

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 9.30AM IN JAMES HOUSE, BELFAST

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

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

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Jon Boutcher, Chief Constable
Mr Bobby Singleton, Deputy Chief
Constable
Ms Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating
Officer
Ms Melanie Jones, Assistant Chief
Constable
Mr Davy Beck, Assistant Chief Constable
Ms Clare Duffield, Assistant Chief Officer
People and Organisational Development
Mr Ryan Henderson, Assistant Chief
Constable
Mr Mark McNaughten, Assistant Chief
Officer
Ms Aldrina Magwood, Assistant Chief
Officer Strategic Planning & Transformation
One Officer/ Three Staff

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

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

**OTHER OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

* Attended via video conference

- (1) From 9.45am, left at close of morning private session
- (2) From 10.00am, left at 2.25pm
- (3) From 11.00am to 12.00pm for public session only
- (4) From 9.30am, left at the beginning of the afternoon private session
- (5) From 9.45am, left at the beginning of the afternoon private session
- (6) For afternoon private session only

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Gerry Kelly, Mr Alan Chambers and Mr Peter McReynolds.

Members **AGREED** the agenda.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

A Board member noted an interest in terms of correspondence included in the addendum to the Chief Executive's Report, in that they are dealing with a complaint from the same person in a different capacity. The Chair responded that this would be noted as an interest but would not be considered a conflict.

The Director of Performance withdrew from the meeting during discussions on the NIPB senior staff structure at item 6.2.

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

3. DRAFT MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING:

3.1 Thursday 2 July 2026

The Chair asked Members to consider the draft minutes of the Board meeting held on Thursday 2 July 2026.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The draft minutes of the Board meeting held on Thursday 2 July 2026 be **APPROVED** as a correct record for publication on the Board's website.

The Chair noted that virtual attendance of meetings would now take place via MS Teams and that all Members had laptops which were equipped with MS Teams, Zoom is no longer available.

The Chair drew the Members' attention to the Draft Schedule of Meetings for 2027 circulated previously under item 9.2 on the Agenda. The Chair asked Members to note in particular the Board and Committee meeting dates proposed for the April/May period 2027. It was noted that the first Thursday in April would fall during Easter week, and the first Thursday of May is currently scheduled as the date for the NI Assembly elections. Therefore, it was proposed that April Board meeting would be held on Thursday 15 April and there would be no Board meeting in May 2027.

The Chair at this point also drew Members' attention to an item from the Board action log in respect of the recently reviewed and finalised Board Member Code of Conduct and specifically Members' invitation to sign the related declaration to commit to comply with the Code. The Chair expressed thanks to those Members who have so far signed the declaration and advised that, for those yet to sign, declaration forms have been made available by officials and requested those Members sign and return the declaration to Board officials by the close of today's meeting.

Following discussion, the Members **AGREED** the dates proposed in the Draft Schedule of Meetings for 2027.

4. QUESTIONS TO THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

The Chief Executive advised Members of the advance notice questions received for both the public and private sessions of the meeting with PSNI later in the meeting. Members also proposed and discussed additional questions for submission to PSNI.

The Chair highlighted the results published on *Outcome 2 of the Policing Plan 2025-30: We have Safe and Engaged Communities with Confidence in Policing* (Outcome 2) as set out in the September 2026 Chief Constable's accountability report and noted that the Chief Constable would take questions on Outcome 2 during the first part of the public session and questions on general matters after the Outcome 2 questions had concluded.

Following a discussion, Members agreed that in relation to Outcome 2, they would pose questions in relation to neighbourhood policing, organised crime on the high streets, repeat offending, cyber-crime, road safety and in particular recent road deaths and police pursuit tactics, during the public session.

The Chair also highlighted that the PSNI would be providing a detailed presentation to the Board at the private session on Prioritising Resources According to Risk which would provide opportunity for further questions on staffing and resourcing matters.

A Member raised whether a Representativeness Action Plan provided under item 4.2 in response to a Follow Up Question to the Chief Constable could be raised as a question during the public session. The Chair noted this was to be presented to the next Resources Committee meeting for detailed review and discussion.

4.1 Chief Constable's Accountability Report

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

4.2 Individual Members Written Questions and Responses

Members **NOTED** the PSNI responses to Members' written questions since the last Board meeting and the PSNI follow up responses from the Board meetings in June and July.

4.3 Committee Written Questions and Responses

Members **NOTED** two responses received to Committee questions since the last Board meeting.

4.4 Key Issues of Public Interest

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

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

5.1 Professional Standards Committee – Monday 20 July 2026

The Board **NOTED** the Professional Standards Committee Chair's report and the draft minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20 July 2026.

5.2 Partnership Committee – PCSP Effectiveness Report

The Board **NOTED** the Partnership Committee Chair's Report to the Board following the Partnership Committee Meeting held on Thursday 25 June 2026, and the final draft of the PCSP Effectiveness report 2024/25.

The Partnership Committee Vice-Chair was in attendance and provided an update on current status of the report to the Board.

Following discussion and subject to consideration of the comments outlined above Members: **(AP1)**

- **AGREED** the final amendments made to the draft report, and
- **APPROVED** publication of the final report to the Board's website.

6. BOARD BUSINESS

6.1 Policing Plan Outcome 2 – We Have Safe and Engaged Communities with Confidence in Policing

The Board **NOTED** the progress update on Outcome 2 as included in the September 2026 Chief Constable's accountability report presented at item 4.

The Director of Performance provided an overview of a Key Issues paper presented to inform Members on potential questions to be put to the Chief Constable in the public session based on the progress of Outcome 2. This paper was discussed in conjunction with consideration of the Chief Constable's Accountability Report at agenda item 4 above.

6.2 Update on actions from Away Day/ Board Continuous Improvement Plan

The Chief Executive presented a paper updating Members on actions from the Board Development Event held on Thursday 29 and Friday 30 January 2026.

The Chief Executive provided Members with further details on several items listed in the Rolling Continuous Improvement Plan annexed to the update paper. The Chief Executive noted that a research report on advocacy commissioned in relation to Public Accountability v Public Advocacy is to be discussed at the September Partnership Committee.

The Chief Executive further noted that discussions on Schemes of Delegations had progressed with PSNI officials and further meetings were planned with stakeholders to agree a framework.

The Members **NOTED** the items currently underway. It was **AGREED** that the Chief Executive would continue to progress actions in the Rolling Action Log from the Board Development Event and will provide an update at the next Board Development Event planned for January 2027. **(AP2)**

The Chief Executive drew Members attention to the ongoing review of the NIPB Senior Staff Structure. The Members gave broad agreement to the convening of single item Board meetings to consider aspects of the structural review and progress the implementation of two new Grade 6 posts, arrangements to be notified to Members in due course. A brief update was provided in respect of the potential regrading of the Chief Executive's post. It was noted that the CE is

not involved in this ongoing process and that a business case is likely to come to the November Board in respect of this.

The Chief Executive noted that this would be the final Board meeting for the current Senior Director of Resources, Mr Sam Hagen, and noted the Board's thanks to Mr Hagen for his contribution during his time at the Board. The Chief Executive further updated the Board that arrangements are well advanced for recruitment of a Grade 7 Corporate Services Director (in line with the new NIPB senior staff structure) and that the post would shortly be advertised.

At this point the Director of Performance withdrew from the meeting.

The Chief Executive further advised Members that, following a formal role matching exercise (incorporating a review of the current and additional duties as per the revised senior staff structure) the Director of Performance's post had been deemed to be re-graded as a Grade 6 post. Members were updated on the details of this process and advised that the incumbent Director would therefore in due course be taking up this Grade 6 post. The Chief Executive added that the Senior Management Team were intending to communicate the upcoming structural changes to all NIPB officials today.

A Member asked for further details on the formal matching exercise undertaken to upgrade the Director of Performance post. The Chief Executive undertook to share information on the matching exercise undertaken by Heads Together with Members after the meeting. **(AP3)**

6.3 Draft Consultation Response to the DOJ Consultation on The Police (Conduct) (Amendment) Regulations NI 2026

The Director of Performance presented the NIPB's draft consultation response to the Department of Justice on The Police (Conduct) (Amendment) Regulations NI 2026.

The Director of Performance noted that this was now a closed consultation in the final stages and the Department of Justice (DoJ) were consulting with stakeholders on the final version of the legislation and the related Code of Ethics. The Members discussed several aspects of the draft Regulations, in particular the proposed role of the Ombudsman as “observer” in cases involving senior officers while also having a role in terms of agreeing any outcome with the Board.

Following a discussion, Members **AGREED** to strengthen the consultation response by including a request for clarification on the role of the Ombudsman as an observer where legislatively any outcome must be agreed with the Ombudsman, and for clarification on the process and the statutory basis for dealing with circumstances where the Board and Ombudsman cannot reach agreement as to an outcome. **(AP4)**

7. ACTION LOG

Members **NOTED** the action log for the Board meetings held on 2 July, 4 June and 5 March 2026.

Members noted the points actioned and closed since the last meeting and the Chief Executive went on to highlight the following details of the remaining open Action Points (AP) from the Board meeting held on 2 July 2026:

- AP11 Correspondence with Minister of Justice regarding consultation on Injury on Duty (**IOD**) regulations and consideration of possible next steps following meeting between Board officials and DoJ. Members noted that a meeting had taken place where it was agreed that a tripartite working group would be established following summer leave to consider regulatory amendments and roles and responsibilities. The Chief Executive noted that a productive discussion had been progressed with

the PSNI and a further meeting had been arranged for October. Action to be **closed**.

- AP12 Outstanding response from Deputy Chief Constable to Chair regarding handling of ongoing complaint. Members noted that the Chair had discussed the matter with the Deputy Chief Constable at a recent meeting and noted that a response is imminent. The Chair noted that the complainant had also contacted him directly and he was in the process of formulating a response, which would be included in the Chair's Report to the October Board meeting. The Chair added that a lot of work had gone into resolving the case. Action to remain **open**.
- AP14 Visit to the National Crime Agency (NCA) Offices London in November 2026. The Chief Executive noted the visit was under review and would be progressed when budget was available. The Chief Executive raised the new date for the December Board meeting which is required to accommodate an alternative, recurring engagement for the PSNI Senior Engagement Team. The Chief Executive noted that NIPB officials will contact the NCA to inform them of the move of December Board meetings, which will now be held on the second Thursday of every December going forward. **(AP5)**

Members **NOTED** the updates provided.

8. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

8.1 Chair's Report

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

During the Chair's introductory comments to his report, he highlighted the *His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Inspection Report 2025-26* included as an Annex to item 8.1 and noted that report would be reviewed and discussed at the October Performance Committee meeting. The Chair added that any Members who were not on the Performance Committee, but who had comments on the HMICFRS Inspection Report, could submit them to the Director of Performance.

The Chair discussed the HMICFRS Inspection Report generally and noted, given the 'Adequate' rating, there remained several areas of concern, including the exclusion of any discussion in respect of the use of force, an adequate rating for HR procedures when no PDRs had been completed for 2 years and the lack of psychological screening for those in vulnerable roles. The Chair added that he was considering writing to the HM Inspector on these points, however advised he would await discussions at the October Performance Committee.

The Human Rights Advisor raised Stop and Search and the use of force and contended that it is important that use of force was discussed both publicly and by Board Members. In addition, a Member referenced a previously received unsatisfactory written response to a question regarding the use of Stop and Search under the Terrorism Act. The Chair acknowledged these comments and noted that they would be discussed at the October Performance Committee.

The Chair drew the Members attention to the *Race and Ethnicity Action Plan 2025–2030: Year One Progress Update* (REAP Report) included as an Annex to item 8.1 and noted that report would be reviewed and discussed at a future Partnership Committee.

The Chair highlighted the following items of correspondence:

- Correspondence received from PIPS Suicide Prevention Ireland on the implementation of Right Care/ Right Person (RCRP). The Chair noted

that Assistant Chief Constable Henderson would be giving a detailed presentation on RCRP at the October Partnership Committee meeting. Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

- Correspondence exchange with the Deputy Chief Constable on Operation Constraint and risk assurance. The Chair noted that he had concerns about the adequacy of the related audit processes currently in place. The Chair noted that he intended to put his concerns in writing to the Chief Operating Officer, copying the correspondence to the PSNI ARAC. Members **NOTED** the correspondence.
- Correspondence received from the Chief Constable on violence against women and girls (VAWG) and misogyny. The Chief Constable advises in his letter that recommendations from the Langdale review are in the process of being incorporated into the VAWG Action Plan, which will be presented to the Board in due course. The Chief Constable further advises that the Melia recommendations are progressing through a tripartite implementation group. The Chair and Chief Executive are to meet with the Minister of Justice and Jan Melia on 16 October and will report back to the Board. Members **NOTED** the correspondence.
- Correspondence between the Chief Constable and the Home Office on national policing reform. The Chair noted that dialogue on this matter is important as it will have significant implications for Northern Ireland, however current plans did not provide much cognisance for Northern Ireland. Members were advised that DoJ would be taking the lead of this going forward. Members **NOTED** the correspondence.
- Correspondence to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (SoSNI) requesting a meeting. Members **NOTED** the correspondence and noted the importance of political input from the SoSNI via the NIPB.
- Correspondence received from the Chief Constable on the Service Executive Team Portfolios. The Chair noted that the letter indicated that

progress was being made towards a satisfactory resolution of this matter.
Members **NOTED** the correspondence.

8.2 PSNI Officer Headcount Table

The Chair asked Members to consider the PSNI Officer Headcount Table annexed at item 8.2 and provided to Members for information.

The Vice-Chair noted that the headcount table did not include details of the number of temporary promotions currently within the PSNI. The Chief Executive undertook to review previous Resources Committee papers for relevant information on numbers and ranks of temporary promotions within PSNI. If the figures are not available, a written question will be forwarded to the PSNI on behalf of the Vice Chair requesting the information. **(AP6)**

9. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

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

The Chief Executive highlighted the following matters:

- Management Accounts had now been prepared and while they showed an underspend, this was due to a phasing of expenditure and accruals for the anticipated staff pay award were likely to create a pressure going forward.
- Public Office Accountability Bill and development of a new Member Code of Conduct (CoC). The Chief Executive noted that following the recent review of the CoC, the final document has been shared with CSO for a view on whether any small amends are required to take cognisance of

the Public Office Accountability Bill. The Chief Executive noted that individuals in public office, including Members, would be under a duty of candour to sign the new CoC when it is finalised. The Chief Executive added that a new public sector CoC, which would be applicable to NIPB officials, is currently being considered by across the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

- Members were advised the DoJ recruitment competition for new NIPB Board Members is now live.
- Dates for diary. The Chief Executive noted the success of the NIPB and Policing and Community Safety Partnership *Foundation and Future: Policing 2026 and Beyond, Conversations with Purpose* event held at the Ulster University's Magee Campus in Derry/Londonderry on Wednesday 2 September and encouraged Members to attend future events in this series planned for Belfast and Dungannon. The Chief Executive highlighted the upcoming joint NIPB/PSNI 25 Year Anniversary Conference due to take place in November, noting that a formal invitation would be circulated in due course. The CE also provided an update regarding funding and expected costs for the conference.
- A Member requested an update on the McGilton & Co judicial review. The T/Director of Police Pensions & Injury Benefits noted that the case was currently with the Court of Appeal and is listed again for early October.
- A Member requested an update on correspondence received from the Irish Language Commissioner notifying the NIPB of the public display of anti-Irish language slogans on flags in Belfast. The Chair noted that a meeting with the Irish Language Commissioner had been organised and Members would be updated in due course.

- The Chief Executive did not highlight any further correspondence for discussion.

Members also **NOTED** other relevant updates in the Chief Executive's report.

9.1 Updated Board Programme of Work 2026-27

Members **NOTED** the updated Board Programme of Work for 2026–27 and that it will continue to be shared at Board meetings to reflect any further updates.

9.2 Draft Schedule of Meetings 2027

The Draft Schedule of Meetings for 2027 was tabled by the Chair as a house-keeping point under item 3 when it was agreed by the Members. A Member revisited the schedule and raised that regarding the Board Away Day development event planned for the end of January 2027, there could potentially be a number of new Board Members appointed and due to start in April 2027, and would it therefore be preferable to hold the event after April. The Chief Executive noted that any potential new Board Members could be invited to the January event. **(AP7)**

10. PRIVATE SESSION WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE AND SET

The Chair welcomed Members back to the private session of the Board meeting and invited any remaining questions not addressed earlier in the day.

A Member referred to the RCRP and asked whether any progress had been made with the Health & Social Care Trusts or are they in the same position as they were prior to summer and, if so, what does that mean in practice for the memorandum of understanding and service delivery.

PSNI advised that work is progressing collectively and collaboratively with Health & Social Care Trust Executives to establish the timetable going forward. Assistant Chief Constable Henderson also noted thanks to 2 particular individuals within the Department of Health/Trusts who have been instrumental in bringing the health sector along on this. He advised of two pillars of RCRP which are scheduled to go live in September relating to the Mental Health code of practice and new handover procedures.

In respect of the pillar relating to the Mental Health code of practice, Members were advised that it had originally been planned to launch in June but training within Emergency Departments had not yet been completed.

In respect of the new handover procedures PSNI confirmed that a step-down process is being implemented which has the potential to be hugely transformational and may result in significant reduced attendance for officers in Emergency Departments.

Members were advised that new handover forms and procedures have been introduced and the ambulance service will have clearer guidance on when police involvement is appropriate and floor walkers will be present in all control rooms during implementation to provide support and advice.

ACC Henderson agreed to provide a letter to the Chief Executive outlining the timetable of implementation of the two-pillar approach of RCRP. **(AP 8)**

10.1 Prioritising Resources According to Risk Presentation

Members also received a presentation from PSNI on Prioritising Resources according to Risk. The presentation outlined 4 key areas: the strategic context, the organisation approach to assessing risk, the allocation of resources and maximising capacity through evidence-based decision-making. Members were advised that resource prioritisation is a continuous organisational process that

balances demand, risk, affordability, operational requirements, and strategic priorities.

The Chair thanked the PSNI for the presentation and noted reassurance the Board can take in respect of the professional evidence-based approach being taken by PSNI on this.

Member questions following the presentation centred on:

- The significant long-term sickness absence levels recorded in Public Protection Branch (PPB), challenges created by this, alongside unfilled vacancies. The PSNI acknowledged the long-term sickness absence levels recorded and do have a strategic Work Force model in place. They advised that psychological screening is in place, alongside wellbeing initiatives and established management processes to address the issue. The Chief Constable advised that a strategic approach is required to alleviate the pressures currently being experienced. He acknowledged that all departments are facing challenges with an additional burden on PPB. He noted the need for improved support, leadership and resourcing while highlighting ongoing concerns regarding budget constraints.
- The Strategic Risk Model and where the recommendations from, for example, the Langdale Report and the McCullough Report sit within the model and the action plan. PSNI advised that they are adding a Trust & Confidence Risk to their Risk Register, which is currently sitting at departmental level before being presented to the NI Assembly next week. The Chief Constable advised that a more transparent approach is required. He noted that while work is being done differently, new mechanisms are being introduced to future-proof the service, deliver long term benefits and strengthen trust and confidence.

The Board Chair thanked the Chief Constable and his leadership team for their responses and they left the meeting.

11. COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES

Members were advised of planned media statements in relation to Outcome 2, the McCullough Review and progress on RCRP and Conversations with Purpose.

A short discussion followed in terms of the media response to the public Policing Plan accountability sessions and the Chair noted an upcoming engagement with editors where he will raise some of the points discussed.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No matters were raised under any other business.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next full Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 1 October 2026 at 9.30am in James House.

The meeting closed at 3.15pm.

Strategic Planning & Governance
September 2026

Chair

