



**Police Service**  
of Northern Ireland

# Chief Constable's Accountability Report

to Northern Ireland  
Policing Board

Report Date:

Covering Period of 1 March 2024  
to 4 April 2024

Presented at Policing Board  
Meeting:

11 April 2024



**we care**  
**we listen**  
**we act**

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Unless otherwise stated the statistics in this report are unvalidated management information sourced from administrative systems and are subject to change.

# Foreword

I welcome the Chair and new members of the Board and very much look forward to working together with you.

We have had a busy operational period this month, with the two day visit of Queen Camilla to Northern Ireland, the deployment of 50 officers on a mutual aid deployment to assist the MET police in connection with Operation BROCKS, (pro-Palestine demonstrations in London) and events over Easter.

During the vibrancy and celebration of St Patrick's Day, Constable Julie Halliday from Belfast City Centre Neighbourhood Policing Team, became an internet sensation when a social media influencer shared her positive message, attracting over 155,000 likes and 2,300 comments. This embodies our Hallmarks of Neighbourhood Policing and indeed the culture of the service.

As well as families celebrating Easter, we've also had tens of thousands of people commemorating events over this weekend from all traditions, the vast majority peacefully, respectfully and lawfully.

I want to put on record my thanks to these event organisers and participants who have worked with us helping to keep people safe. What unfolded in Creggan on Easter Monday, in particular the attacks on journalists, was extremely disappointing and completely unnecessary. We are supporting those affected and have commenced an investigation with a view to bringing those responsible to justice. I welcome the broad condemnation and am grateful for the wide support from across the community.

## Kenova

The 8 March 2024 saw the publication of the interim Operation Kenova report and I again want to acknowledge the strength, determination and dignity shown over many years by the families. This has been an inspiration to me and I will ensure that the Police Service of Northern Ireland is a victim centric organisation.

## Neighbourhood Policing

What a future police budget looks like will determine other aspects and in particular, our style of Neighbourhood policing. The publication of the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) inspection report on '[Community Safety and Local Policing Arrangements in Northern Ireland](#)'

outlines the reality regarding the abstraction of Neighbourhood Officers to provide backfill functions. Unfortunately, this does not come as a surprise to me, but I want to assure you, that I will continue to work hard to ensure that the contribution that our neighbourhood teams provide to our communities is not lost.

## Police Service Demand

With demand ever increasing, work is progressing in respect of the national programme 'Right Care, Right Person' (RCRP). Justice Department has led on early engagement with key partners with an organisational project board being created. Early indications would suggest excess of 42,000 concern for safety calls per year and 500 calls per month from the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS). This is significant additional

pressure placed on policing when the nature of these incidents would suggest they would be best resolved by another agency. RCRP is being progressed in a staged approach, initially looking at concern for safety, followed by conveyancing, handover and mental health detentions. This programme will be embedded over the next 12-18 months and I look forward to updating the Board on progress.

We continue to expand online reporting capability to increase accessibility and provide a wider choice to members of the public in relation to how they contact the Police Service. Crime, road traffic collisions and anti-social behaviour can all be reported online, with this service being expanded to include reporting of domestic abuse. This includes an update to the 101 system, highlighting the alternative to report online by providing the public with an option to receive a text message, with a relevant link to the reporting site. Work is progressing to deliver a new online citizens portal where victims of crime can log in at a time of their choosing, receive instant updates as to the status of an investigation and the ability to communicate with the investigating officer. The digital agenda continues with work progressing to facilitate online payment of non-endorsable fixed penalty tickets and a bail kiosk for use within enquiry offices, to further reduce demand and provide an effective and efficient experience.

## **Funding and Recruitment**

Last month I reported that we were allocated additional in-year funding which will enable us to break even this year. I wish to reiterate my thanks to the Board for the part they played in securing this outcome. We have now secured approval for the police officer pay award and we will progress payment to them in April. I am determined to progress

the police staff pay award and I note the Department of Justice (DOJ) commentary around the business case for an uplift in the Revised Environmental Allowance (REA). In my view, this increase is long overdue and reflective of the unique challenges police staff face and I wish to reinforce my commitment to this.

While the additional funding late in the year for 2023-24 was welcome relief, it no way addresses the underlying funding deficit. Our most recent submission to the Department of Finance for the 2024-25 budget, based on a flat cash roll over settlement and maintaining police officer headcount at 6,358, results in a projected funding gap of **over £130m** next year. This pressure grows to over **£300m** if provision is included for compensation and legal costs associated with Holiday pay and the Data leak.

I am delighted to have welcomed 34 Student Officers to the Police College on their induction day. They will commence training later this month, but quite simply, this is a drop in the ocean. I have previously highlighted to the Board how the uncertainty of an adequate police budget impacts on strategic planning and organisational management. Outlined in the most recent His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report that the short-term nature of funding and continued uncertainty about future settlements, mean that the Service is severely restricted in its ability to plan for long-term investment and this needs to be addressed if the Service is to operate more efficiently. The recent Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (NIAC) report on ['The funding and delivery of public services in Northern Ireland'](#) states ....'the cuts in police

*officer numbers due to recent budgetary pressures will impact on the PSNI's visibility and ability to respond to increased demand.....Given the severe funding situation which the PSNI faces, we urge a rethink by the Treasury, Northern Ireland Office and the new Northern Ireland Executive of the PSNI's financial framework. This would ensure that the PSNI has a greater variety of options in dealing with any financial difficulty in future, which is critical given the importance of the Police Service's role in Northern Ireland's post conflict society....'*

In the NIAC report on '[the effect of paramilitary activity and organised crime on society in Northern Ireland](#)' comments about PSNI funding to our Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF), outline that short-term yearly funding cycles mean that PCTF is operating on a cliff edge funding cycle. This has an impact in developing and delivering longer term strategies to combat paramilitary criminality. This uncertain and short term funding allocation, also has significant impact on the officers and staff in these investigative teams and the perception of the stability and longevity of their roles. These are highly skilled and motivated officers and staff do a challenging role to keep people safe and **we must not lose momentum or relinquish the gains made.**

To provide further illustration and comparison on our budget, from 2010-2022 Police Funding in (England & Wales) **increased by 20%** - the PSNI budget has gone slightly down. Over the same period inflation was 36% and as a consequence our budget has **decreased by 36%** in real terms.

*[Source - Session 2 – National Police Infrastructure – Finance & Workforce – March 2024]*

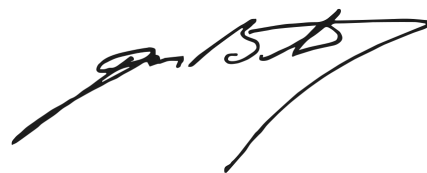
Despite the financial cliff we are facing, I am pleased to report that In the 12 months from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 to 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024, crimes recorded in Northern Ireland saw a **decrease of 5.5 per cent** (6,092) on the previous 12 months (105,256 crimes recorded). This is testament to my officers and staff, who despite the challenges we face, continue to do their best to keep people safe.

## Team PSNI

A leadership conference was held at Newforge attended by over 120 colleagues to celebrate International Women's Day. This included the Women in Policing Association NI (WPA NI) Inspire Awards, which saw 90 officers and staff members nominated for the 12 awards which were presented on this year's theme of 'Inspire Inclusion'. National Police Staff Week of celebration culminated in a special recognition event at the Police College for the 53 members of staff nominated by colleagues.

I would like to thank the WPA NI for their continuing work and to congratulate the recipients and nominees in all these awards.

I look forward to our first 'Team PSNI' event, where we will further imbed with officers and staff, our core purpose and create a truly collaborative and inclusive environment. This will allow direct engagement with members of the Service Executive Team to build networks and relationships.



Jon Boutcher QPM  
Chief Constable  
Police Service of Northern Ireland

# Finance and Resource Update

Following the return of the Executive, I reported last month that PSNI has now been allocated with additional in year funding. This funding is much needed to address our underlying financial pressures and should enable a break even position at year end. I want to reiterate my thanks to the Board for the part they played in securing this outcome.

The additional funding includes the cost of outstanding pay awards and we have now secured approval to progress payment to police officers in April. I also remain committed to progressing the police staff award as soon as possible.

## 2024-25

My focus is now firmly fixed on securing an improved budget settlement for policing. For too long, officer and staff numbers have been allowed to decline, along with the supporting infrastructure. Policing is at the heart of any functioning society and needs to be given adequate priority in funding decisions both by the NI Assembly and Department of Justice.

On my part, I have already signalled my intention to stop the decline in police officer numbers by restarting student officer recruitment again in April. However, I do so knowingly at risk, as yet again I am entering the financial year without a notified budget. This is not an acceptable position and we really must do better. My ability to properly plan operationally and to maximise the value of whatever budget is provided, is significantly curtailed by both the annularity and lateness of budgets.

The additional funding late in the year for 2023-24 was welcome relief, but in no way addresses the underlying funding deficit. Our most recent submission to the Department of Finance for the 2024-25 budget, based on a flat cash roll over settlement and maintaining police officer headcount at 6,358, results in a projected funding gap of over **£130m** next year. This pressure grows to over £300m if provision is included for compensation and legal costs associated with holiday pay and the data leak.

## Officer & Staff Numbers

In my last report, I referred to recent research that set out a credible evidence base for up to 8,500 officers and 3,000 staff. This is in stark contrast to our current resourcing levels and funding is urgently required to address the shortfall.

Despite the NI Block growing by almost 50% since 2010-11 to £14.2bn in 2023-24, the police budget has fallen from £903m to £892m, without any adjustment for purchasing power or inflation. Whether intentional or otherwise, the reality is that the priority of policing has been eroded and this inevitably comes at a cost to services.

# Our Performance

## Official Statistics

The information in this section is extracted from our Official Statistics published reports. The full reports can all be accessed from the following link. <https://www.psni.police.uk/about-us/our-publications-and-reports/official-statistics>. These are in-year provisional figures and may be subject to change.

## Recorded Crime

In the 12 months from 1st March 2023 to 29th February 2024:

- There were 105,256 crimes recorded in Northern Ireland, a decrease of 6,092 (-5.5 per cent) on the previous 12 months.
- There were 55 police recorded crimes per 1,000 population in the 12 months March 2023 to February 2024 compared with 58 in the previous 12 months.
- When compared with the previous year, crime levels have been lower in each of the ten months since May 2023.

While shoplifting has increased by 1,698 (23.4 per cent), the majority of crime classifications have recorded lower levels. Stalking and harassment shows the largest fall (-3,295, -23.6 per cent); there have been a series of changes in the recording of these 'behavioural offences' since April 2017 with the latest change from May 2023 requiring fewer such offences to be recorded

- Higher crime levels were seen in theft offences (mainly shoplifting), possession of weapons and miscellaneous crimes against society.

- Lower crime levels were seen in violence against the person. The largest decrease was in stalking and harassment, with smaller decreases seen in violence with and without injury.
- Lower crime levels were also seen across burglary, criminal damage and drug offences.
- Sexual offences, robbery and public order offences showed similar levels to the previous 12 months.

## Anti-Social Behaviour

In the 12 months from 1st March 2023 to 29th February 2024:

- There were 45,355 anti-social behaviour incidents in Northern Ireland, a decrease of 2,475 (-5.2 per cent) on the previous 12 months. This is the lowest 12 month figure since the data series began in 2006/07.
- Between March 2023 and February 2024, each month has recorded lower levels of anti-social behaviour when compared with the same month in the previous year, with the exception of April to June 2023.
- Each month March 2023 through to February 2024 recorded the lowest levels of anti-social behaviour for those months since the start of the data series in April 2006, with the exception of April through to June 2023, which recorded the second lowest levels in the data series.
- The latest month (February 2024) was 138 incidents higher than January 2024.

## Security Situation

In 12 months from 1st March 2023 to 29th February 2024:

- There was one security related death, the same number as during the previous 12 months.
- There were 8 bombing incidents, compared to 6 during the previous 12 months and 24 shooting incidents, compared to 36.
- There were 31 casualties of paramilitary style assaults, compared to 27 during the previous 12 months. Just under half of these assaults (15) occurred in Belfast. All 31 casualties were aged 18 years or older.
- There were 14 casualties of paramilitary style shootings, compared to 10 during the previous 12 months. Just over half of these shootings (8) occurred in Belfast. All 14 casualties were aged 18 years or older.
- There were 102 security related arrests under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000, compared to 116 during the previous 12 months.
- 23 persons were subsequently charged, compared to 14 during the previous 12 months.

## Motoring Offences

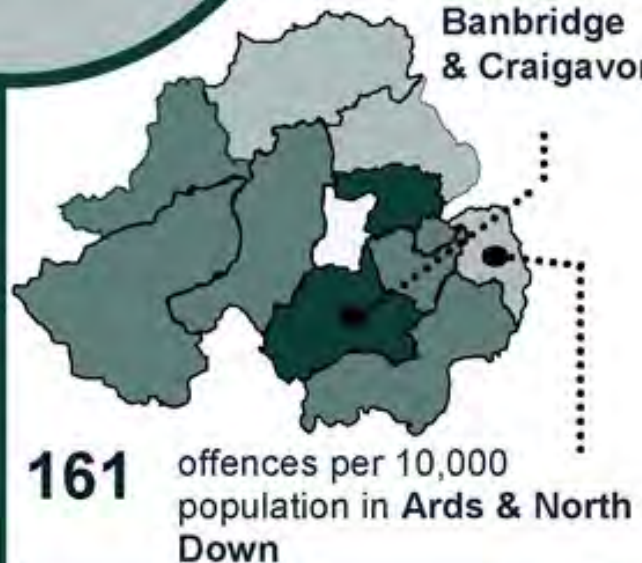
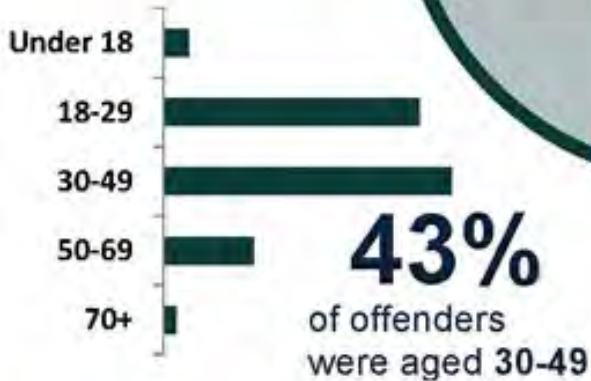
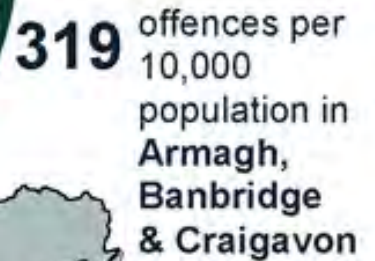
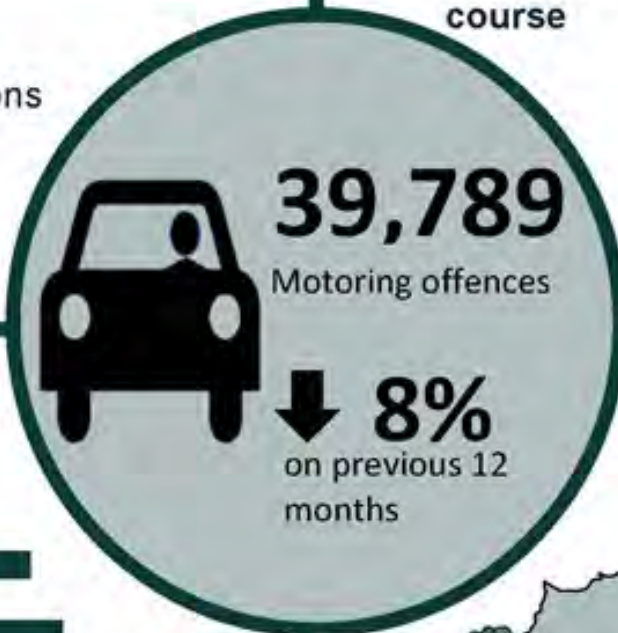
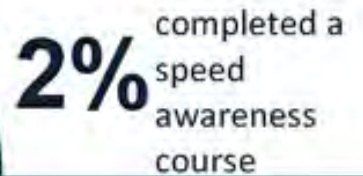
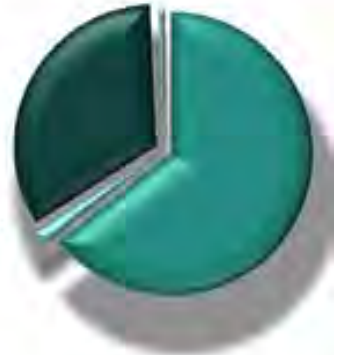
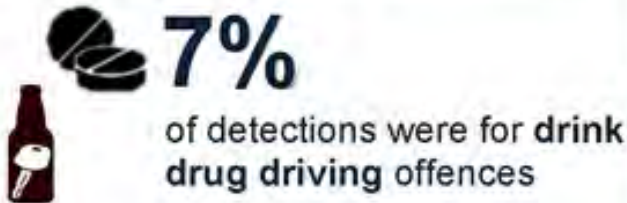
In the 12 months from 1st December 2022 to 31st December 2023:

- In 2023, there were 39,789 detections for motoring offences in Northern Ireland, a decrease of 3,347 offences (8%) on the 43,136 detections recorded in 2022.

- Of the 39,789 detections in 2023, over three fifths resulted in a referral for prosecution and a further one fifth in endorsable fixed penalty notices.
- Motoring offence detections have fallen by one third over the last ten years, from 60,838 in 2014.
- Insurance was the largest offence group in 2023 with 7,298 detections, accounting for 18% of the total, followed by speeding with 5,551 detections. There were a further 4,666 detections related to careless driving offences, 90 more offences than in 2022.
- Three offence groups showed modest increases (2%) over the year including insurance (141), careless driving (90) and construction and use (66).
- In contrast, 16 offence groups decreased over the year, most significantly speeding and mobile phone offences which fell by 1,576 (22%) and 479 (27%) respectively. These two offence groups accounted for over three-fifths of the overall decrease in detections between 2022 and 2023.



# Motoring Offences detected by PSNI 2023



For further information, please read full report available from: [here](#).

Date published: 28th March 2024



## Police Recorded Injury Road Traffic Collisions and Casualties

Between 1st January 2023 and 31st December 2023:

- There was a total of 5,058 injury road traffic collisions recorded, resulting in 71 fatalities, 880 people seriously injured and 7,034 slightly injured.
- While overall casualty levels increased by 1.8% on 2022, they have not yet returned to pre Covid-19 levels. Conversely though, while KSI casualties were 1.5% lower than 2022, they remain higher than the totals seen prior to 2020.
- Drivers and pedestrians accounted for approximately three-fifths of all KSI casualties (59%).
- There were 83 children (under 16) killed or seriously injured – 9 fewer than in 2022. In 2023, there were 18 fatalities in the 65 and over age group which was 8 more than the number recorded in 2022.
- Newry, Mourne and Down district had the highest number of road deaths with 11 fatalities. Belfast City district recorded the most serious injuries in 2023 (127 people).
- The most common principal causation factors for all casualties were ‘inattention or attention diverted’ (1,320 casualties) followed by ‘driving too close’ (1,052 casualties) and ‘emerging from minor road without care’ (590 casualties). These 3 causation factors alone accounted for more than a third of all casualties in 2023 (37.1%).
- The most common principal causation factors for KSI casualties were ‘inattention or attention diverted’ (135) and ‘impairment by drugs or alcohol - driver/rider’ (84).

# Outcome 1

## We Have a Safe Community

### Crime Department

#### Organised Crime Branch

On 1 March 2024 detectives from Organised Crime Branch made two arrests and recovered Class B controlled drugs with an estimated street value in excess of £500,000 following searches in south Belfast.

Follow up searches were conducted by detectives at premises in the Lisburn Road area and further drugs, cash and paraphernalia were located.

Two men, aged in their 20s and 40s, were arrested on suspicion of possession of Class B and possession of Class B with intent to supply. Both were later charged to appear at Belfast Magistrates Court.



*Pictured are drugs seized during the searches.*



*Suspected cocaine worth £200k seized alongside cash in Co Tyrone*

On 19 March 2024, detectives from Organised Crime Branch made an arrest following the stop and search of a vehicle in Dungannon. Officers stopped a vehicle travelling on the Omagh Road and a search of the vehicle uncovered suspected cocaine with an estimated street value of £200,000 and cash in both Euro and Sterling with a combined total value of approximately £50,000. As a result, a 41-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of possession of a Class A controlled drug with intent to supply and possession of criminal property. He was later charged to appear at Omagh Magistrates Court.

#### Paramilitary Crime Task Force

On 6 March 2024, detectives from the Paramilitary Crime Task Force conducted a search at a house in the North Belfast area. This search was part of an ongoing operation into criminality linked to the INLA. Suspected firearms and ammunition along with quantities of suspected drugs were seized.

A 27-year-old man and 29-year-old woman were arrested on suspicion of a number of offences.

They were both later charged to appear before Belfast Magistrates Court with possessing a firearm and ammunition in suspicious circumstances and possession of a Class C controlled drug.



*Officers seized the static dwelling from Ballyhalbert*

On 7 March 2024, a 45-year-old man was sentenced at Belfast Crown Court for offences as a result of an investigation by the Paramilitary Crime Task Force, into illegal money lending in the Larne area. The offences were carried out between the period of February 2018 and February 2019.

He was convicted of carrying on a regulated activity in breach of general prohibition and acquiring criminal property. He was sentenced to a 20-month custodial sentence that was suspended for two years.

On 20 March 2024, detectives from the Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF) investigating drugs criminality linked to the South East Antrim UDA welcomed the sentencing of a 38 year old man at Belfast Crown Court, for possession with intent to supply a class A controlled drug.

He was sentenced to serve a total of 16 months in custody and 16 months on licence. He was arrested in the Mallusk area of Newtownabbey, in December 2022, after a car he was driving was searched by officers who had been patrolling in the area. Cocaine with an estimated street value of approximately £100,000 was recovered from the car.



*Images of seized firearm*

On 14 March 2024, a seaside holiday home believed to have been purchased with the proceeds of fraud and money laundering has been seized and recovered by the National Crime Agency as part of a civil recovery investigation under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

NCA officers embedded in the Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF) obtained a recovery order by consent in Belfast High Court over the static home, located in Ballyhalbert.

The owner, a woman aged 29, from Newtownabbey, some of whose family are believed to be senior members of South East Antrim UDA, consented to the order. She is not alleged to be directly involved in the group and denied being involved in any unlawful conduct.

Recovering this holiday home is an excellent result for the Paramilitary Crime Task Force, and an example of how collective efforts can disrupt the activities of paramilitary groups.

## Serious Crime - sentencing updates

- A 55 year old man has been sentenced to a minimum term of 20 years imprisonment for the murder of Inayat Shah (March 2020).
- A 34 year old man has been sentenced to a minimum of 21 years imprisonment for the murder of Roy Reynolds (March 2022). A 70 year old man was also sentenced to 2 years & 4 months (half on licence) for assisting an offender.
- A 21 year old man was sentenced to 3½ years imprisonment (half on licence) for the manslaughter of David McConville (May 2022).
- A 33 year old man has been sentenced to a minimum of 29 years imprisonment for the murders of Roman Gossett, Sabrina Gossett, Morgana Quinn and the manslaughter of Denise Gossett (February 2018).
- A 26 year old man was sentenced to 4 months imprisonment suspended for 18 months and a 23 year old man was given 240 hours community service in relation to a video posted online which featured chanting about Michaela McAreevey who was murdered in 2011. A third man was found guilty and will be sentenced at a later date.

## Public Protection Branch

### Domestic Abuse Awareness Training Event

Rachel Williams (domestic abuse advocate, survivor and founder of Stand Up to Domestic Abuse) was in attendance with District Policing, Crime and Justice Departments on Monday 11 and Tuesday 12 March delivering training on domestic abuse. This saw her share her own personal experience where

following an 18 year domestically abusive intimate relationship her offender attended her place of work and shot her twice.

This attack has resulted not only in sustaining life altering injuries, but also in the tragic circumstances which saw her son take his own life. Following this harrowing attack, the offender took his own life, therefore leading to no criminal justice outcome.

This training received overwhelming positive reviews and we have two further in person sessions arranged for next month with an online session to follow later in the year.

### Stalking Protection Order

On the 19 March 2024 we saw the first Stalking Protection Order be issued in Northern Ireland following the provisions going live in October 2023. This sees a 46 year old male being given a two year Stalking Protection Order (SPO) against his ex-wife, having stalked and harassed her and family members. The victim has been incredibly positive about her experience with police and that she finally feels that there is something in place to protect her and her family.

### Operation Subreference

Retail crime was recently identified as a priority and in order to ensure a co-ordinated and collaborative approach, an Op SUBREFERENCE (our co-ordinated approach to an issue across all Districts and Departments) event focusing on retail crime across Northern Ireland took place on Friday 29 March 2024. The operation was part of the Safer Business Action Day, driven by formal analysis in terms of vulnerable locations and repeat offenders, aimed at both preventing and detecting crime.

As part of a national month of action to tackle retail crime launched by the National Business Crime Centre, this day of action brought police and partners in the business community together to tackle the key issues of business crime in our communities. Police across Northern Ireland conducted planned operations including high visibility patrols, proactive activity against repeat offenders, vehicle check points and searches. Importantly, police officers and crime prevention staff also engaged with local businesses and the public providing advice and guidance in terms of how to prevent retail crime.

During this operation we worked with police colleagues from An Garda Síochána and Belfast Harbour Police as well as groups such as Retail NI, Retailers Against Crime and the Federation of small businesses.

# Outcome 2

## We Have Confidence in Policing

### Community Background Monitoring

In April 2024 we will launch a three month pilot to collate community background monitoring data with a view to enhancing and improving our approach as we use the learning to understand how, and where, we can expand the pilot to improve our data sets. The initial data collection will focus on person searches conducted under the powers conferred under the Terrorism Act 2000 and Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007. This work is vitally important to promote organisational learning and continual improvement, increase accountability and transparency and build legitimacy and trust, especially around the use of police powers such as stop and search.

In the absence of any legislative enabling framework and no widely recognised definition of community background, the development of an organisational approach has been challenging. There is no doubt that our initial approach will require review and adjustment as we learn from the pilot and develop a detailed understanding. The pilot has been developed through the Service Accountability Panel (SAP), supported by the external reference group members and with oversight from the NIPB Human Rights advisor and the Independent Reviewer of the exercised powers under the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007.

### Stop and Search

We are taking forward work that relates to the development of a stop and search information card designed specifically for children and young people (which will outline

information on rights and procedure). By using the contacts made by our various neighbourhood policing teams, five groups of young people have been directly engaged with on this matter, totalling 65 young people (from Lurgan, Belfast, Lisburn and Newtownards). These engagements have been very productive and generated positive feedback, with valuable ideas that have greatly assisted in the development of this initiative.

In March 2024, as result of this feedback, the information card was presented to the our Service Accountability Panel (SAP), during which it was agreed that further meetings will be held with a view to improving it. We have also drafted a stop and search information internet page designed for young people and it is envisaged that when complete, these information pages will be accessible to young people via the scanning of a QR code on the back page of the stop and search information card. This matter is progressing and will be discussed again at the next meeting of SAP in June 2024.

### Young Peoples Forum

A number of Districts have now arranged to run Youth REAL events locally, with the first of those having taken place in late March and others to follow in the coming months. These events will provide an opportunity for young people across the country to have access to local police and senior officers to express concerns, raise issues or provide feedback on the connection and engagement they have experienced with policing in their areas.

It has now been agreed that Children's Commissioner's Office (NICCY) will manage and oversee a Young People's Forum, with PSNI, NIPB and PONI coming alongside as partners in this initiative.

A residential is being held with a group of 16 young people, aged 14-20 years old in early April. This group will have the opportunity to establish its own Terms of Reference and outline the aims and objectives it wishes to have regarding engagement with not just PSNI, but with NIPB and PONI, as the agencies which are the supporting structures for policing in Northern Ireland.

## **Community-Based Restorative Justice Pilot Scheme**

On 26 March 2024, Criminal Justice Branch held an event at Newforge Conference Centre to introduce the upcoming Community-Based Restorative Justice (CBRJ) pilot scheme, set to begin in April 2024. This scheme, launching initially in North and West Belfast, is designed as a one-year pilot aiming to establish a comprehensive and effective process for service wide implementation in April 2025.

The process focusses on referrals to Department of Justice accredited CBRJ schemes, for both non-crime incidents on the threshold of criminal behaviour, and offences eligible for Community Resolution Notices (CRNs). The process underscores the commitment of criminal justice partners to developing restorative pathways, reinforcing the collective effort to safeguard and positively impact our community.



# Outcome 3

## We Have Engaged and Supportive Communities

### St Patrick's Day

St Patrick's Day celebrations saw a busy operational weekend with police deployed at parades across the country as well as extended deployments to counter anti-social behaviour. We had extensive night-time economy operations in place across all parts of Northern Ireland. In the most part, the weekend passed off successfully. This is, in no small measure, due to extensive local engagement with parade organisers and participants. In the Holylands, we did not experience widespread anti-social behaviour, however, colleagues made three arrests and six people will be subject to report to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS). Two people received Penalty Notices for Disorder (PND) and 20 people were dealt with by Community Resolution Notice (CRN).

### Easter

This has been a really busy Easter for the Police Service with close to 80 parades taking place across the country.

As well as families celebrating Easter, we've also had tens of thousands of people commemorating events over this weekend from all traditions – the vast majority peacefully, respectfully and lawfully.

What we saw in the Creggan was an unrepresentative small minority who remain intent on causing violence and disorder and who will exploit local young people in the process.

Moving forward we will continue to focus on delivering policing with the community in the Creggan.

We welcome the broad condemnation of these events and are grateful for the wide support we've had from across the community since Easter Monday.

### CJINI report

The Police Service of Northern Ireland welcomes the publication of the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) inspection report on Community Safety and Local Policing Arrangements in Northern Ireland. The report highlighted the dedication and passion of our neighbourhood officers but also their growing frustration and that of communities with their level of abstraction from their core duties. This report we feel is both very timely and very helpful in terms of highlighting the opportunity costs arising from an inadequate budget allocation last year and more than ten years of under-investment in policing.

We remain committed to delivering a community based policing service that works with communities and partners to co-produce community safety.

What a future policing budget looks like going forward will determine how much Neighbourhood policing we can deliver, as we are now in danger of having Neighbourhood policing in name only.

## Safe Transport Team (STT) update

The Safe Transport Team (STT) was initially created as a joint pilot between PSNI and Translink in September 2020.



Due to the continued success of this project, we now have a permanent team that is co-funded by Translink. STT main priorities are to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour on the transport network, build capacity by engaging with and complement other local police teams dealing with local issues and to build relationships to improve confidence among Translink staff.

STT engage with Translink to discuss areas of concern and they have worked to improve their visibility at key times on the transport network. STT officers greatly assist in helping to give Translink staff the confidence and assurance to carry out their jobs in a safer environment, something acknowledged by their Union representatives.

STT have visited the project management team on the new site for the transport hub at Weaver's Grange and have seen the exciting plans that lie ahead. This will see an increase in passenger footfall and cross-border travel.

We are committed to ensuring that passengers will feel safe and are a key stakeholder in the planning and development of the project. As part of the new transport hub, plans are developing for a 'Community

Safe Space' that will provide STT, police and emergency services with space to engage with and support travellers.

## Key Campaigns and Events

### Guns and Knives Ruin Lives

Delivered by operational officers from the Armed Response Unit (ARU) this project aims to educate children, specifically between the ages of 14-17 years old, about the dangers and consequences associated with gun and knife crime. Over the past 12 months, ARU officers have been running a series of engagement events with schools and youth clubs throughout Northern Ireland in relation to knife crime. The 'Guns and Knives Ruin Lives' project has engaged with approximately 2500 young people, many from disadvantaged communities. This project originally commenced in 2010 and has been well supported by schools, community leaders and the Board.



*One of the engagement events*

## Autism Reality Experience

Police in Northern Ireland have had a major learning experience after taking a walk in the steps of those with autism. The Chief Constable was among 120 officers to get a glimpse into the world of the neurologically diverse ahead of Autism Acceptance Week.

The Chief Constable said those with autism have been “failed” in the past due to a lack of understanding of such conditions. It came during a visit of the Training 2 Care UK Autism Virtual Reality Experience Bus to Belfast, an initiative developed by those with autism which immerses users through the journey of being brought into custody with flashing lights, noises and sensory aspects such as smells and textures.

Those participating were observed by a trainer who took them through a lengthy debrief afterwards to assess their reactions and explain the reasons for how the experience worked.

While many prison authorities and schools have taken part in it, the PSNI is believed to be the first police service to do so. The PSNI have been working with Autism NI and the group’s Chief Executive welcomed participation in the initiative which will equip police officers with training and understanding, so that when they come into contact with somebody who has autism, they are able to understand and support them better.



*Autism NI CEO Kerry Boyd and Chief Constable Jon Boutcher*

# Our People, Your Service

## International Women's Day Leadership Conference

International Women's Day 2024 was celebrated with a Leadership Conference held at Newforge attended by over 120 colleagues.

The conference was opened by Chief Operating Officer Pamela McCreedy and included guest speakers including, TV presenter and journalist Lynda Bryans, Assistant Commissioner for the Metropolitan Police Barbara Gray, Justice Minister Naomi Long, Chair of the Northern Ireland Policing Board Deirdre Toner and Lady Mary Peters.



*International Women's Day conference attendees including: - Justice Minister Naomi Long, Chief Operating Officer Pamela McCreedy and T/ACC Melanie Jones*

## Inspire Awards 2024

As part of the programme of events to mark International Women's Day on Friday 8 March, the Women in Policing Association NI (WPA NI) presented 12 awards to inspiring female colleagues at the Leadership Conference at Newforge.

The theme for International Women's Day this year was Inspire Inclusion and a total of 90 officers and staff members were nominated spanning all ranks and grades. These nominations not only celebrate our female colleagues but they also show their hard work, professionalism, talent, compassion, leadership, courage, resilience and demonstrate their roles as mentors and in inspiring others.

## Long Service Awards

On 8 and 28 March 2024, officers and staff received Long Service Awards at a ceremonies at Police College, Garnerville. These events brought together officers, staff and their loved ones to celebrate the achievement of their long service.

Presenting the awards, Chief Constable Jon Butcher emphasised that to attain these service milestones is an outstanding achievement and one which represents a significant contribution to policing. There is no greater public service than policing, and to obtain the accolade of such an award here in Northern Ireland deserves even higher praise.

The officers and staff were made up of:

- One part-time reserve constable having achieved 35 years' service
- 14 officers and three staff members having achieved 30 years' service
- Four part-time reserve constables having achieved 25 years' service
- 54 officers (including one posthumous award) and 25 staff members having achieved 20 years' service, and
- 13 part-time reserve constables having achieved 15 years' service

## National Police Staff Week of Celebration

National Police Staff Week of celebration 2024 saw us focus and share the personal stories from across the diverse roles that our colleagues undertake every day to keep people safe. These stories, roles and achievements were highlighted through various platforms including social media and internal communications. This week served as a platform to honour and appreciate the invaluable contributions made by police staff both locally and nationally.

This culminated in a special recognition event at the Police College, Garnerville, for the 53 members of staff nominated by colleagues.



*T/DCC Todd and colleagues during National Police Staff Week*

# Forward Look

## Visual Impairment Protocol

In April, and in collaboration with the Royal National Institute of Blind (RNIB) people, we will be introducing our Visual Impairment Protocol. The aim is to prevent the targeting of vulnerable people at their home, especially by criminals impersonating police officers.

How the protocol works is that when we are contacted for assistance and are required to attend, a password will be provided to the caller and used by the attending officer to identify themselves. Should we have to call to a vulnerable persons address unexpectedly, instructions will be provided for them to keep the door locked, call 101 and select a dedicated option. Staff in our Contact Management Centre will confirm it is police in attendance.

Whilst this protocol is primarily being introduced with the support of the RNIB and the visually impaired community, it can be used by any vulnerable persons or groups.

## National Stalking Awareness Week 2024

National Stalking Awareness Week takes place between the 22nd and 26th of April, with a particular focus on partnership working to protect victims – ‘Join Forces Against Stalking’. For the Police Service of Northern Ireland, it presents an opportunity to not only raise awareness but also to promote the successes to date in tackling this crime type following the launch of the new legislation, two years on.

Stalking can actually take many forms and can be online as well as in person and could

be someone known to you or a complete stranger. It is an insidious crime that takes over and destroys lives. Statistics show that people will suffer up to 100 incidents before reporting to police. It often results in fear, trauma and a reduction in the victim’s quality of life, in some tragic cases it has resulted in murder.

## Team PSNI Events

Our first Team PSNI event will take place at Newforge. The aim is to create a positive work culture by building trust and confidence directly with officers and staff and deliver on the outcomes of Your Service Your Voice survey.

- Connecting with our core purpose
- Demonstrating transparency and involvement
- Communicating effectively
- Connecting the workforce creating a collaborative and inclusive environment
- Providing opportunity for development, shifting mind-sets and building new behaviours

The events are aimed at all employees both officers and staff and will provide direct opportunity for all of the workforce to meet and engage with members of Service Executive Team (SET) and with colleagues from across the organisation building networks and relationships.

## Operation Two Wheels

As part of our continued work to improve safety on our roads, this month will see officers focusing on Operation Two Wheels. This will focus specifically on the safety of motorcyclists and we will be reminding everyone of the importance of taking extra care on the roads as we head into spring.

Motorcyclists are one of the most vulnerable groups on Northern Ireland's roads, so it is important for road users to take another look for a motorcyclist before making any manoeuvre.

As part of this focus, officers will be engaging with motorcyclists, their passengers and other road users to promote motorcycle safety, including carrying out vehicle check points and conducting a number of Bike Safe workshops.

The arrival of better weather traditionally means we see an increase in motorcycles on our roads and we know that motorcyclists are **125 times more likely** to be killed or seriously injured when involved in a road traffic collision than a car driver for the same distance travelled.

We want everyone who uses the road to be safe.

Operation Two Wheels is part of our wider campaign which seeks to re-inforce the importance of the fatal five;

1. don't drink or take drugs and drive;
2. slow down;
3. don't be careless;
4. always wear your seat belt
5. never use your mobile phone whilst driving.

Stay alive.  
**Get to know the fatal five.**

**More than a statistic  
drive safe**

**DON'T DRINK  
OR TAKE DRUGS**

**30**

**SLOW  
DOWN**

**DON'T GET  
CARELESS**

**BELT  
UP**

**STAY OFF  
YOUR PHONE**

psni.police.uk

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