



**ANNUAL
ASSESSMENT**

**THE NORTHERN IRELAND
POLICING
PLAN
2020-2025**

**& ANNUAL
PERFORMANCE
PLAN
2020/21**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
BWV	Body Worn Video
CIPT	Child Internet Protection Team
CRN	Community Resolution Notice
CSAE	Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation
DAPN	Domestic Abuse Protection Notice
DAPO	Domestic Abuse Protection Order
DASH	Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour based violence and risk identification, assessment and management model
DV/A	Domestic Violence and Abuse
EA	Education Authority
FPN	Fixed Penalty Notice
FYTD	Financial Year To Date
HSC	Health and Social Care
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (and Questioning)
LPR	Local Policing Review
NCA	National Crime Agency
NPT	Neighbourhood Policing Team
OBA	Outcomes Based Accountability
OCG	Organised Crime Group
OMU	Offender Management Unit
OPONI	Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland
PCSP	Policing and Community Safety Partnerships
PFYTD	Previous Financial Year To Date
PPANI	Public Protection Arrangements for Northern Ireland
PPB	Public Protection Branch
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
ROU	Reducing Offender Unit
SBNI	Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland

INTRODUCTION

The Northern Ireland Policing Plan 2020-2025 and Annual Performance Plan 2020/21 was agreed by the Board at its meeting of 5 March 2020. The Policing Plan outlines three Outcomes that the Board want policing to deliver for the people of Northern Ireland:



1

**WE HAVE
A SAFE
COMMUNITY**



2

**WE HAVE
CONFIDENCE
IN POLICING**



3

**WE HAVE ENGAGED
AND SUPPORTIVE
COMMUNITIES**

The Annual Performance Plan 2020/21 includes nine Indicators and eleven Measures which were used to quantify the progress towards achieving the Outcomes. These are collectively provided on page 5.

By virtue of the Police (NI) Act 2000 and the Annual Performance Plan, the Board is required to prepare and publish for each financial year a summary (its “performance summary”) of the Board’s Assessment. To deliver on this statutory requirement each Measure within the 2020/21 Performance Plan has been considered.

Prior to each Committee, Members were provided with a paper which included the PSNI OBA (Outcomes Based Accountability) Report Card for each Measure and Board official's analysis, which encompassed a summary Key Issues / Opportunities piece. At each applicable Committee meeting the responsible PSNI ACC was present and Members engaged in scrutiny, monitoring and evaluation of each Measure.

All eleven Measures within the Performance Plan 2020/21 were presented to Members through either the Performance, Partnership or Resources Committee between September 2020 and March 2021. This approach has enabled the compilation of an evidence based Annual Assessment which takes cognisance of Members' views. Therefore, the purpose of this document is to provide an Assessment of the PSNI's performance as reflected through the monitoring and scrutiny provided by Members. It centres on the available evidence base and includes areas that the PSNI either: fell short on; need to revisit; or require recognition for.

In addition to the Assessment of each Measure, pages 27 to 31, provide a summary of (i) the assessment in respect of Impacts and Opportunities and (ii) future monitoring areas. These are snapshots of what Impacts and Opportunities have been identified through the Assessment of Performance in 2020/21 and what the anticipated areas of focus will be for future reporting.

OUTCOME 1: WE HAVE A SAFE COMMUNITY

INDICATOR	MEASURES 2020-2021
1.1 FEWER REPEAT VICTIMS OF CRIME	1.1.1 Repeat victimisation rate and report on initiatives to support repeat victims with a focus on victims of (i) Domestic Abuse, (ii) Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (CSAE) and (iii) Hate Crime in 2020/21.
1.2 FEWER REPEAT OFFENDERS OF CRIME	1.2.1 Repeat offending rate and report on initiatives to reduce repeat offenders with a focus on Domestic Abuse in 2020/21. 1.2.2 Repeat offending of Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) and paramilitary organisations.
1.3 PEOPLE IN ALL COMMUNITIES FEEL SAFE	1.3.1 Number of people in Northern Ireland who feel safe in their; local area, local high street or town centre and own home. 1.3.2 Rate of places repeatedly victimised.
1.4 CRIME RATES AND TRENDS SHOWCASE AN EFFECTIVE POLICE RESPONSE	1.4.1 Benchmark PSNI crime rates against previous PSNI levels and other most similar police services.

OUTCOME 2: WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN POLICING

INDICATOR	MEASURES 2020-2021
2.1 THE LEVEL OF PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN POLICING	2.1.1 Number of people in Northern Ireland who are confident that PSNI is accessible, visible, responsive and victim focused.
2.2 THE LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH THE SERVICE RECEIVED	2.2.1 Number of victims who are satisfied with the service they have received.
2.3 THE REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE POLICE SERVICE	2.3.1 Improve representativeness of the service across ranks, grades and departments by gender and community and socio-economic background.
2.4 DELIVERY OF EFFECTIVE CRIME OUTCOMES	2.4.1 Levels of crime outcomes to identify and respond to areas of concern in outcomes statistics, with a particular focus on domestic abuse in 2020/21.

OUTCOME 3: WE HAVE ENGAGED AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

INDICATOR	MEASURES 2020-2021
3.1 POLICE, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES, INCLUDING PCSPS, IDENTIFY AND DELIVER LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO LOCAL PROBLEMS.	3.1.1 In collaboration with the community deliver the commitments outlined in the Local Policing Review.

OUTCOME 1: WE HAVE A SAFE COMMUNITY

INDICATOR 1.1:

Fewer repeat victims of crime

MEASURE 1.1.1:

Repeat victimisation rate and report on initiatives to support repeat victims with a focus on victims of (i) Domestic Abuse

ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Performance Committee: 10 September 2020

PSNI OBA Report cards: M 1.1.1, M 1.2.1 & M 2.4.1

Domestic Violence and Abuse (DV/A) is an ongoing, long-term issue which accounts for a significant and increasing proportion of overall crime across Northern Ireland. The PSNI reported an increase in domestic abuse incidents, in the period, from July 2019 to June 2020, compared to the previous 12 months and this was the highest 12 month period recorded since 2005. Additionally, they reported that during March 2020 to June 2020, calls for service in domestic abuse increased by 25%. Members sought clarity on numerous issues from the PSNI, specifically concerning the introduction of an advocacy service for victims of domestic and sexual abuse. Members were encouraged by the possible introduction and recognised the merit in the service, most notably to support victims as they go through the criminal justice system. Members wrote to the Justice Minister highlighting their support of the advocacy service and noted that applying it across Northern Ireland, regardless of the level of risk, age, gender or location of a victim, would signal a positive and encouraging step to further assist victims of DV/A.

A key issue highlighted through police performance monitoring was the introduction of the Domestic Abuse and Family Proceedings Bill 2020. While Members welcomed the introduction of the Bill, through discussion with the PSNI, they identified a possible legislative gap. This was in regards to the Bill not including Domestic Abuse Protection Notices (DAPNs) or Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPOs). These Notices and Orders, through benchmarking with England and Wales, have been shown to carry considerable merit.

If introduced in Northern Ireland this could positively impact on the PSNI's ability to further protect victims. Members requested clarity on this legislative gap from the Justice Committee. In response, they were provided with assurances that the Justice Committee supported the introduction of DAPNs and DAPOs in Northern Ireland and that they agreed to bring forward an amendment to the Domestic Abuse and Family Proceedings Bill at Consideration Stage to place a duty on the Justice Minister to provide for a scheme within 24 months of commencement of this legislation, with the aim of ensuring appropriate progress is made in this area.

In reporting on support for repeat victims, the PSNI outlined a range of positive initiatives such as the Repeat Victims approach¹, the introduction of the Repeat Victim (Domestic Violence and Abuse) Strategy², the introduction of the Victim Call Back Scheme³ and improvements in the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment and Honour-based violence and risk identification, assessment and management model (DASH) with the PSNI adopting an electronic system⁴. These are initiatives which Members expect future reporting to include clear information on what difference they have made in respect of repeat victims.

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- 1 PSNI consider how close together incidents occurred, how many times and the seriousness.
 - 2 The strategy aims to compliment the core DV/A work already undertaken to engage and seek to protect victims considered to be at greatest risk of DV/A, standardise the high level of service and engage with those highest-volume repeat victims of DV/A.
 - 3 The call back scheme was launched at the start of lockdown for all victims of DV/A in order to provide victims with necessary support.
 - 4 At the time of reporting PSNI stated that it was, '...anticipated this would be operational in 6 months'.

MEASURE 1.1.1:

Repeat victimisation rate and report on initiatives to support repeat victims with a focus on victims of (ii) Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Performance Committee: 8 October 2020

Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (CSAE) has seen a significant rise over the last 20 years with the number of crimes committed against children increasing and the types of crimes that children are victims of becoming more harmful. PSNI reporting demonstrated a steady increase in the reporting of rape, sexual grooming and other sexual offences involving children over the last three years. This also identified links between children and increased instances of CSAE including children in care, flagged at risk of CSAE, suffering mental ill-health and those undertaking risk-taking activities (such as children reported missing, illicit drugs and/or substance misuse).

Members sought clarity on multiple key issues, including the quality of the PSNI training in this area. The PSNI provided assurances that the Public Protection Branch (PPB) had created a new e-learning package for front line officers, including response police, call handlers, detectives and custody staff, to raise awareness and signpost officers. The PSNI outlined that e-learning had enhanced the operational practice of almost 500 officers that had completed the training at the time of reporting.

Members further scrutinised police performance regarding collaboration with stakeholders and the role of partners, especially schools and further education colleges, in safeguarding children. In response, the PSNI provided detailed information regarding the new internal structures that had been initiated to enhance collaborative partnerships with Health and Social Care (HSC), Education Authority (EA) and Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI). They advised that these aim to improve the service provision for child victims and encourage engagement with the criminal justice system to improve outcomes. While specific impacts of this collaboration was not outlined in reporting, it is anticipated that this will feature in future reporting.

OUTCOME 1: WE HAVE A SAFE COMMUNITY

Reporting also noted 'Collectively Preventing Harm'⁵ of which the PSNI led on collaborative multi-agency meetings and discussions. These were undertaken over the COVID-19 lockdown period and proved vital in identifying and addressing the needs, issues and concerns of the most vulnerable and allowed for effective, efficient and successful solutions over the lockdown period. Additionally and in line with vulnerability, Members' expressed their concern with regard to the decrease in child abuse referrals during the COVID-19 lockdown period compared to previous years.

A surge in online CSAE was also a key issue for Members, specifically where it related to the PSNI's work in educating parents of the dangers of online abuse/grooming of children. The PSNI provided assurance by demonstrating initiatives, including collaboration with SBNI which produced a media campaign highlighting risks to children over the COVID-19 lockdown period. They also highlighted an expectation that possible advances in technology will enable the Child Internet Protection Team (CIPT)⁶ to carry out checks of electronic devices during searches of properties which should lead to improved efficiency. Members furthermore declared support in compelling all internet service providers and social media platforms to sign up with UK Legislation for 'Duty of Care' online protection⁷ and as the legislation progresses it was agreed that the Performance Committee will revisit.

5 PSNI led a multi-agency meeting on Collectively Preventing Harm, attended by: PSNI, DOJ, NIPB, DfC, EA and HSCT; and Safeguarding Board NI. More information on the Collectively Preventing Harm meetings in NIPB 'Thematic Review of Policing Response to COVID-19', Available online at: <https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/sites/nipb/files/publications/report-on-the-thematic-review-of-the-policing-responser-to-covid-19.PDF>

6 The Child Internet Protection Team (CIPT) receive referrals from the NCA and this had led to multiple arrests relating to Indecent Images of Children (IIOC) in 2020/21.

7 Online Harms White Paper, April 2019, Available online at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/793360/Online_Harms_White_Paper.pdf

MEASURE 1.1.1:

Repeat victimisation rate and report on initiatives to support repeat victims with a focus on victims of (iii) Hate Crime in 2020/21 and repeat victims overall

ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Performance Committee: 12 November 2020

Hate Crime is an ongoing issue which causes harm to the community. It is traditionally under-reported, so the number of crimes recorded does not convey the full picture. In respect of overall repeat victims, one of the most pivotal roles the PSNI has is to support and protect the victims of crime within our communities. The PSNI aim to ensure that all victims, in particular repeat victims⁸, are supported in a way that meets their individual needs and circumstances which is paramount to supporting a safe community.

The PSNI reported increases in the recorded levels of hate abuse and noted that this should be viewed positively given the trend of under-reporting. The PSNI outlined that repeat victimisation is more prevalent among victims of hate crime, with 35% of victims experiencing more than one crime or incident in a twelve month period, at least one of which was hate motivated. They stated that on average, 7 hate incidents were reported per day in Northern Ireland, resulting in 4.6 crimes per day.

It was highlighted that the highest rate of repeat victimisation was of transphobic motivation with 32.2% of repeat victimisation and 42% of all transphobic hate experienced by just ten individuals. Members scrutinised the statistics provided and probed the PSNI on their engagement with the community in respect of hate crime. They also probed the PSNI on their engagement with the LGBTQ+ community. In response the PSNI noted that they have undertaken a good level of engagement. They noted how they had also established relationships with statutory and non-statutory agencies at District level, in order to fully understand the nature and level of hate crime among this community, to effectively deal with hate crime in this regard.

⁸ A repeat victim is "a person who has been a victim of a crime on more than one occasion in a 12 month period. The repeat victimisation rate is the percentage of all victims who are repeat victims".

OUTCOME 1: WE HAVE A SAFE COMMUNITY

Members noted that given the significant extent of activities undertaken by the PSNI the impact on addressing hate crime and repeat victimisation was not significant. They reinforced this point by noting their expectation that future reporting on activities must include what difference is made through the demonstration of clear impacts.

Finally, a key opportunity identified in monitoring PSNI performance this year was the possible enhancement of legislative tools to enable the PSNI to effectively carry out and improve responsibilities the Service has to safeguard victims of hate crime, through the publication of the Hate Crime Legislation Review⁹. At the time of reporting on this Measure, 12 November 2020, the review was not published. However the PSNI acknowledged that going forward, while they are awaiting the recommendations from the Review, they are exploring with stakeholders the possible introduction of disposal outcomes including Community Resolution Notices (CRNs) or Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for some of the lower categorisation of crimes.

9 The Review is led by Judge Desmond Marrinan to consider whether, '*...existing hate crime legislation represents the most effective approach for the justice system to deal with criminal conduct motivated by hatred, malice, ill-will or prejudice, including hate crime and abuse which takes place online.*' The review was published on 1 December 2020, Available online at: <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/justice/hate-crime-review.pdf>

INDICATOR 1.2:

Fewer repeat offenders of crime

MEASURE 1.2.1:

Repeat offending rate and report on initiatives to reduce repeat offenders with a focus on Domestic Abuse in 2020/21

ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Performance Committee: 10 December 2020

Repeat offenders¹⁰ represent a small proportion of the population in Northern Ireland. However, from this small proportion, over 60% of offenders had committed previous offences with repeat offenders posing a significant risk to individuals and communities. In order to address this behaviour the PSNI, in partnership with others, play a crucial role in concentrating their efforts on repeat offenders with the aim of reducing crime. The PSNI reported that the majority of repeat offenders have complex chaotic lives with 76% having mental health and addiction struggles. They evidenced an overlap in the relationship between repeat offenders and victims of crime, with 48% of repeat offenders being a victim of crime at some stage.

Members questioned the status of Mental Health Courts and requested, both verbally and in writing, further information on deferring sentences for those repeat offenders identified as having a mental health issue. In response, the PSNI provided written assurance that this is a Problem Solving Justice pilot¹¹ and that COVID-19 has delayed the initiative. They advised that work was underway to progress the scoping study with delivery partners and stated that a further update will be provided when the scoping study is at a more advanced stage. Members expressed the importance of the effectiveness of mental health courts and their intent to actively scrutinise.

¹⁰ Repeat offenders are defined as “offenders [who] committed a proven re-offence within the year following release from custody, receiving a non-custodial court disposal or a diversionary disposal”

¹¹ Undertaken by The Department of Justice, in collaboration with the Department of Health, Health Trusts, the NI Courts and Tribunals Service and the Probation Board NI

OUTCOME 1: WE HAVE A SAFE COMMUNITY

In line with the assessment of other Measures, Members again raised the issue of lack of 'impact' within PSNI reporting. They specifically highlighted the need for the PSNI to report on what difference and added value the initiatives outlined in their reporting demonstrated to reduce repeat offenders. In response, the PSNI provided assurance that they were undertaking a review of the numerous mechanisms for managing offenders including the Reducing Offender Units (ROUs), Offender Management Units (OMUs) and Public Protection Team (PPT) under Public Protection Arrangements for Northern Ireland (PPANI) and this could support the reporting of impact.

MEASURE 1.2.2:

Repeat offending of Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) and paramilitary organisations

ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Partnership Committee: 18 February 2021

There are overlaps between Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) and paramilitarism, including paramilitary style attacks, extortion, intimidation, drug dealing and money laundering. OCGs and paramilitary organisations exercise considerable influence on local communities through fear, intimidation and control. Such activities cause significant economic and social harm to communities, in particular those most vulnerable.

A key issue raised by Members was the significant increase in the value of drug seizures this Financial Year To Date (FYTD) compared to the Previous Financial Year To Date (PFYTD). Approximately 44% of drug seizures in 2020/21 to date resulted in arrests. Members queried this statistic with the PSNI responding that while an arrest is a positive outcome of a seizure, in some circumstances an arrest may not be possible.

Members also focussed on the changing nature of criminality, with technological advancements and the increasing use of the internet leading to more online crimes and harms. The Board noted that there was a significant amount of examination and input by the cybercrime centre¹² against the organised crime investigation, Operation VENETIC¹³. In turn, the PSNI outlined that criminal activity is being driven by technology and encryption.

12 The Cybercrime Centre was established 18 June 2019 as a state of the art centre providing a base for all digital forensic services across all of the PSNI. Ranging from providing support to officers during a large scale investigation, to leading on complex specialist cyber investigations on a global scale.

13 Operation VENETIC, the UK's response to the infiltration of an Encrochat server (a server assessed as having no lawful purpose) by European law enforcement, has resulted in an enhanced understanding of the use of criminally dedicated secure communications (CDSC) devices.

OUTCOME 1: WE HAVE A SAFE COMMUNITY

Members probed the PSNI on the topic of encrypted messages. The PSNI outlined the opportunities for law enforcement to gain evidence from encrypted messages, including working with other agencies. However, when support is sought from social media companies to provide evidence the PSNI advised of the challenges this presents.

Finally, a key opportunity outlined in the analysis of PSNI performance monitoring was the development and the finalisation of the **Organised Crime Strategy (2021-24)**¹⁴. The Strategy aims to consolidate and enhance the response to existing organised crime threats due to the level of collaboration and partnership needed to develop and ultimately effectively deal with OCGs and paramilitary groups. The Strategy will feature in future reporting with the impact/s with the aim of enhancing the response to OCGs and paramilitary groups monitored and scrutinised by Members.

14 The strategy is set in the broader context of wider government outcomes and DoJ priorities. The overarching aim will be delivered through a set of strategic objectives that are grouped under key themes. These are: pursuing offenders through investigation, disruption and prosecution; preparing and protecting individuals, communities, systems and businesses to mitigate vulnerability and impact; and preventing, deterring and diverting people from engaging and re-engaging in organised crime.

INDICATOR 1.3:

People in all communities feel safe

MEASURE 1.3.1:

Number of people in Northern Ireland who feel safe in their; local area, local high street or town centre and own home

MEASURE 1.3.2:

Rate of places repeatedly victimised

ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Partnership Committee: 17 December 2020

With regard to community safety, the PSNI's understanding of locations where people feel unsafe, and identifying demographical trends, is pivotal in addressing underlying issues to enable bespoke interventions. Furthermore, not all places experience the same level and type of criminality. Therefore, maintaining a specific focus on places¹⁵ which experience a disproportionate volume of crime is crucial for the application of appropriate interventions.

Members discussed the increase in Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in Northern Ireland and similar trends evidenced by other UK Services. Members questioned the level of criminality in certain areas reported by the PSNI.

The PSNI advised that while crime has generally been within 'normal trends', with the exception of ASB, it was difficult to identify repeat places experiencing sustained levels of criminality. The PSNI clarified that Local Districts discuss trends at daily and monthly meetings and this information is then fed through to the Support Hub in each area to ensure a multi-agency approach. The PSNI also assured Members that with almost 400 officers in Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs), the PSNI's focus is on the development of an effective shift pattern to ensure visibility in neighbourhoods to address any issues which arise.

¹⁵ Places, Streets and Neighbourhoods.

OUTCOME 1: WE HAVE A SAFE COMMUNITY

The PSNI also highlighted the correlation between ASB, drugs and alcohol misuse and outlined how NPTs are best placed to identify key factors such as suppliers and runners and the importance of identifying local solutions to local problems.

While Members welcomed improvements in reporting of the range of positive initiatives and activities, they highlighted the lack of strategic 'impacts' provided to adequately address the Measures. The PSNI acknowledged the report lacked data to draw out key strategic issues and assured Members that they would aim to demonstrate impact in future reporting.

OUTCOME 1: WE HAVE A SAFE COMMUNITY

INDICATOR 1.4:

Crime rates and trends showcase an effective police response

MEASURE 1.4.1:

Benchmark PSNI crime rates against previous PSNI levels and other most similar police services

ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Performance Committee: 14 January 2021

Monitoring crime rates and trends is necessary to ensure the PSNI respond effectively to existing and emerging crime problems and in turn ensure a safe community.

Members sought clarity on the usefulness of crime rates for monitoring police performance. The PSNI noted the necessity of crime figures to fully understand crime rates and trends in order to apply an effective policing response. Members also stated the difficulty in assessing the report card's statistical evidence and how this affects police practice. The PSNI advised that reporting on this measure is still in a developmental stage. They highlighted that the recorded data would be used as a baseline to identify long term trends to plan, move forward and benchmark.

As benchmarking and learning from most similar Police Services is pivotal in addressing this measure, Members questioned what learning, activity and collaboration the PSNI had undertaken to adopt best practice from those most similar Police Services. In response, PSNI outlined a range of learning best practice examples, specifically through their attendance at National Working Groups, working closely with other UK Services to gain support to address high level criminality and ongoing work with the National Crime Agency (NCA). Members welcomed the assurances given by the PSNI.

The PSNI provided an update on the continued decrease in incidents of overall crime rates, but also outlined an increase in the proportion of harmful crimes in reporting. Members discussed a range of additional key issues, including querying PSNI performance against a broad range of crime types which had decreased¹⁶ or increased¹⁷ throughout the reporting year.

¹⁶ The proportion of crime incidents in robbery, burglary, theft and criminal damage have decreased.

¹⁷ The proportion of harmful crimes including violence against the person, sexual offences and domestic abuse have increased.

OUTCOME 2: WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN POLICING

INDICATOR 2.1:

The level of public confidence in policing

MEASURE 2.1.1:

The number of people in Northern Ireland who are confident that PSNI is accessible, visible, responsive and victim focused

ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Partnership Committee: 17 September 2020

Communities where people feel safe and have confidence in the PSNI can encourage essential co-operation with the police in the provision of vital information and reporting of crime. Improving the trust within some communities, in particular those which have lower confidence in the police, is vital in tackling a range of criminal activity. It is therefore essential that everyone sees the positive impact of policing in their communities, with victims supported, less repeated criminality, crimes solved and offenders brought to justice.

Members focussed on the complaints trends evidenced by the Office of the Police Ombudsman Northern Ireland (OPONI). The PSNI noted that complaint trends are almost at an all-time low and they attributed this, in part, to Body Worn Video (BWW) usage and the increased scrutiny by the Board on Use of Force.

Members questioned the PSNI further on the need to ensure a balance of existing resources in conjunction with the roll out of 400 NPT officers. The PSNI agreed the importance of balancing resources in order to deliver effective responses to emergency calls, while also ensuring local police are dealing effectively with local issues.

A key issue highlighted was the lack of data available to accurately measure confidence in policing. Notably the latest statistics available at the time of reporting were collected in 2018. Therefore, the data predated the Performance Plan, meaning Members were provided with minimal survey information to effectively consider elements of this Measure.

This gap will be addressed over the course of the Policing Plan by establishing a new and bespoke survey to inform multiple areas with the aim of including '*public perceptions and confidence in policing*' data. At the time of reporting, Board Officials had commenced scoping work on this area, and this will be a particular area of focus and development in future performance monitoring.

INDICATOR 2.2:

The level of satisfaction with the service received

MEASURE 2.2.1:

Number of victims who are satisfied with the service they have received

ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Partnership Committee: 19 November 2020

Ensuring that the PSNI provide a high quality service to victims of crime is essential in maintaining and building confidence in policing. To date victim satisfaction feedback is gathered by text message service, which is sent to the victim.

Based on the victim satisfaction survey information, Members discussed and challenged the PSNI on the low response rate from 18-25 year olds. The PSNI accepted that further work would be required to fully understand whether the low response rate in young people is due to the communication medium. They discussed how engagement with key stakeholders, including Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PSCPs), could be utilised to take this forward and provided assurances that the SBNI, of which the PSNI has representation on, has secured funding to develop a risk assessment tool to look at 'at risk' young people. In addition, a redeveloped PSNI victim satisfaction survey was launched in 2020.

Finally, a key issue highlighted through analysis of PSNI performance was the core questions asked within victim satisfaction surveys for Police Services in England and Wales and how this differs to that asked by the PSNI. While understanding that there are no direct comparisons with the PSNI victim satisfaction survey and those available in England and Wales, Members did consider that those Police Services in England and Wales are required by the Home Office to carry out victim satisfaction in relation to domestic abuse. In response the PSNI advised Members that while vulnerable individuals, such as victims of domestic violence or sexual offences, are not contacted by text, work had started to look at other ways of gathering victim satisfaction information from these individuals.

OUTCOME 2: WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN POLICING

INDICATOR 2.3:**The representativeness of the police service****MEASURE 2.3.1:****Improve representativeness of the service across ranks, grades and departments by gender and community and socio-economic background****ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE****Resources Committee:** 14 October 2020

This Measure centres on representativeness within the PSNI, in respect of officers and staff, with a focus on gender, community background and socio-economic background. Achieving a more representative police Service will enable police officers and staff to understand the communities they serve. In turn local people can identify with the PSNI, resulting in effective engagement for all and securing confidence in policing.

Members considered the PSNI People Strategy 2020-2025 that is built around five people principles¹⁸ and sets out an ambition to be truly representative and inclusive. The PSNI noted that through the Strategy, representativeness needs to be mirrored in police staff recruitment, promotion and selection in development across all roles, grades and ranks in the organisation. Analysis of PSNI performance in this area provided the opportunity to ensure that the PSNI improve representation of the Service through their People Action Plan which will be an area of focus in 2021-22 police performance monitoring.

The PSNI provided a range of examples on initiatives and resources to recruit under-represented groups, in particular in respect of community background. However, a key issue identified by Members was that figures provided in the PSNI report, which offered a comparison of the last two recruitment campaigns¹⁹, showed that the numerous initiatives and activities undertaken had failed to make a significant impact.

18 (i) Being representative and inclusive; (ii) Resourcing for the future; (iii) Leading together; (iv) Serving with professionalism; and (v) Valuing health and wellbeing.

19 In 2018 31% of applicants were Catholic compared to 30.8% in 2020.

In addition to this, the PSNI did not address ‘impact’ i.e. *‘what difference has been made’* in order to evidence improvement in representativeness. While the PSNI provided assurances that representativeness was an area of focus of their People Strategy and Action Plan (as outlined above) they did not provide further detail on this issue. The PSNI did however outline that they were undertaking an overview of outreach initiatives, as part of the PSNI Officer Recruitment Campaign, in early 2020. In respect of the upcoming Police Staff Recruitment Campaign, they detailed a planned focus to reach those in working class communities. They stated that work was underway with their Recruitment Partner to identify an Academic Partner to work on this. Members also stressed that the Measure is not only about recruitment but also about representativeness across ranks, grades and departments.

OUTCOME 2: WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN POLICING

INDICATOR 2.4:**Delivery of effective crime outcomes****MEASURE 2.4.1:****Levels of crime outcomes to identify and respond to areas of concern in outcome statistics, with a particular focus on Domestic Abuse in 2020/21****ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE****Performance Committee:** 11 March 2021

Confidence in policing is built in part through appropriate and timely criminal justice outcomes. It is imperative that the PSNI and the wider criminal justice system work within their respective powers to ensure that victims receive the outcome they deserve. In order to ensure the PSNI provide a victim focussed service, it is important to understand what victims want as a result of reporting the crime. For example, an effective crime outcome for a victim may not necessarily be a court disposal, it could be a restorative justice approach such as a caution or penalty notice.

The PSNI advised Members that while there is room for improvement with regards to crime outcomes, generally the overall picture was encouraging, positive and going in the right direction. They highlighted the negative effect COVID-19 has had on the justice system, particularly the challenge of assessing if levels of crime outcomes are trends or a result of COVID-19 and noted that work was being completed nationally on this issue.

In respect of the justice system, the PSNI noted that victim attrition and evidential difficulties were of specific concern to them. They advised Members that they had been working in partnership with the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) and the Department of Justice (DoJ) to address these concerns and other areas that require improvement. This was notably through the establishment of the Victim and Witness Steering Group. The PSNI also assured Members that they had been working on addressing how the Service can keep victims and witnesses engaged throughout the process. They elaborated on the vital role of the family liaison officers and how remote evidence had supported victims and witnesses and endeavour to improve the securing of justice outcomes.

OUTCOME 2: WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN POLICING

Members sought clarity on the levels of crime outcomes in regards to crimes against older people. They further discussed crime outcomes and the ability to benchmark with other Police Services. The PSNI advised that there were some areas of crime outcomes that are not comparable with similar Police Services, due to a variety of reasons including the recording of crime and legislation. For example, the PSNI are the only service that records crime outcomes for over 60's. Therefore, outcome rates among older people will continue to be monitored through future reporting.

OUTCOME 3: WE HAVE ENGAGED AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

INDICATOR 3.1:

Police in partnership with local communities, including PCSPs, identify and deliver local solutions to local problems

MEASURE 3.1.1:

In collaboration with the community deliver on the commitments outlined in the Local Policing Review

ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Partnership Committee: 15 October 2020

The PSNI recognise and value the voice of the community. Following consultation, a comprehensive programme of work was identified and published in the **Local Policing Review (LPR) response**²⁰ to change local policing. This was to be delivered through the six identified headline actions²¹ with community empowerment playing a vital role in successfully achieving this Outcome.

Members discussed progress on the implementation of the LPR Action Plan with the PSNI, updating Members of progress. PSNI highlighted that COVID-19 had significantly impacted on the delivery of a number of Actions within the Plan. They confirmed that their focus was to put in place an additional 400 Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) Officers and this was on track to be delivered. In doing this, they highlighted the multiple associated challenges, such as training, that was required to fill gaps left in moving officers to other roles. Again, PSNI highlighted the impact of COVID-19 restrictions which makes training difficult to deliver. They noted that while there was a suspension in non-essential training, there had been a marked increase in virtual training provision. PSNI assured Members that 1,200 officers had completed Open University Modules and training in Problem Solving had been provided.

20 At the latter end of 2018 the Board and PSNI undertook one of the largest consultations on policing in recent years. Thousands of individuals, and a number of representative groups, engaged with the process and provided a wealth of information to shape the future of local policing in Northern Ireland.

21 Visibility; Neighbourhood Policing; Vulnerability and Mental Health; Call Handling; Collaboration and Multi-Agency Working; and Competing Policing Demand.

OUTCOME 3: WE HAVE ENGAGED AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

Members also outlined the importance of Neighbourhood Policing reaching all people and not just those already engaged with the PSNI. They provided assurance and expressed their recognition that there is a lot more to Neighbourhood Policing than being visible, emphasising the importance of effective problem solving and intelligence of local issues. PSNI provided further detail on the ‘visibility’ of NPTs noting they had increased liveried vehicles, ‘accessibility’ whereby NPT details were available online and on social media platforms. ‘Responsiveness’ continues to be emphasised in training programmes.

Members noted that there was an evident lack of ‘impact’ provided within actions coming from the PSNI’s LPR Action Plan. The PSNI accepted the Action Plan lacked focus on impacts. They advised that 15 of the 45 actions within the LPR were completed or ‘business as usual’. However, Members queried whether all of the 15 Actions were ‘business as usual’ and therefore a focus should remain on monitoring progress against these Actions.



2020/21 IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

This section provides an overview and summary of the Impacts and Opportunities identified through analysis and reporting on the first year of the 2020-25 Policing Plan.

The biggest challenge faced by the PSNI in this year, as highlighted throughout the Annual Assessment 2020/21 was COVID-19. As with every individual, organisation and indeed society as a whole, the pandemic has had a significant impact. Therefore, reporting on the impact of policing in Northern Ireland during 2020/21 needs to be set against this context.

COVID-19 posed significant challenges for all Police Services across the UK and Ireland. Indeed the Board examined in detail the impact for the PSNI in its report **A Thematic Review of the Policing Response to COVID-19** published in November 2020. The PSNI were given the difficult task of policing the evolving and ever changing Health Regulations as the response to the pandemic moved through various stages of lockdown throughout the year. There is no doubt that this provided major challenges for the PSNI and resulted in both positive and negative impacts during 2020/21.

It was anticipated that the reporting of the Performance Plan 2020/21 would enable the PSNI to put in place a number of baselines that would provide opportunities for evidencing impact in future years through tracking and comparatives across the lifespan of the five year Policing Plan. It was also accepted that there would have been more positive and effective impacts demonstrated of policing were it not for the challenging policing environment the COVID-19 pandemic created.

In contrast, the direct impact of COVID-19 on policing provided the PSNI with opportunities to demonstrate positive impacts across the Outcomes of the Policing Plan, including:

OUTCOME ONE

The PSNI successfully led on multi-agency work delivered as a reaction to the pandemic through **Collectively Preventing Harm**. In partnership with the PSNI and the Board, this collaboration involved the Department of Justice, the Department for Communities, Education Authority, Health and Social Care Trust and Safeguarding Board NI reacting proactively to keep communities safe during the COVID-19 lockdown period. Delivering a safe community was also evidenced within the 2020/21 Assessment through the enhancement of **Hate Crime Legislation** which could support the PSNI in effectively carrying out and improving their responsibilities to safeguard victims of hate crime. It is anticipated that the development and the finalisation of the **Organised Crime Strategy 2021-2024** will further support a safe community. The strategy is set in the broader context of wider government outcomes and DoJ priorities with the overarching aim to be delivered through a set of strategic objectives that are grouped under key themes.

OUTCOME TWO

2020/21 has been a challenging year for Police Services in the UK due to the pandemic and the policing of the Health Regulations. This will have impacted on confidence in policing levels across Northern Ireland. However, even with these challenges, an opportunity has been identified to develop a **new and bespoke Policing Plan survey**. It is anticipated that this will provide essential survey data and inform multiple areas of the Policing Plan 2020-25 centering on the pivotal area of confidence in policing.

OUTCOME THREE

During 2020/21 the PSNI made a significant investment in an **additional 400 Neighbourhood Policing Team officers**. While the impact of this investment is yet to be evidenced, it is anticipated they will strengthen engaged and supportive communities through the PSNI's contribution to addressing and tackling local issues and enabling the assessment and evaluation of the impact of partnerships. These areas have been identified through Outcome Three reporting to the Board and the supporting work of the Policing Plan Review Working Group.

While recognising this was the first year of reporting on a five year plan, which was impacted upon considerably by COVID-19, Members asked for more focus to be brought by the PSNI to the identification of impacts and the difference being made within each Measure. There is, therefore, an expectation from Board Members that considerable improvements will be made in the 2021/22 reporting of impacts and opportunities.

While including a comprehensive assessment of the PSNI's performance for Measures within 2020/21 it is clear that some areas brought to, or challenged by Members, will require future monitoring, scrutiny and evaluation. Therefore, this section of the Assessment provides a summary of the Future Monitoring considerations for the Board. They are illustrated in line with the Policing Plan 2020-2025 Outcomes²² and include a snapshot of information on future monitoring areas.

This summary illustrates the broad range of areas and issues that have already been reported against. However, the work of the PSNI is extensive and it is important to emphasise that reporting is not exclusive to the areas or issues outlined within this Future Monitoring summary. It is a snapshot based on 2020/21 reporting of the Performance Plan and future reporting will also include new and emerging areas.

FUTURE MONITORING

OUTCOME 1: WE HAVE A SAFE COMMUNITY

REPEAT VICTIMS

Domestic Abuse: the Repeat Victims approach; the Repeat Victim (Domestic Violence and Abuse) Strategy; Victim Call Back Scheme; and PSNI adopting an electronic DASH system.

CSAE: UK Legislation for "Duty of Care" online protection; and child abuse referrals decrease.

Hate Crime: Hate Crime Legislation

REPEAT OFFENDERS

PSNI review for managing offenders, including the Reducing Offender Units (ROUs), Offender Management Units and Public Protection Team under Public Protection Arrangements for Northern Ireland (PPANI).

The Organised Crime Strategy 2021-2024.

FEELING SAFE

Identification of strategic impacts to support positive initiatives and activities.

CRIME RATES

The increase in the proportion of harmful crimes.

²² Outcome 1 - We have a safe community; Outcome 2 - We have confidence in policing; and Outcome 3 - We have engaged and supportive communities.

OUTCOME 2: WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN POLICING

CONFIDENCE IN POLICING

Lack of up-to-date data to measure confidence in policing.

VICTIM SATISFACTION

Re-launched Victim Satisfaction Survey.

REPRESENTATIVENESS

The PSNI People Strategy 2020-2025 and PSNI People Action Plan.

OUTCOME 3: WE HAVE ENGAGED AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

LOCAL POLICING REVIEW COMMITMENTS

LPR Actions, inclusive of those that Members did not perceive as closed or business as usual.



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DOCUMENT TITLE

The Northern Ireland Policing Plan 2020-2025
& Annual Performance Plan 2020/21
Annual Assessment

ONLINE FORMAT

This document is available in PDF format
from our website.

PUBLISHED AUGUST 2021

This document may also be made available
upon request in alternative formats or languages.
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