of the Code of Conduct, and that an assessment will now be made in accordance with these procedures.
   - will seek to gather all information relevant to the potential breach which may include further information from the person alleging a breach and any comments offered by the member alleged to have breached the code
   - will consider all relevant information and make a determination on whether there has been a breach of the Code.
   - will, if they determine there has not been a breach, notify same in writing to the member alleged to have breached the Code, to the person alleging the breach if appropriate and to the next full Board meeting.
   - will, where they determine there has been a breach, write to the member concerned, setting out why they consider a breach has occurred, offering to meet the member to discuss the breach [note paragraph 6 above in this regard] and suggesting, where appropriate, what steps could be taken to address the breach, and seek a written response from the member within 10 working days of the notification.
   - will, after the elapse of the 10 working days, prepare a report detailing the potential breach, the steps taken and information considered to determine if a breach has occurred, set out their determination and the reasons for it, and the sanction they are recommending to the Board.

- will share this report with the member concerned and will invite any further comments they wish to make within 10 working days and will take those comments into account in the final report to the Board.
- will provide their final report to the member concerned setting out their determination and the reasons for it, any representations made by the member concerned, the sanction they are recommending to the Board, and will advise of the appeals process.
- will provide their final report to the next Board meeting, setting out their determination and the reasons for it, any representations made by the member concerned, and the sanction they are recommending.
- will be assisted in their role by the Chief Executive or other staff appointed by the Chief Executive to support the process or other advisors including legal advisors.

APPEALS

8. There is one opportunity to appeal at the point at which the Board has considered the determination and made a decision in relation to the sanction.
9. The parties able to appeal the outcome of the determination and sanction are the member who is alleged to have breached the code.
10. The Chair of the Board will exempt him/herself from the part of the Board meeting at which the breach determination and sanction is being considered so that they can fairly and impartially consider any appeal.
11. Any appeal should be made in writing to the Chairperson of the Board within 10 working days of being notified of the determination and the Board's decision in relation to the sanction. Appeals after this date will not be considered.
12. Paragraphs 2 and 3 above set out the appeal arrangements when the person alleged to have breached the code is the Vice-chairperson or the Chairperson.
13. Processes to progress proposed sanctions will remain in abeyance until the conclusion of any appeals process.
14. The person handling the appeal:

- will advise in writing all relevant parties that an appeal has been received - relevant parties can include the vice-chairperson, the member alleged to have breached the code, the member(s) making the initial breach allegation.
- will advise the next full Board meeting that an appeal has been received and that an assessment will now be made in accordance with these procedures and that at the conclusion of the process the outcome will be reported firstly to the person bringing the appeal, then any other relevant parties if appropriate, and the Board.
- will gather all information relevant to the appeal including representations from relevant parties, either in writing or through a meeting - note paragraph 6 above in this regard.
- will consider all relevant information provided and decide whether to uphold the original determination and sanction made by the person handling the breach
- will write to the relevant parties, setting out their decision on the appeal and the rationale for their decision and will invite any further comments to be made within 10 working days and will take those comments into account in the final report.
- will after allowing 10 working days, prepare their final report and share it with the person making the appeal, and if appropriate other relevant parties, and then provide their final report to the next Board meeting setting out their decision on the appeal and the rationale for their decision, and will include any representations made by the relevant parties. Their final report will also have appended to it the final report on the original handling of the breach

SANCTIONS

15. The potential sanctions which the appropriate person handling the breach can recommend to the Board are listed below. This is not an exhaustive list and the nature of the allegation and their determination of it will dictate the appropriate sanction to be taken in any given case.

a. Recommend No further action – this may be due to the member concerned acknowledging a breach has occurred and taking remedial action to address the breach, although such steps by a member may not always lead to a determination of no further action.
b. Recommend the Board seek an Apology from the member at private session of a Board meeting.
c. Recommend the Board seek an Apology from the member to person(s) affected by the breach.
d. Recommend the Board seek a Public apology from the member.
e. Recommend the Board censure the Member concerned in private session of the Board meeting and issue written warning.
f. Recommend the Board censure the Member concerned through a statement of Board disapproval of the members actions to be issued after the next Board meeting and issue written warning.
g. Recommend the Board censure the Member concerned through not calling on them to speak at public or private meetings of the Board and for such period of time as the Board may determine.
h. Recommend the Board agree that the matter is so serious it requires referral to the Minister of Justice, as per the section "Referral to Minister of Justice" below.

REFERRAL TO MINISTER OF JUSTICE

16. The Minister of Justice can consider the removal of a Board member under the provisions as set out in paragraph 9 of Part III of Schedule 1 to the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000.
17. The Board may determine that the breach of the Code by a member is so serious as to warrant the Minister of Justice being invited to consider using her powers as set out above.
18. In the case of political party representatives any correspondence with the Minister of Justice in this regard should be copied by the Board to the relevant political party leader.

NOTIFICATIONS

19. Notwithstanding the arrangements in paragraphs 16-18 above, the Minister of Justice and if appropriate the relevant political party leader will be notified of any breaches or potential breaches of the Code, of the outcome of the consideration of the breach, the determination and sanction, including whether an appeal was made and if so the outcome of same.

Northern Ireland Policing Board

Northern Ireland Policing Board
James House, Block D
2 – 4 Cromac Avenue
The Gasworks
Belfast, BT7 2JA

028 9040 8500

information@nipolicingboard.org.uk

www.nipolicingboard.org.uk

policingboard

@nipolicingboard

nipolicingboard

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Northern Ireland Policing Board
Board Member Code of Conduct

ONLINE FORMAT

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