



Police Service
of Northern Ireland

Race and Ethnicity Action Plan 2025 -2027

**Equality in Action - Delivering Effective and Trusted Policing
for Ethnic Minority Communities, Officers and Staff**

Draft for Consultation Purposes

**we care
we listen
we act**

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Introduction

This plan outlines specific goals and actionable steps to eradicate racial and ethnic disparities in policing. These include enhanced training programs, oversight mechanisms, community engagement initiatives and feedback, and policy reforms. By implementing these measures, we will strive to build a policing system that upholds the dignity and rights of every individual, building safer communities for all.

As we embark on this journey, we are committed to continuous evaluation and improvement, ensuring that our efforts lead to meaningful and lasting change. We believe a proactive framework that cultivates an environment where people from ethnic minority communities can thrive, will enhance the lives of all our communities. We want the Police Service of Northern Ireland to be a great place to work. We recognise equality, diversity, and inclusion will be essential to achieving this.

The Race and Ethnicity Action Plan for policing in Northern Ireland is a comprehensive plan designed to address and build a more equitable service and improve our response to people from ethnic minority communities. This plan recognises the impact of race and ethnicity on interactions between the police and the communities they serve. It seeks to foster trust, promote justice, and ensure equitable treatment for everyone.

Our action plan is based on the principles of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) and the values of fairness, transparency, and accountability. It is informed by research, community input and best practice and lessons learned by policing nationally and internationally. By prioritising the voices of marginalised communities and our own Ethnic Minority Police Association (EMPA) and leveraging evidence-based activities, we aim to deliver a policing model that is effective and inclusive.

Context

“You can’t really move forward until you look back.”¹

Nationally, policing has accepted there is racism, discrimination and bias in policing. The Police Service of Northern Ireland also accepts this is the case and is, therefore, determined and fully committed to taking practical and meaningful action.

The launch of a National Police Race Action Plan for England and Wales followed the murder of George Floyd in summer 2020. His death was a further catalyst for concern about social injustice experienced by Black people nationally and internationally. The resultant review by Baroness Casey² outlined systemic failures, overt acts of homophobia, misogyny and institutional racism by serving officers and staff within the Metropolitan Police Service. This has had a significant impact for policing in the United Kingdom and resonated strongly with ethnic minority communities and in particular Black people, eroding public confidence in the police. Regrettably, these echoed similar findings of the 1999 report from ‘The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry’ by Sir William Macpherson and the subsequent ‘Macpherson Report: Twenty-two Years On’ in 2021 that defined institutional racism as:

“The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service

to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people”.³

In Northern Ireland, the Police Service has not been immune to criticism following our own handling of peaceful protests organised by the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, following the death of George Floyd.⁴ Furthermore, in February 2023, the Belfast Multi-Cultural Association (BMCA) announced plans to sell its Belfast premises after two arson attacks. **A representative of Amnesty International said the Police Service of Northern Ireland had, “consistently let down the black and minority ethnic”**⁵ **communities in this country”.** Despite the subsequent engagement and response taken by police since these incidents, we recognise there is more to do.

Summer 2024 brought more appalling attacks and scenes of violence and disorder across

Northern Ireland, with members of our ethnic minority communities attacked, damage caused to property and evidence of racist graffiti. Similar to events across England and Wales, this activity was carried out with the singular intent of terrifying communities and inciting hatred. We are clear through our policing response and the content of this plan, there will be no place for hatred and discrimination in Northern Ireland. **We are an anti-racist Police Service.**

According to the most recent census data, 8.1% of the Northern Ireland population belong to ethnic minority groups. Despite this, the Police Service of Northern Ireland is significantly under-represented, with only 0.66% of officers and 0.75% of staff currently from ethnic minority backgrounds, comprising an average of 0.71% of the workforce.

Recognising that lived experience and evidence shows that racial disparities affect Black people most acutely, our **Race and Ethnicity Action Plan is intended to address disparities and deliver specific outcomes for all minority ethnic communities.** It will demonstrate how we operate internally and externally for the benefit of all people from minority ethnic backgrounds that live in Northern Ireland today and in the future.

People from ethnic minority backgrounds and communities will only have confidence to engage with and trust us when we deliver on the plan outcomes. The plan has been developed through consultation with internal and external stakeholders as well as aligning with national practice, such as the National Race Action Plan for England Wales. We have also taken into consideration the outcome of the 'Your Service, Your Voice' cultural audit from approximately 4000 respondents that resulted in recommendations and the need to

clearly prioritise inclusive practices and behaviours in our workplace culture and environment. We invite continuous feedback on the plan and how we are delivering on our commitments and want to work in partnership to make sure we are getting it right. It will be essential in ensuring the Police Service of Northern Ireland is culturally competent and responds to the individual needs of officers, staff and people from ethnic minority communities.



A statue in memory of Frederick Douglass
as featured in Belfast City Centre

1. Cornel West - From 'Remaking America' panel discussion at George Washington University
2. Baroness Louise Casey - 'An independent review into the standards of behaviour and internal culture of the Metropolitan Police Service', 2023.
3. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, report of an inquiry by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277111/4262.pdf, 6.34, p49, February 1999
4. <https://www.policeombudsman.org/news/discrimination-concerns-are-justified.-but-not-on-grounds-of-race-or-ethnicity>
5. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-64637550>

How we will communicate on Race and Ethnicity

Communicating on issues of race and ethnicity needs to be done sensitively, accurately and responsibly in order to maintain the trust and confidence of communities, our workforce and partners. Segregating race into broad categories without careful consideration and where it is possible to be more specific, results in exclusion.

In reporting on Northern Ireland data, we take account of Northern Ireland Statistics Agency (NISRA) statistical bulletins and we will use their guidance around communicating about ethnicity.⁶

Ethnicity and Race - we will refer predominantly to ethnicity. This is because:

- surveys usually ask people for their ethnicity
- using consistent terms helps people to understand our data.

Ethnic minorities - We will use 'ethnic minorities' to refer to all ethnic groups except the white British and white Irish groups. Ethnic minorities include white minorities, such as Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller groups.

We will not use the terms BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) and BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) because they emphasise certain ethnic minority groups (Asian and Black) and exclude others (Mixed, Other and White Ethnic Minority groups). The terms can also mask disparities between different ethnic groups and create misleading interpretations of data.

6. <https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Corporate/Commission%20Meetings/2023/cmeeting250123/EC-23-01-11-Census21databriefingnoteAC.pdf>

What we will do

We want the Police Service of Northern Ireland to be an actively anti-racist organisation where we actively demonstrate upstander behaviours against racism and prejudice. Policing is behind almost every other public service as an employer of choice for people from ethnic minority communities and there is a need for urgent change.

Commitments of our Race and Ethnicity Action Plan

1

We are an anti-racist Police Service.

2

We are committed to people from an ethnic minority background feeling safe, valued by and engaged in policing.

3

We are committed to staff and officers from an ethnic minority background feeling safe, valued by and engaged in the workplace.

4

We are a Police Service who can be trusted by people from ethnic minority communities.

5

We are a Police Service who strive for excellence in diversity, equality and inclusivity.

In developing our plan, we welcome being held to account. External scrutiny from our accountability body, the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB), will ensure delivery against the Policing Plan outcomes: (to note - under consultation at time of writing)

1

We have a safe community

2

We have confidence in policing

3

We have engaged and supportive communities

How we will do it

We will make good on our commitments to people from an ethnic minority background by building on our principle of people being at the heart of our service delivery – we are victim focused, community focused and workforce focused. Our commitments are aligned with the Code of Ethics¹⁰, our Public Engagement Strategy, the Police Service of Northern Ireland Hate Crime Control Strategy¹¹ and our People Principles.¹²

People Principles

Our five People Principles are:

1

Being representative and inclusive – where the communities we serve can be seen across the organisation and where everyone is confident to be themselves at work.

2

Resourcing for the future – evolving and continually adapting our resourcing model to unlock the capacity and capability of our people.

3

Leading Together – taking responsibility for how we police.

4

Serving with professionalism – taking pride in demonstrating the highest levels of conduct and performance.

5

Valuing health and well-being – where we value the health and well-being of colleagues to create a safe and supportive working environment.

¹⁰ <https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/psni-code-ethics>

¹¹ <https://www.psni.police.uk/sites/default/files/2024-10/Hate%20Crime%20Control%20Strategy%20-%20August%202024.pdf>

¹² <https://www.psni.police.uk/sites/default/files/2022-09/people-strategy-2025-spreads.pdf>

Our Workstreams

We will deliver and monitor our commitments under five workstreams:

Workstream 1

Internal Culture and Inclusivity

A Police Service that is proportionately representative and inclusive of ethnic minorities, and supports its ethnic minority officers and staff.

Workstream 2

Professionalism, Powers and Policy

A Police Service that is fair, respectful and proportionate in its actions towards people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Workstream 3

Community Engagement and Relations

A Police Service that routinely involves, engages and delivers for people from ethnic minority communities, at every level, no matter the manner of contact.

Workstream 4

Protection, Partnership and Justice

A Police Service that protects people from ethnic minority backgrounds from crime, and seeks safety and justice for all.

Workstream 5

Performance and Accountability

A Police Service that measures performance, uses evidence based decision making and delivers positive outcomes for our communities and workforce.

Everything we do will be in line the Code of Ethics.

We will also demonstrate impact through analysis, insights and learning:

- Evidence and evaluation.
- Baseline 2024 data (e.g. internal performance framework, workforce and representation data)
- Develop a performance and outcomes framework
- Develop annual reporting and governance structures
- Develop a communications plan

Here for You - Public Engagement Pillars:

1

Attraction, recruitment and retention- a focus on representation and recruitment.

2

Engagement - through a community focused and collaborative approach.

3

Procedural fairness - where every encounter the public has with policing is fair, impartial and consistent.

4

Effective neighbourhood policing - where local engagement, service delivery and community problem solving is at the heart of everything we do.

5

Local accountability - where we are focused on positive outcomes, for victims, communities and justice.

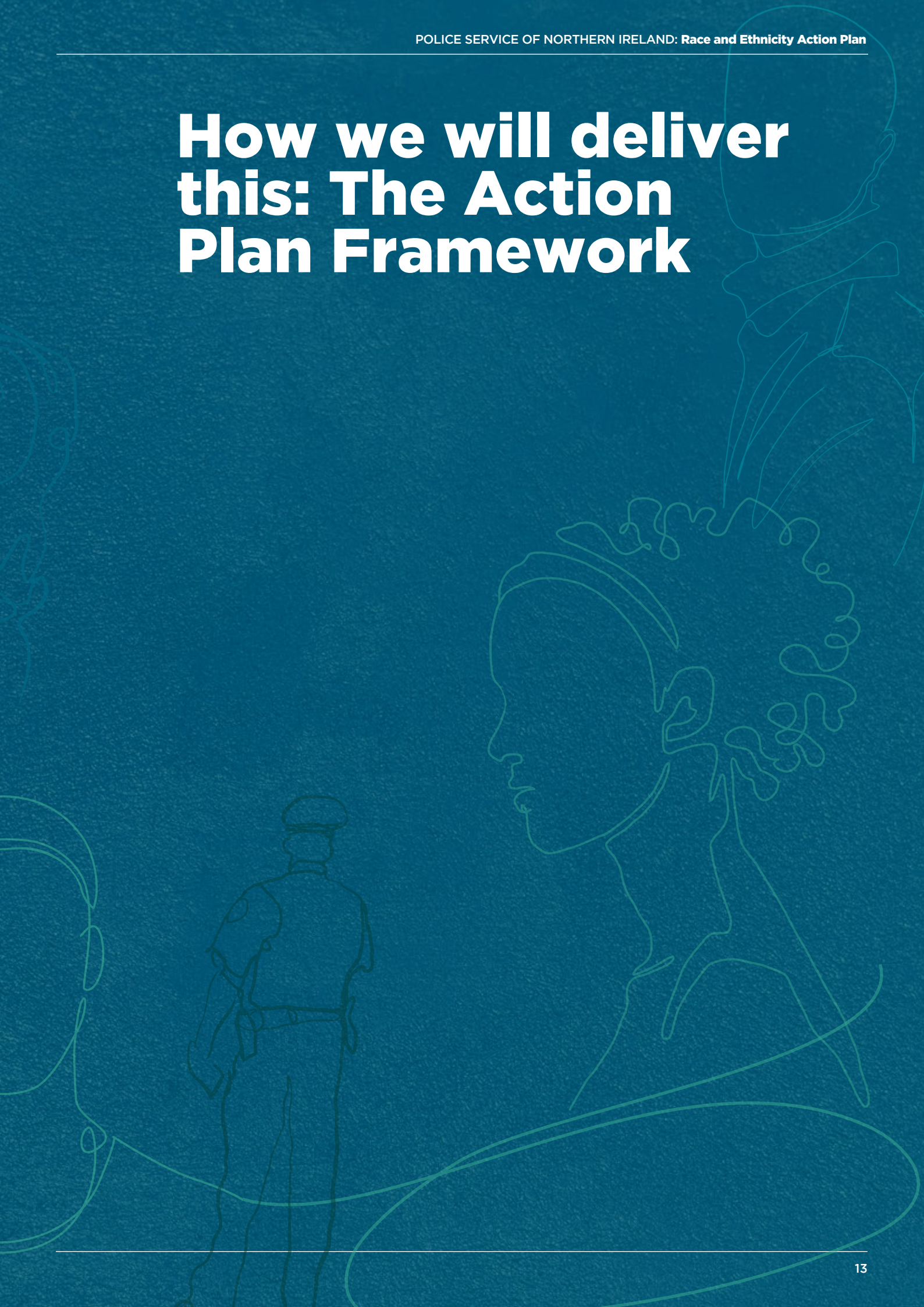
Strategic Governance and Compliance

To support the implementation of the Police Service of Northern Ireland Race and Ethnic Minority Action Plan, there will be individual workstream delivery plans that will inform an Annual Delivery Plan, setting out the priority actions over the forthcoming 12-month period. Governance and scrutiny of this plan, including progress against delivery, will take place through the development of a new performance framework; internal governance processes, and a communications and community engagement plan at a local and strategic level.

The Race and Ethnicity Action Plan will have a key part to play in the delivery of our Equality Action Plan and our commitment to the Equality Scheme. The Police Service of Northern Ireland Equality Scheme is our formal mechanism to ensure we comply with our statutory obligations and equality legislation. Compliance is monitored through internal processes within Police Service of Northern Ireland and through external oversight of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI).



How we will deliver this: The Action Plan Framework



Workstream 1

Internal Culture and Inclusivity

A Police Service that is representative of ethnic minorities and supports its ethnic minority officers and staff.



People and Workforce | Leadership Training | Professional Standards

What we will do	How we will do it
1.1 Increasing the awareness of racism, anti-racism, Black history and its connection to policing	1.1.1 Reducing racial disparities inside the Police Service, regardless of their root causes through robust training programmes 1.1.2 Ending racism in the workplace - training upstander behaviours, cultural competence and awareness
1.2 Improving recruitment, retention and progression of ethnic minority people within policing	1.2.1 Treating people with an ethnic minority background fairly and with respect, when applying for policing roles and throughout their policing careers 1.2.2 Developing ethnic minority officers and staff so they can fulfil their potential and progress to the most senior levels 1.2.3 Making sure ethnic minority people are encouraged and prepared to apply for police roles
1.3 Improving understanding of the experiences of ethnic minority officers and staff and addressing workplace disparities	1.3.1 Ensuring internal processes for pay, recruitment, promotion, progression and misconduct are fair to ethnic minority officers and staff 1.3.2 Listening to ethnic minority officers and staff, asking them to share their views and taking their perspectives into account 1.3.3 Develop coaching, mentoring and reverse mentoring programmes 1.3.4 Equip frontline supervisors to create an environment of support and allyship within and external to the Police Service of Northern Ireland
1.4 Reducing racial disparities in misconduct and complaints processes and improving support to ethnic minority officers and staff	1.4.1 Responding to the individual needs and circumstances of ethnic minority officers and staff, such as experiences of hate crime 1.4.2 Routinely involving ethnic minority officers and staff in internal decision-making processes 1.4.3 Review the grievance processes to ensure that discrimination cases/trends are collated

Workstream 2

Professionalism, Powers and Policies

A Police Service that is fair, respectful and proportionate in its actions towards people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

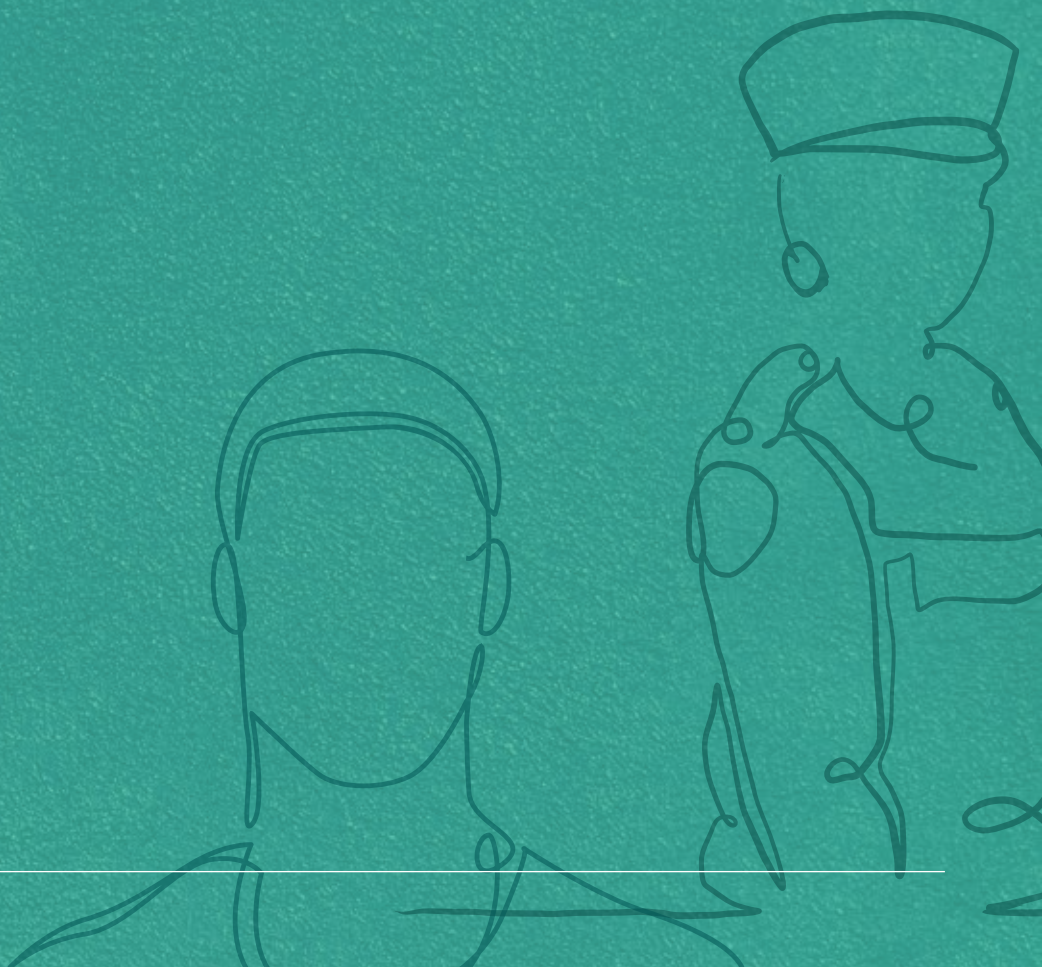


What we will do	How we will do it
<p>2.1 Embedding the principles of the professionalism and Code of Ethics</p> <p>Eliminate any racial bias, stereotyping, profiling or discrimination in our actions</p>	<p>2.1.1 Dealing with ethnic minority children in an age appropriate and culturally sensitive way</p> <p>2.1.2 Deliver service -wide Cultural Intelligence (CQ) Training</p> <p>2.1.3 Through analysis, supervision and scrutiny of police powers at service and individual levels, identify and take actions to eliminate any identified racial disparities</p>
<p>2.2 Providing a service that is specific to individual need and taking account of cultural identity, heritage, vulnerabilities, experiences and circumstances, such as trauma</p>	<p>2.2.1 Ensure that officers and staff understand ethnic minority history as it relates to policing Black people and other ethnic minorities and the ongoing impact and trauma of disproportionality</p> <p>2.2.2 Responding to the individual needs and circumstances of people, such as mental ill-health and trauma</p> <p>2.2.3 Treating ethnic minority people who have contact with the police fairly and with respect</p>
<p>2.3 Appropriate use of powers - Reducing the risk of criminalising people from ethnic minority communities by ensuring that they benefit from appropriate response, early action, prevention and diversion</p>	<p>2.3.1 Actively supporting services that make a difference to young people's lives and reducing the need for police to be involved at later stage</p> <p>2.3.2 Working with ethnic minority communities to tackle the crime and disorder problems that cause them concern or harm, particularly to young people</p> <p>2.3.3 Treating everyone from ethnic minority communities who have contact with the police fairly and with respect</p>
<p>2.4 Strengthen workforce knowledge and oversight of the use and impact of police powers</p>	<p>2.4.1 Using police powers - such stop and search and traffic stops - proportionately and only when lawful and necessary</p> <p>2.4.2 Reducing racial disparities in the use of police powers and criminal justice outcomes</p>

Workstream 3

Community Engagement and Relations

A Police Service that routinely involves, engages and delivers for people from ethnic minority communities no matter the manner.



Community Policing | Communications and Engagement

What we will do	How we will do it
3.1 Develop a bespoke, stronger and consistent approach to enhancing engagement with ethnic minority communities in policing activity and governance	3.1.1 Acknowledging that policing in the past has led to community trauma and distrust among Black people, including young Black people 3.1.2 Addressing and reconciling the divisions between the police and people from ethnic minority communities 3.1.3 Seek and record formal and informal feedback from, for example, levels of compliance, PSD cases and hate crime incidents (internal and external)
3.2 Review and develop a consistent policing response to refugees, asylum seekers and migrants	3.2.1 Map community confidence, publish outcomes of community engagement and publish response to issues raised by ethnic communities locally 3.2.2 Engage with ethnic minorities in developing police policies and practices 3.2.3 Routinely have representation in police oversight and scrutiny processes 3.2.4 Demonstrate tangible improvements for ethnic minority communities and individuals. (e.g. victim and witness feedback, levels of trust and confidence, feedback, surveys)
3.3 Enhance confidence of victims of hate crime to come forward to Police and to reduce the numbers subject to repeat victimisation	3.3.1 Actively supporting services that make a difference to young people's lives and reducing the need for police to be involved at later stage 3.3.2 Providing ethnic minorities with timely and meaningful information about police decisions and how they were reached 3.3.3 Complete a regular internal audit of the police response to victims of hate crime.
3.4 Harnessing the value of community leadership Actively supporting services and partners that make a positive difference to the lives of ethnic minority individual and communities	3.4.1 Working with ethnic minorities to tackle the crime that causes concern or harm.

Workstream 4

Protection, Partnership and Justice

A Police Service that protects people from ethnic minority backgrounds from crime and seeks justice for all.



Local Policing | Crime, Justice and Performance | Policy

What we will do	How we will do it
4.1 Reducing the harm caused by crime against ethnic minorities through enhanced partnership working and ensuring appropriate accessibility of services	4.1.1 Improving the quality of investigations for ethnic minority victims and bringing those responsible to justice 4.1.2 Preventing ethnic minorities from becoming victims, especially of hate related crime 4.1.3 Responding appropriately to emergencies involving ethnic minority communities, particularly when there is a risk of serious harm 4.1.4 Review and enhance accessibility of language services.
4.2 Review end to end victim and witness services to ensure individual needs are met and reduce repeat victimisation and attrition	4.2.1 Understanding the needs of ethnic minority victims and witnesses, treating them fairly, with respect and as individuals 4.2.2 Safeguarding ethnic minorities who are vulnerable or at risk of coming to harm 4.2.3 Improving the policing response and effectiveness in supporting vulnerable people from ethnic minority communities, with mental health issues 4.2.4 Improving the policing response and effectiveness in supporting missing persons from ethnic minority communities
4.3 Actively supporting services that make a difference to children, young people and families, to reduce the need for subsequent police involvement	4.3.1 Supporting services that make a positive difference to the lives of young people and prevent the need for the police to be involved later
4.4 Build prevention and problem solving initiatives for ethnic minority communities	4.4.1 Raise awareness of Crimestoppers 4.4.2 Promote the use of Hate Crime Advocates to support victims of Race Hate Crimes and/or Incidents

Workstream 5

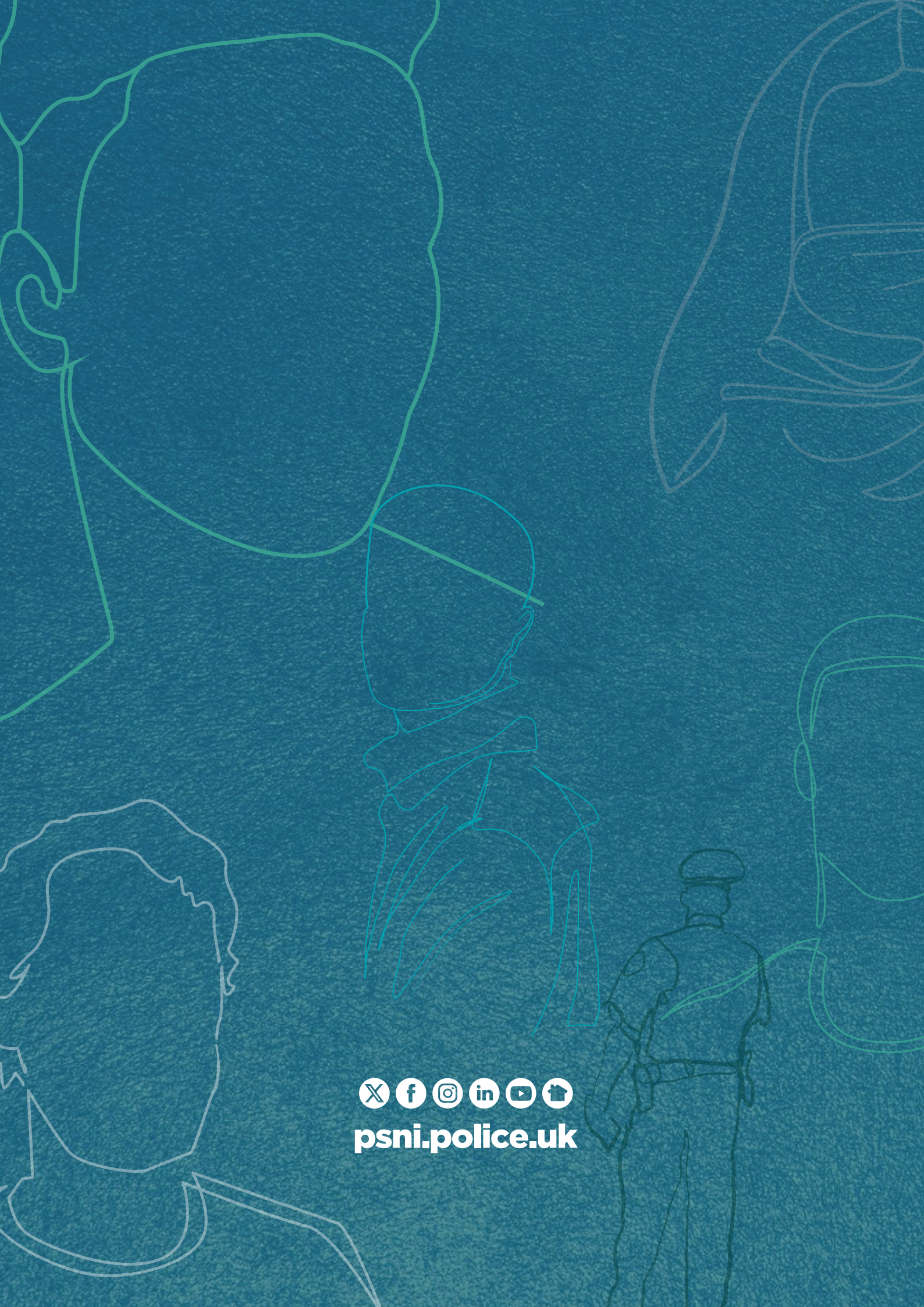
Performance and Accountability

**A Police Service that measures performance,
uses evidence based decision making
and delivers positive outcomes for our
communities and workforce**



Overall

What we will do	How we will do it
5.1 Demonstrate impact through analysis, insights and learning	5.1.1 Evidence and evaluation 5.1.2 Baseline 2024 data 5.1.3 Develop performance and outcomes framework 5.1.4 Set targets and trajectory 5.1.5 Develop annual reporting and governance structures 5.1.6 Develop communications plan 5.1.7 Align with Policing Plan outcomes



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